

Health Disparities Profile Report to Support the Activities of the Rhode Island Girls Empowerment Mentoring Support (RI-GEMS) Intervention

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**Prepared For:
Rhode Island Department of Health, Health Equity Institute**

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This Health Disparities Profile was developed to support the intervention efforts of the Rhode Island Girls Empowerment Mentoring Support (RI-GEMS) intervention. The RI-GEMS is a joint effort between the Rhode Island Department of Health, YWCA, and the Providence Public School Department. The intervention is directed by Sterling Clinton-Spellman and includes additional core staff. The program is funded by the Federal Office of Minority Health MYEP II. The content of this report is solely the responsibility of the RI-GEMS team and does not represent the official views of any of the funding agencies.

RATIONALE FOR THE GIRLS EMPOWERMENT MENTORING SUPPORT INTERVENTION

The primary objective of the Rhode Island Department of Health, Office of Minority Health's Rhode Island Girls Empowerment Mentoring Support (**RI-GEMS**) intervention is to address a key social determinant of health, low high school graduation rates (i.e., regular diploma and/or GED equivalent) among girls in Providence, Rhode Island. **“Students who graduate with a regular diploma four years after starting ninth grade”** is one of 26 leading health indicators selected by Healthy People 2020 (**HP2020**) to communicate high priority health issues. Low graduation rates are associated with a number of poor economic and health outcomes (e.g., poverty, poor mental health, teen pregnancy, and chronic disease).

RI-GEMS seeks to provide a two-component, year-round mentoring, academic support, and leadership development program to girls who attend two middle schools, West Broadway and DelSesto Middle Schools, located in Providence, Rhode Island. This research study will also obtain data from two control schools, Esek Hopkins and Nathan Bishop. These schools and communities have some characteristics that may increase the risks for high school dropout, which we present in the accompanying report. However, it must be noted that these schools and communities also have protective factors that facilitate students' academic success. We detail many of the risk factors and protective factors in this report.

To understand the risk factors for and protective factors against low on-time high school graduation rates and high dropout rates among girls, we organized the health disparities indicators and health disparities profile using a socio-ecological model. A socio-ecological model suggests that public policies (e.g., state and local school policies), culture (e.g., norms and values), communities (e.g., neighborhood factors), organizations (e.g., school environments and zero tolerance policies), interpersonal relationships (e.g., peers and family), and individual factors (e.g., attitude about school) influence on-time high school graduation and high dropout rates (1-4).

To select these aforementioned risk and protective factors, we conducted a review of the extant scientific literature and obtained data from the Rhode Island Department of Education InfoWorks and SurveyWorks statewide, district, and school data releases for the 2013 – 2014, 2014 – 2015, 2015 – 2016, and 2016 - 2017 academic years. We also incorporated data from the United States Census Bureau, the National Center for Education Statistics, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System, Rhode Island Kids Count, and the American Civil Liberties Union of Rhode Island. The health disparities report includes the following indicators described below.

HEALTH DISPARITY PROFILE INDICATORS

COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT

- **Race and Ethnicity:** This indicator shows the percentage of persons by race and ethnicity in Rhode Island overall and in the city of Providence.
- **Foreign-born and Language Spoken in the Home:** These indicators show the percentages of foreign-born residents and residents who speak a language other than English at home.
- **Poverty:** This indicator depicts the percentage of residents living in poverty in Rhode Island and Providence.
- **Median Household Income:** This indicator shows the median household income for Providence and Rhode Island.
- **Neighborhood Safety:** This is an indicator of the sum of the percentages of students who agreed or strongly agreed that they felt safe when walking outside of school.
- **Feeling Nervous Outside of School:** This indicator measures the sum of the percentages of students who reported that they “almost never” or “once in a while” felt nervous outside of school.

SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

- **High School Graduation:** This is an indicator of the percentage of students who graduated on-time. On-time graduation is defined as earning a standard high school diploma within four years after enrolling in the ninth grade for the first time.
- **General Equivalency Diploma (GED):** This is an indicator of the percentage of students who obtained a GED.
- **Dropout:** This is an indicator of the percentage of students who dropped out of high school.
- **Promotion Rate to Next School Grade (PPSD)**
- **Aggregate Income Status at the School-level:** This indicator is an indirect estimate of school socioeconomic position and is measured by the percentage of students eligible for subsidized lunch.
- **Race and Ethnicity of Student Population:** This indicator depicts the percentage of students by race and ethnicity.
- **Gender of Student Population:** This is an indicator of the percentage of students who are female.
- **Student-Teacher Ratio:** This indicator measures the number of students per one classroom teacher.
- **Stability Index:** The Stability Index is a measure of a student’s tendency to switch or stay within a school district over a school year expressed as a percentage.
- **Feeling Nervous at School:** This indicator measures the sum of the percentages of students who reported that they “almost never” or “once in a while” felt nervous at school.
- **Weapons Seen in School:** This indicator measures the percentage of students who saw a weapon in school.
- **Violence in School:** This indicator measures the sum of the percentages of students who reported “almost never” or “once in a while” worrying about violence in

their schools.

- **Student Suspension Rate:** This is an indicator of the number of suspensions per 100 students.

INTERPERSONAL FACTORS

- **Bullying:** This indicator measures the percentage of students who reported that they were not bullied on school property during the past 12 months.
- **Electronic Bullying:** This indicator measures the sum of the percentages of students who reported that they were not electronically bullied on school property during the past 12 months.

INDIVIDUAL FACTORS

Student Attendance and Achievement Outcomes

- **Chronic Absenteeism:** This indicator measures the percentage of middle school students who missed 10% or more school days during the year.
- **English as Second Language (ESL)/Bilingual Education:** This is an indicator of the percentage of students receiving ESL/Bilingual Education.
- **English Language Arts/Literacy:** This indicator is a measure of the percentage of students who met or exceeded English Language Arts/Literacy.
- **Mathematics:** This indicator is a measure of mathematics readiness for Grades 6 through.

Student School Engagement and Learning

- **Excited about Going to Classes:** This indicator measures the sum of the percentages of girls who reported that they were “quite excited” or “extremely excited” about going to classes.
- **Class Learning:** This indicator measures the sum of the percentages of students who reported that they found things learned in classes to be “quite interesting” or “extremely interesting”.
- **Usefulness of School:** This indicator measures the sum of the percentages of students who reported that they thought that school would be “quite useful” or “extremely useful” to their future.
- **Excited to Participate in Classes:** This indicator measures the sum of the percentages of students who reported that they were “quite excited” or “extremely excited” to participate in their classes.
- **Thought about how to Approach a Challenge:** This indicator measures the sum of the percentages of students who reported that they “frequently” or “almost always” thought about the best way to approach a challenging project before starting it.
- **Try Different Learning Strategies:** This indicator measures the sum of the percentages of students who reported that they were “extremely likely” or “quite likely” to try a different strategy when they get stuck while learning something new.
- **Self-Confidence in Completing Schoolwork:** This indicator measures the sum of the percentages of students who reported that they were “quite confident” or “extremely confident” that they could choose an effective strategy to get schoolwork done well.

Mental Health

- **Life stress:** This indicator measures the sum of the percentages of students who report that life was “not at all stressful” or “slightly stressful”.
- **School stress:** This indicator measures the sum of the percentages of students who reported that school was “not at all stressful” or “slightly stressful”.
- **Feeling Sad or Hopeless:** This indicator measures the percentage of students who reported that they did not feel sad or hopeless almost every day for two or more weeks in a row during the past 12 months, which resulted in them stopping some of their usual activities.
- **Worrying about Things in Life:** This indicator measures the sum of the percentages of students who reported that they were “almost never” or “once in a while” worried about things in their life.

Alcohol and Drug Use

- **Alcohol Use:** This indicator measures the percentage of students who consumed alcohol during the past 30 days .
- **Electronic Cigarette Use:** This indicator measures the percentage of students who tried an electronic cigarette product.
- **Illegal Drug Use:** This indicator measures the percentage of students who reported trying illegal drugs (i.e., marijuana, prescription drugs without a doctor’s prescription, inhalants, and other illegal drugs).

Teen Pregnancy

- **Births to Teens:** This indicator measures the rate of births per 1,000 girls among girls ages 15 to 19 years.

Youth Incarceration-Related Factors

- **Youth Detention:** This is an indicator of the percentage of youth age 18 or under who were in the custody or care of the Rhode Island Training School.
- **Dating Violence:** This is an indicator of the percentage of girls in grades 9 – 12 who reported that they experienced dating-related violence.
- **Rate of Youth with an Incarcerated Parent:** This indicator presents the rate of children with incarcerated parents per 1,000 children in 2016.

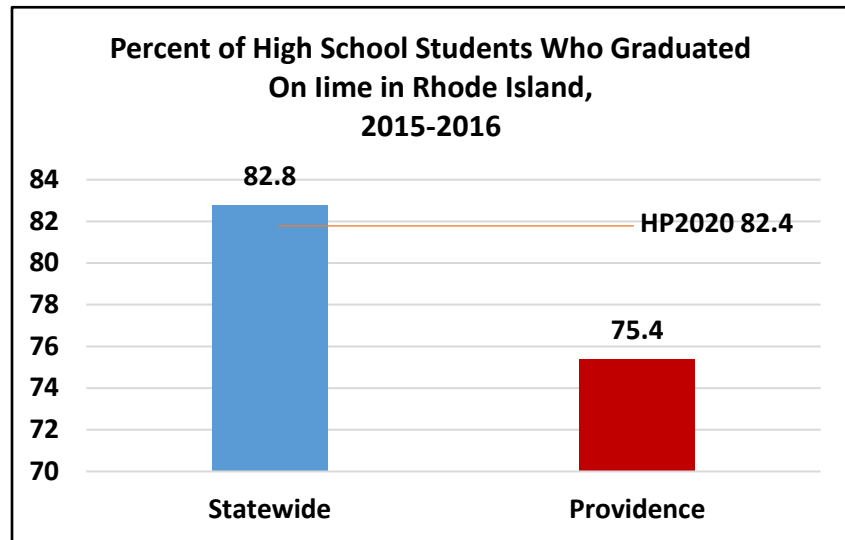
FOUR-YEAR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION, GED, AND DROPOUT

High School Graduation: This is an indicator of the percentage of students who graduated

on-time during the 2015 – 2016 school year. On-time graduation is defined as earning a standard high school diploma within four years after enrolling in the ninth grade for the first time.

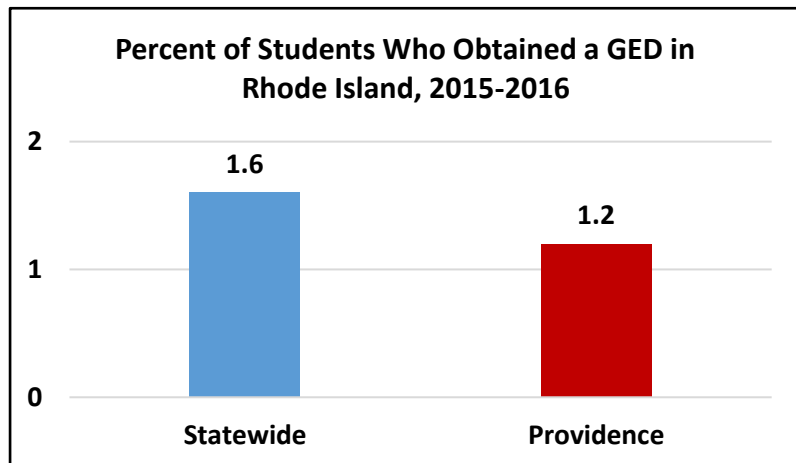
The high school graduation data are from the Rhode Island Department of Education (5). High school graduation is associated with higher lifetime earnings, better health, increased individual and societal level

income, and other positive individual and societal outcomes (6). In Rhode Island, four-year high school graduation increased from 77.3% in 2011 (7) to 82.8% in 2016; for the 2015 - 2016 academic year, statewide graduation surpassed the *Healthy People 2020* (HP2020) goal of 82.4%. Four-year graduation in the Providence Public School District has been on the rise from 66% in 2011 to 75.4% in 2016 (5, 7), however, it remains below the HP2020 goal of 82.4%. During the 2015 – 2016 academic year, 86% of female students graduated within four years statewide. In the Providence Public School District, 79.5% of female students graduated within four years. When examined by race/ethnicity, 92% of Asian, 88% of White, 81% of Black/African American, 79% of Hispanic/Latino, 78% of Native American, and 71.9% of multiracial students graduated from high school statewide. Within the Providence Public School District, 83.5% of Asian, 72.9% of White, 79.4% of Black/African American, 74.3% of Hispanic, 85.7% of Native American and Alaska Native, and 62.5% of multiracial students graduated from high school.



General Equivalency Diploma

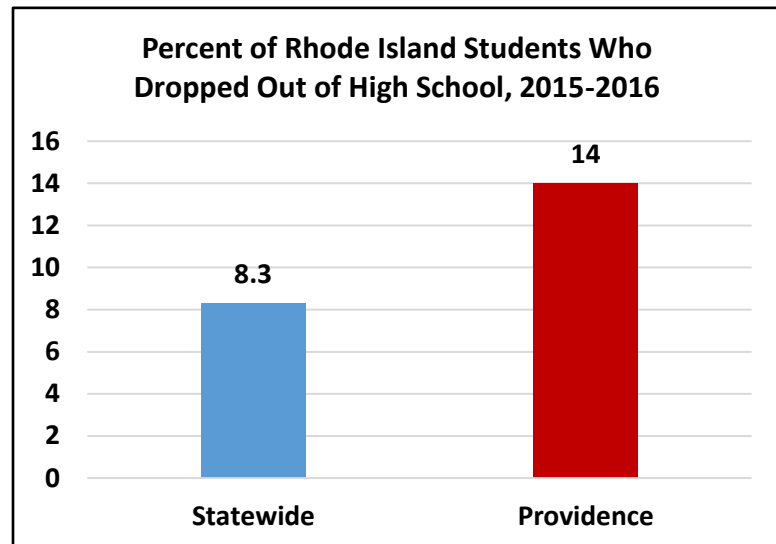
(GED): This is an indicator of the percentage of students who obtained a GED during the 2015 – 2016 school year. These data are from the Rhode Island Department of Education (5). Among girls, obtaining a GED is associated with more work experience and higher labor market earnings (8). In Rhode Island, 1.6% of students obtained a GED while in Providence, 1.2% of students obtained a GED.



When disaggregated by gender, 1.3% of females obtained a GED in Rhode Island and in Providence, 1.2% of females obtained a GED. When disaggregated by race/ethnicity, 1.8% of White, 1.4% of Hispanic, 0.8% of Black, 0.6% of Asian, and 2.1% of multiracial students in Rhode Island obtained a GED. In Providence, 3.2% of White, 2.1% of multiracial, 1.3% of Hispanic, and 0.3% of Black students obtained a GED. No American Indian or Alaska Native or

Asian students obtained a GED during this academic year.

Dropout: This is an indicator of the percentage of students who dropped out of high school during the 2015 - 2016 academic year. These data are from the Rhode Island Department of Education (5). High school drop out is associated with lower lifetime earnings, higher unemployment, incarceration, teenage pregnancy, poor health, and other adverse individual and societal costs (6, 9). Statewide, 8.3% of students dropped out of high school while in Providence, 13.7% of students dropped out of high school. With regard to gender, 6% of female students dropped out of high school statewide. In the Providence Public School District, 11.5% of females dropped out of high school. When disaggregated by

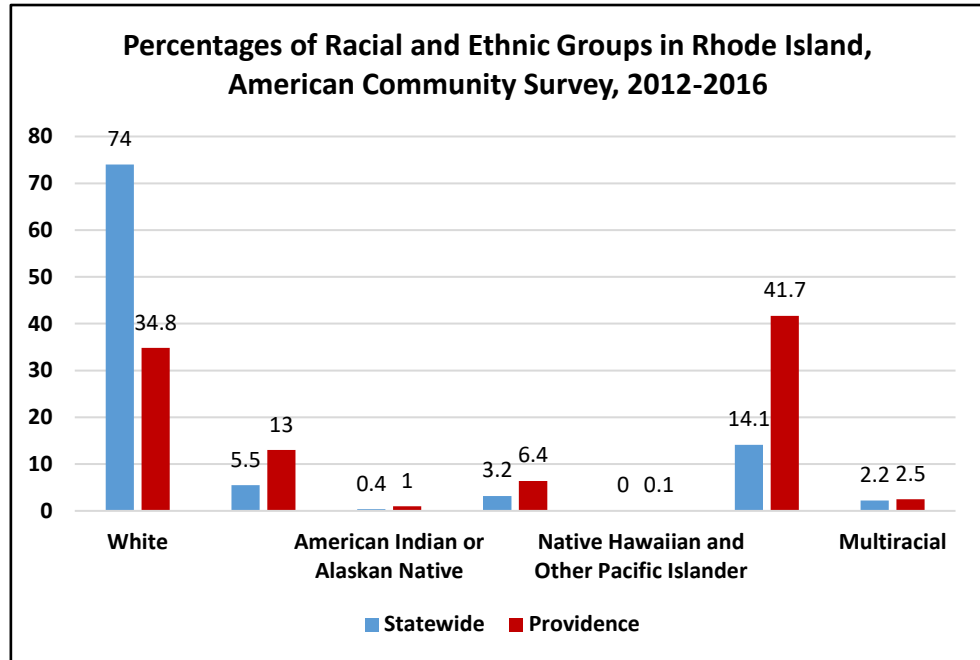


race/ethnicity, 13% of Hispanic/Latino, 13% of Native American, 10% of Black/African American, 6% of White, and 3% of Asian students dropped out of high school statewide. In Providence, 16.1% of White, 14.7% of Hispanic, 12.5% multiracial, 11.1% of Black, 9.5% of American Indian or Alaska Native, and 7.2% of Asian students dropped out of high school.

Promotion Rate to Next School Grade (PPSD)

COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT

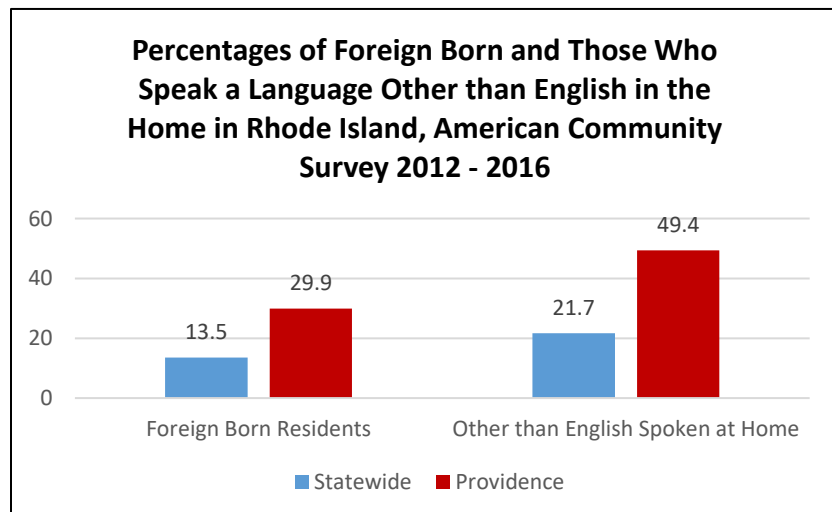
Race and Ethnicity: This indicator shows the percentage of persons by race and ethnicity in Rhode Island overall and in the city of Providence. These data are from the United States Census American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, 2012 – 2016. Relative to their non-minority counterparts, some racial and



ethnic minority groups (e.g., Black/African American, American Indian and Alaska Native, Hispanic/Latinos, and some Asian subgroups) experience higher levels of racism, discrimination and inequality (10). Some of these inequalities include limited economic opportunity, safe communities, and quality childcare and education which may result in lower socioeconomic position (e.g., educational attainment, limited income, wealth and the intergenerational transmission of wealth), limited opportunities for upward social mobility, and health care and health disparities (10-16). Census data indicate that racial/ethnic minority populations represented a larger percentage of Providence city’s total population especially when compared to statewide estimates. Individuals identifying as Hispanic/Latino (41.7%) represented the largest ethnic minority group in Providence.

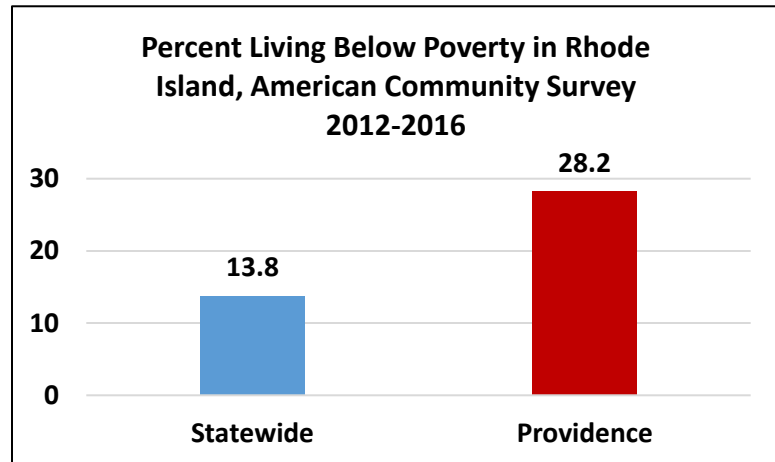
Foreign Born and Language Spoken in the Home: These indicators show the percentages of foreign born residents and residents who speak a language other than English at home. These data are from the United States Census Bureau American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, 2012 – 2016.

While immigrant status itself is not a deterrent to educational attainment, many foreign born residents are of lower socioeconomic position and experience language barriers that create impediments to educational achievement (17). The proportion of foreign-born residents in Providence (29.9%) is much higher than for Rhode Island overall (13.5%). In Providence, 49.4% of residents ages five



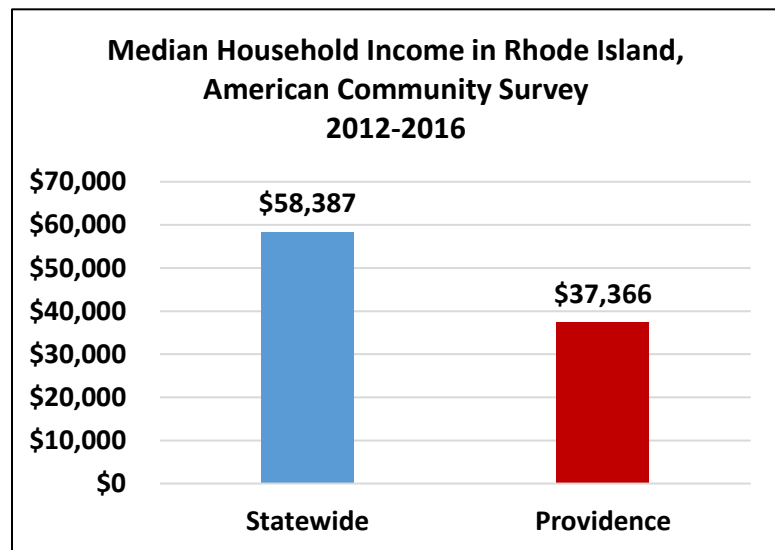
and older spoke a language other than English at home compared to 21.7% for the state as a whole.

Poverty: This indicator depicts the percentage of residents living in poverty in Rhode Island and Providence. These data are from the American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates 2012 – 2016 (18). Community-level poverty is associated with poorer quality schools, lower academic achievement, high school dropout, significant stressor exposure, environmental toxicants, and chronic diseases to name a few (6, 9, 19). In the city of Providence, the percentage of people who lived in poverty was more than two times the state poverty rate, 28.2% compared to 13.8%, respectively. When disaggregated by race/ethnicity, there were clear disparities. In Providence, half of all American Indian and Alaska Native individuals lived below poverty (50.6%) and more than one-third of Hispanic or Latino (35.2%) individuals lived below the poverty level. More than one-fourth of Black or African American and Asians (29% and 24.1%, respectively) and 19.1% of White individuals lived in poverty.



Median Income: This indicator shows the median household income for Providence and Rhode Island. These data are from the American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, 2012 – 2016. Income is adjusted to 2016 dollars. Low income negatively affects children's academic achievement, likelihood of graduating from high school and college, and potential lifetime earnings (20). The median household income for Providence was \$37,366 which was well below the Rhode Island median income of \$58,387. When the median household income is broken down by race and ethnicity, there are clear differences.

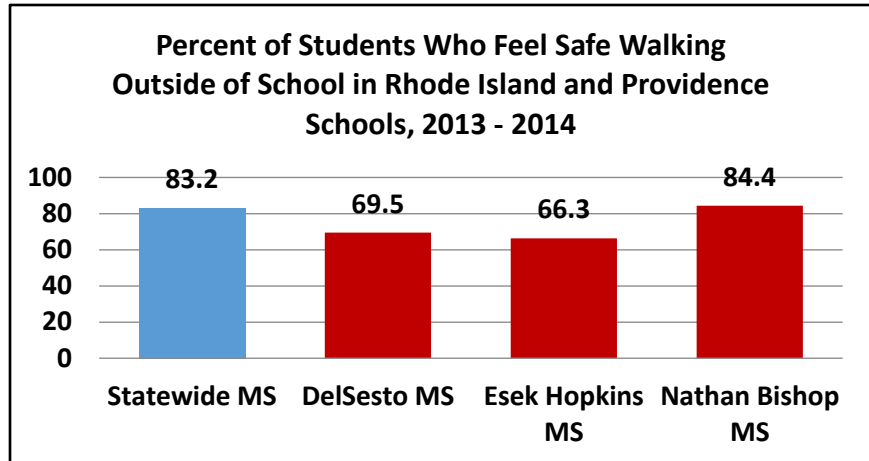
American Indian and Alaska Native households had the lowest median income in Rhode Island and Providence (\$26,764 and \$21,716, respectively). Also, in Rhode Island and Providence, Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American, Multiracial, and Other Racial groups had lower median incomes than Asians and Whites.



Neighborhood Safety:

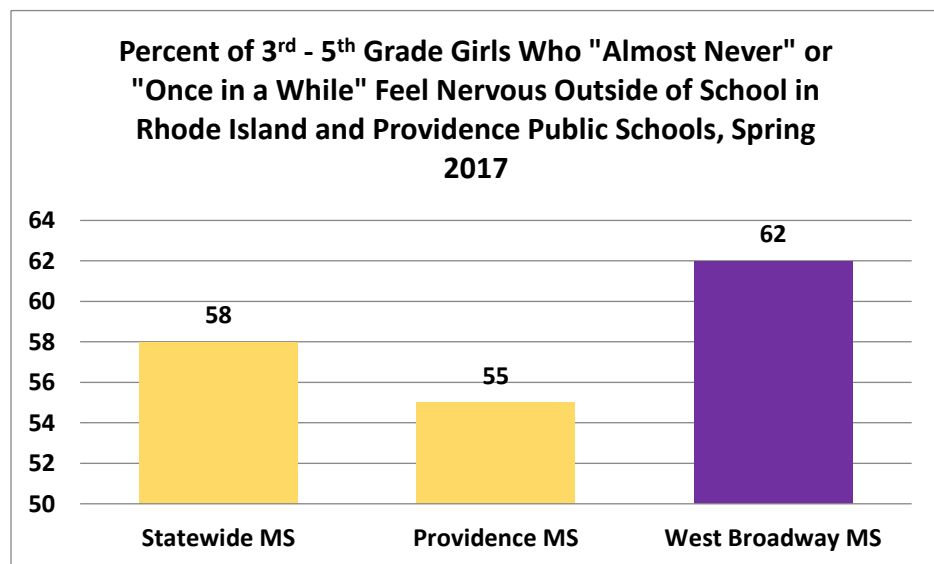
This is an indicator of the sum of the percentages of students who agreed or strongly agreed that they felt safe when walking outside of school during the 2013 – 2014 academic year. These data are from the Rhode Island Department of Education SurveyWorks (21). Feeling unsafe in the neighborhood is associated with lower

academic success, less school engagement, and higher dropout rates (6). Compared to middle school students statewide, fewer students at DelSesto and Esek Hopkins Middle Schools agreed or strongly agreed that they felt safe while walking outside of school. For example, 66.3% of students at Esek Hopkins and 69.5% of students at DelSesto Middle Schools felt safe walking outside of school compared to 83.2% of middle school students statewide. (Data on perceived safety were not available for West Broadway Middle School).

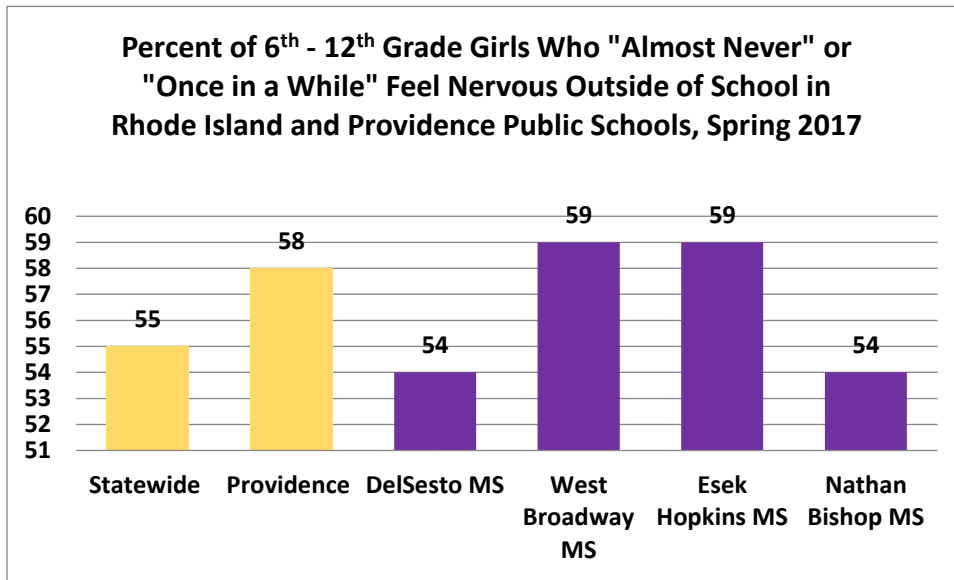


Feeling Nervous Outside of School: This indicator measures the sum of the percentages of students who reported that they “almost never” or “once in a while” felt nervous outside of school. These data are from the Rhode Island Department of Education Spring 2017 SurveyWorks [35]. While nervousness could refer to many things (e.g., nervous about safety, risk for violence, dispositional attribution, etcetera), neighborhood socioeconomic disadvantage and urbanicity are associated with poorer mental health (e.g., anxiety and depression) (22).

Among 3rd – 5th grade girls, 58% in Rhode Island, 55% in Providence, and 62% at West Broadway “almost never” or “once in a while” felt nervous outside of school.



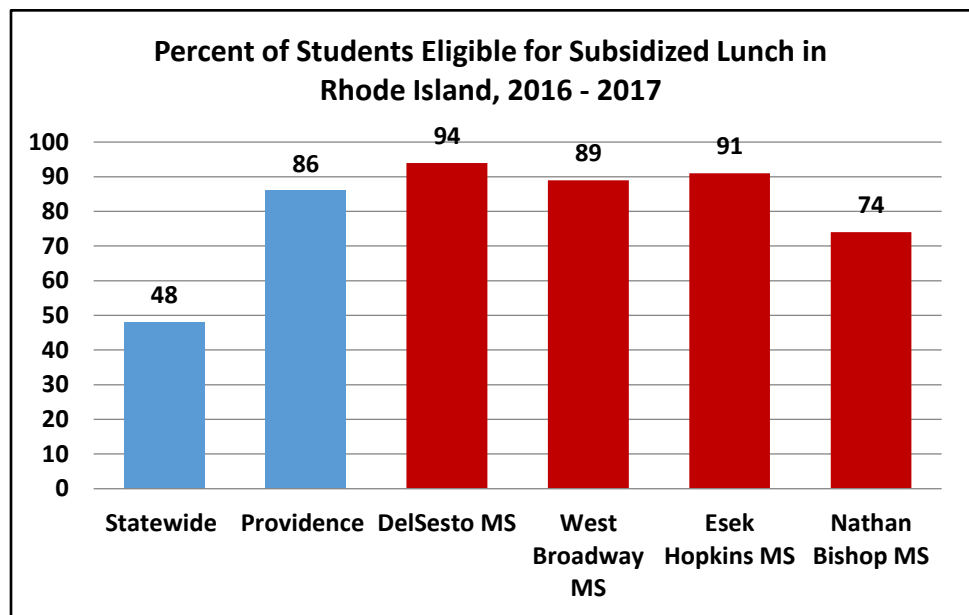
Among 6th – 12th grade girls, 55% in Rhode Island, 58% in Providence, 54% at DelSesto, 59% at West Broadway, 59% at Esek Hopkins, and 54% at Nathan Bishop “almost never” or “once in a while” felt nervous outside of school.



SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

Aggregate Income Status at the School-level: This indicator is an indirect estimate of school socioeconomic position and is measured by the percentage of students eligible for subsidized lunch for the 2016 – 2017 academic year. These data are from the Rhode Island Department of Education (23).

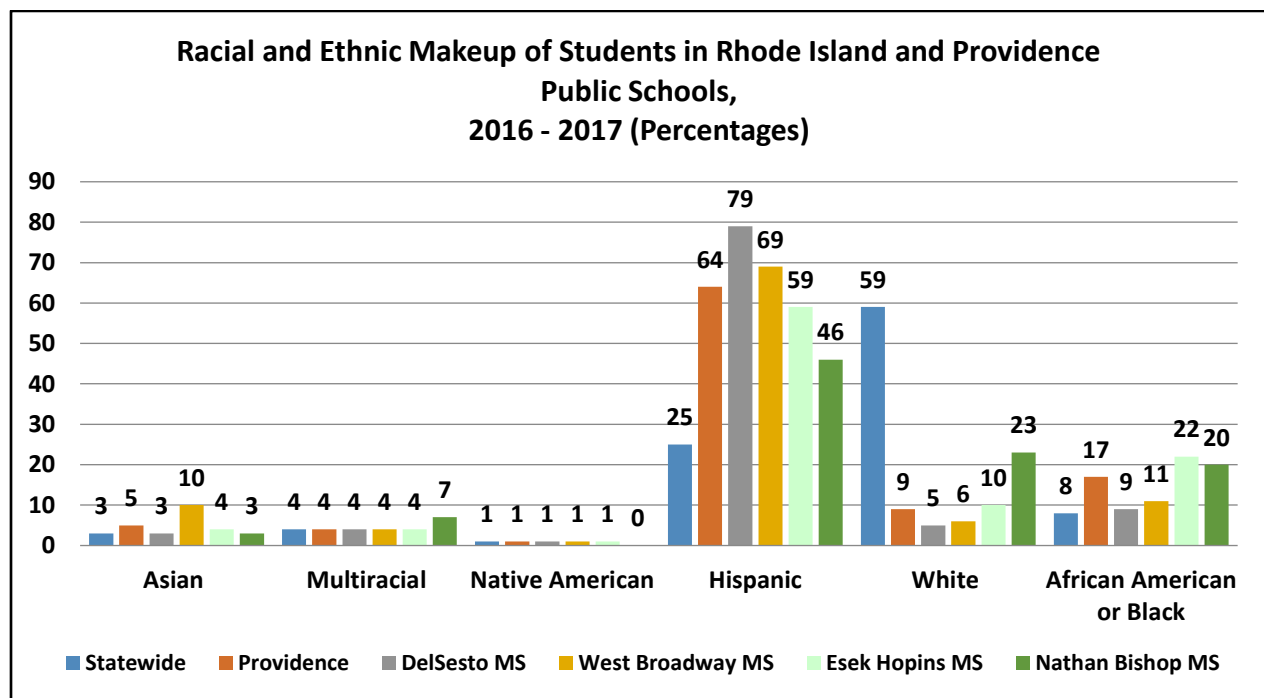
Because students attending a specific school come from different communities, the school-level aggregate may not reflect the neighborhood-level socioeconomic position where the school is located. To be eligible for subsidized school meals, family income must not exceed 185% of the federal poverty guideline (24).



Low socioeconomic position is strongly linked to the likelihood of dropping out (6, 9). Poverty affects academic outcomes including poor school facilities, limited budgets of school administration, and lower levels of available professional services for students (25). However, subsidized school meal programs are associated with lower food insecurity, better cognitive functioning, and academic success

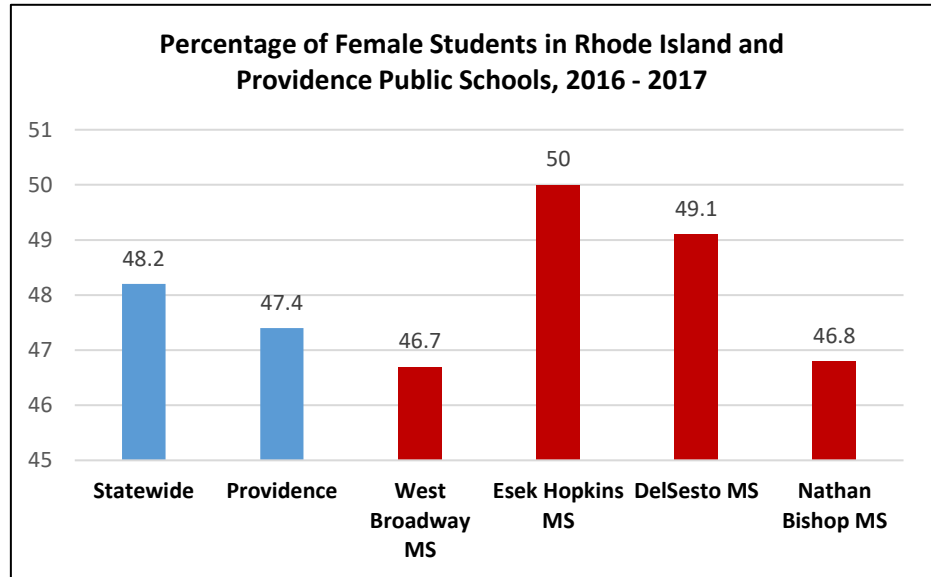
[21]. During the 2016 – 2017 academic year, while 48% of students statewide were eligible for subsidized lunch, 86% of students in the Providence Public School District met eligibility. In the intervention and control schools, 74% to 94% of students were eligible for subsidized lunch.

Race and Ethnicity of Student Population: This indicator depicts the percentage of students by race and ethnicity during the 2016 - 2017 academic year. These data are from the Rhode Island Department of Education (23). These data show that although White students comprised 59% of the student population in Rhode Island, they made up only 9% of the student body in the Providence Public School District. Also, while Hispanic students made up 25% of the student population statewide, they accounted for almost two-thirds of students in the Providence Public School District. While African American or Black students accounted for 8% of students in Rhode Island, they made up 17% of the student body in Providence. During this same academic year, the majority of students in the intervention and control schools were Hispanic.

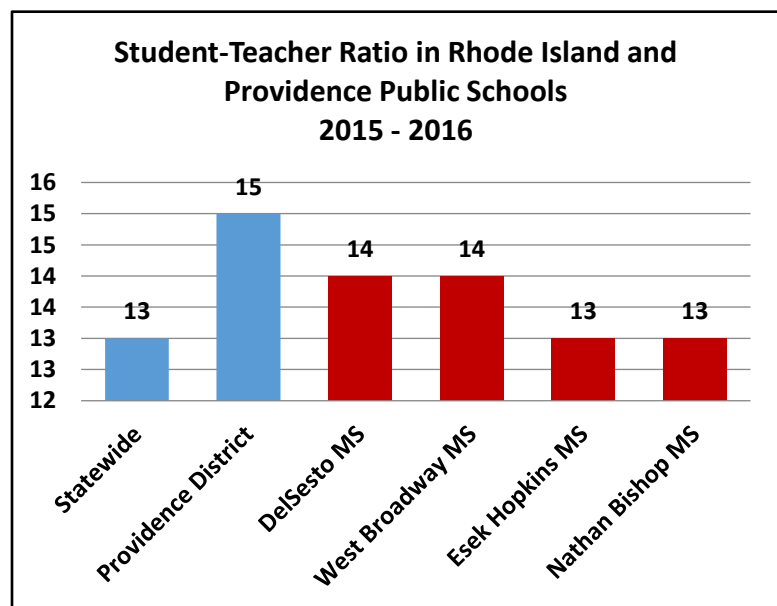


Gender of Student Population:

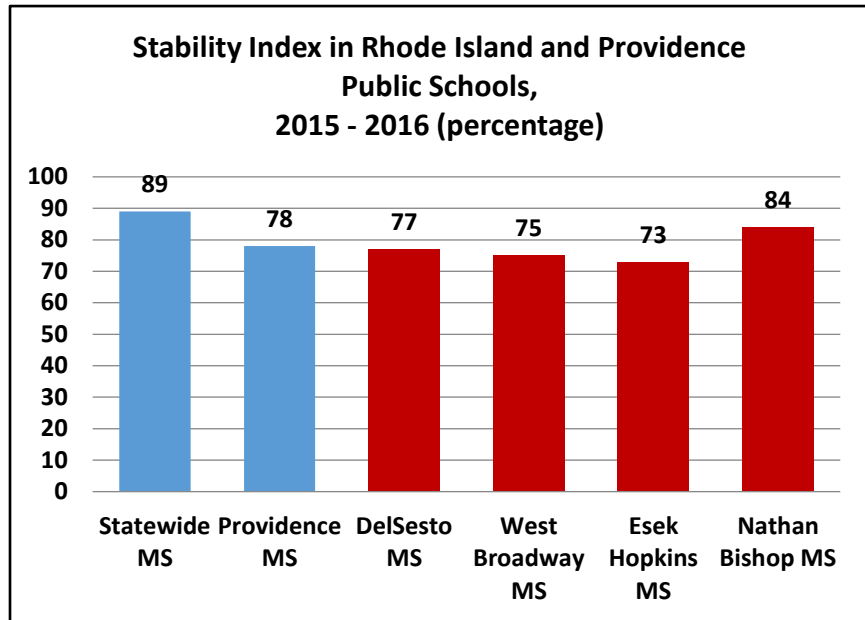
This is an indicator of the percentage of students who are female. These data are from the Rhode Island Department of Education (26). The 2016 - 2017 October enrollment reports indicated that 48.2% of statewide, 47.4% of Providence, 46.7% of West Broadway, 50% of Esek Hopkins, 49.1% of DelSesto, and 46.8% of Nathan Bishop Middle School students were female.



Student-Teacher Ratio: This indicator measures the number of students per one classroom teacher for the 2015 – 2016 academic year. These data are from the Rhode Island Department of Education (27). The student/teacher ratio is an indicator of the workload and availability of teachers to students (28). The lower the student-teacher ratio, the greater availability of teacher services to students (28). For example, the value of 14 for DelSesto Middle School means that there were 14 students for every one classroom teacher.

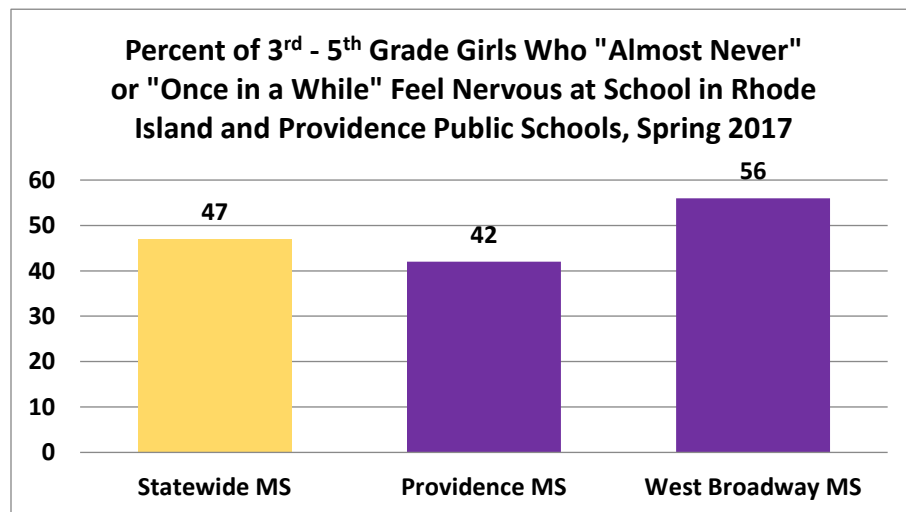


Stability Index: This indicator depicts the Stability Index for the 2015 – 2016 academic year. The Stability Index is a measure of a student’s tendency to switch or stay within a school district over a school year expressed as a percentage. These data are from the Rhode Island Department of Education (29). Lower stability is associated with lower math and reading scores and high school dropout (30, 31). Relative to their counterparts statewide, students at DelSesto, West Broadway, Esek Hopkins, and Nathan Bishop Middle Schools scored lower on the Stability Index (i.e. expressed as lower percentage). For example, 89% of middle school students in Rhode Island remained within the same school district during the 2015 – 2016 academic year compared to 73% of students in Esek Hopkins Middle School.

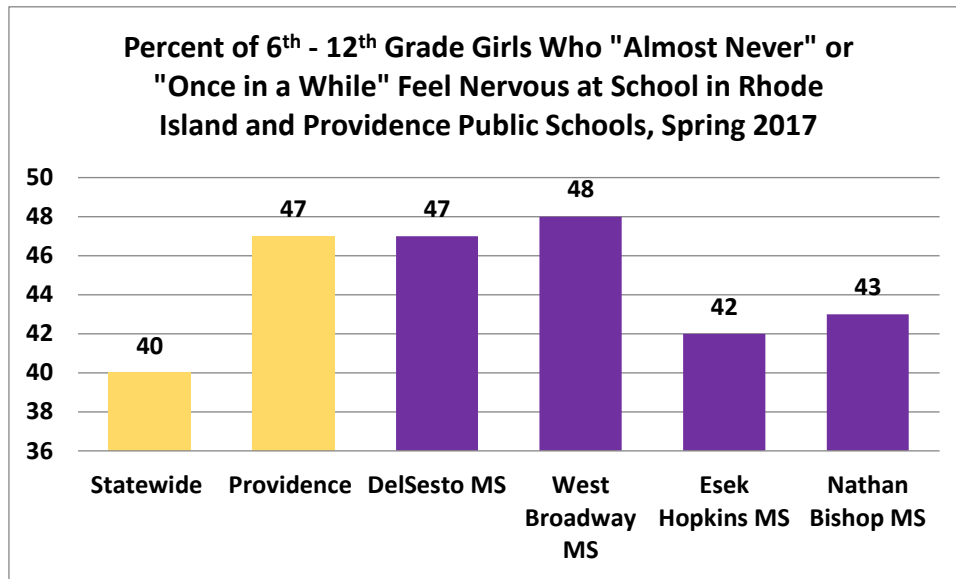


Feeling Nervous at School: This indicator measures the sum of the percentages of students who reported that they “almost never” or “once in a while” felt nervous at school. These data are from the Rhode Island Department of Education Spring 2017 SurveyWorks [35]. While this nervousness could be a result of many things (e.g., worrying about school safety, test taking anxiety, subject specific anxiety, risk for being bullying, school-violence, etcetera), higher levels of anxiety are associated with poorer academic performance and outcomes (32).

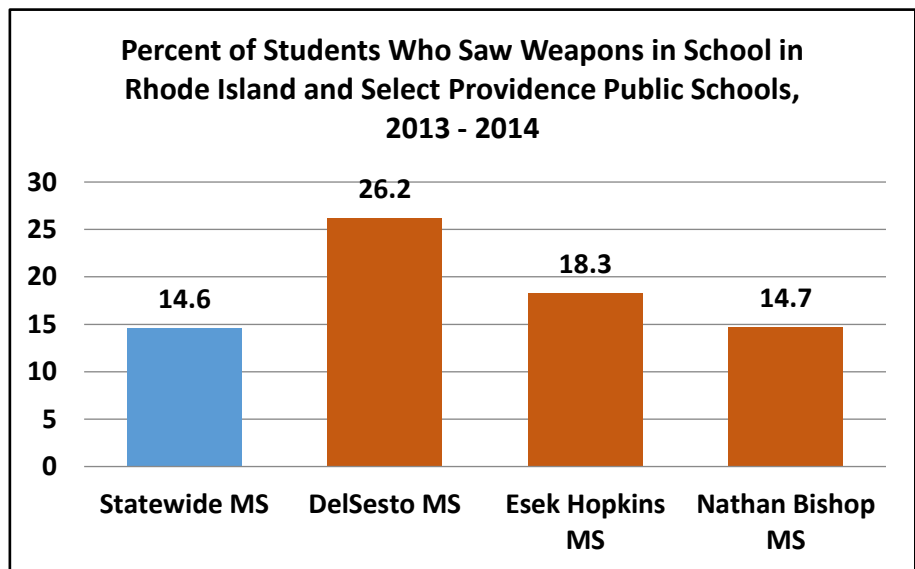
Among 3rd – 5th grade girls, 47% in Rhode Island, 42% in Providence, and 56% at West Broadway “almost never” or “once in a while” felt nervous at school.



Among 6th – 12th grade girls, 40% in Rhode Island, 47% in Providence, 47% at DelSesto, 48% at West Broadway, 42% at Esek Hopkins, and 43% at Nathan Bishop “almost never” or “once in a while” felt nervous at school.

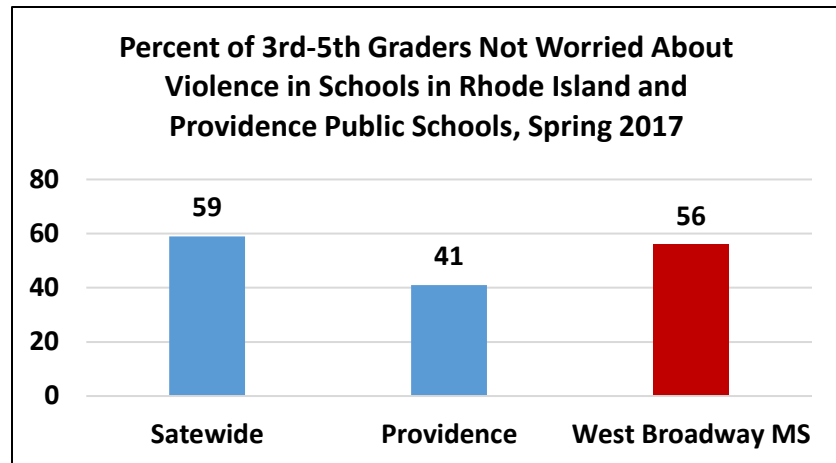


Weapons Seen in School: This indicator measures the percentage of students who saw a weapon in school during the 2013 - 2014 academic year. These data are from the Rhode Island Department of Education SurveyWorks School Report. The carrying of weapons in school is associated with the likelihood that students will witness violence, experience psychological distress, and lower academic performance (33). Weapons carrying is also associated with future violence, criminal offenses, and behavioral problems in school (34, 35). At DelSesto Middle School, students were more likely than their peers statewide to see a weapon at school (26.2% versus 14.6%). Outcomes were similar at Esek Hopkins Middle School where students were more likely than their peers statewide to see a weapon at school (18.3% and versus 14.6%). The percentage of Nathan Bishop Middle School students who saw weapons in school was similar to the statewide percentage. (Data on weapons seen in school was not available for West Broadway Middle School).

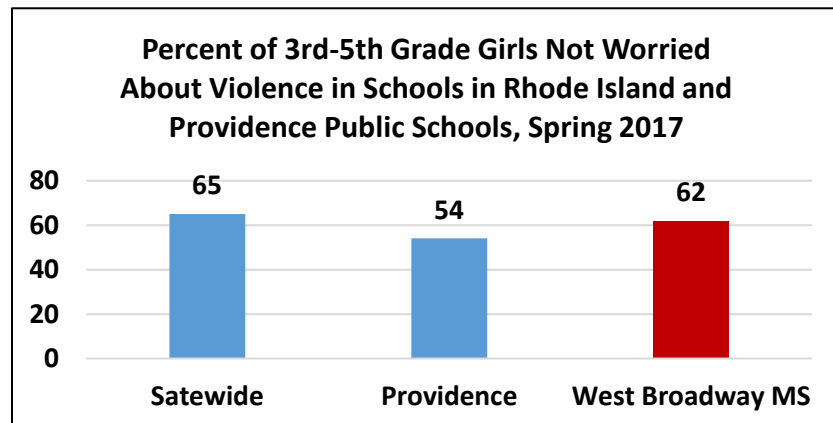


Hopkins Middle School where students were more likely than their peers statewide to see a weapon at school (18.3% and versus 14.6%). The percentage of Nathan Bishop Middle School students who saw weapons in school was similar to the statewide percentage. (Data on weapons seen in school was not available for West Broadway Middle School).

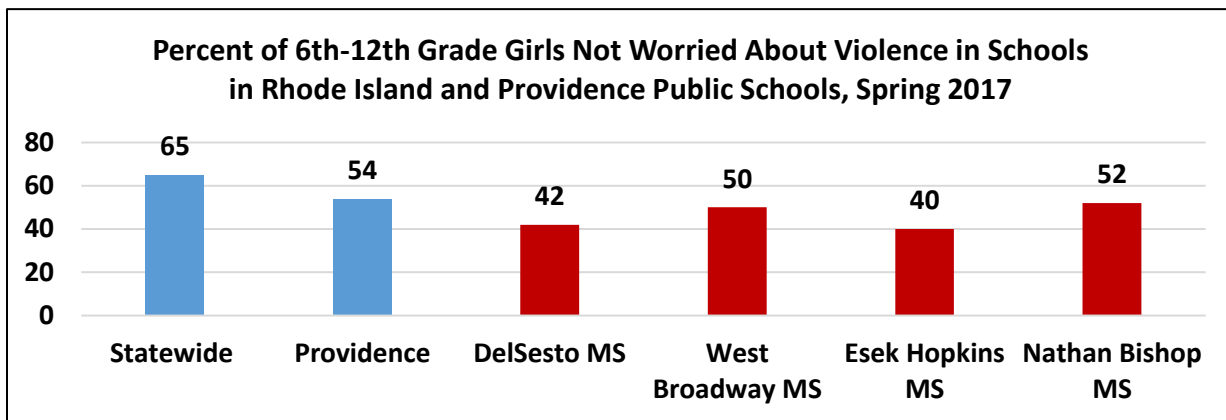
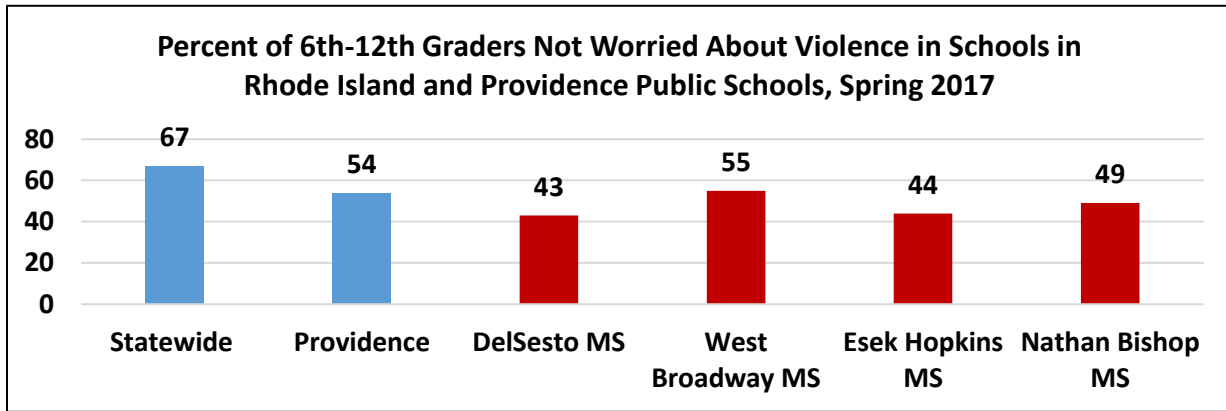
Violence in School: This indicator measures the sum of the percentages of students who reported “almost never” or “once in a while” worrying about violence in their schools. Data for this indicator were collected by the Rhode Island Department of Education Spring of 2017 SurveyWorks (36). Subjective reports of feeling safe in school are associated with better student learning and academic achievement (35).



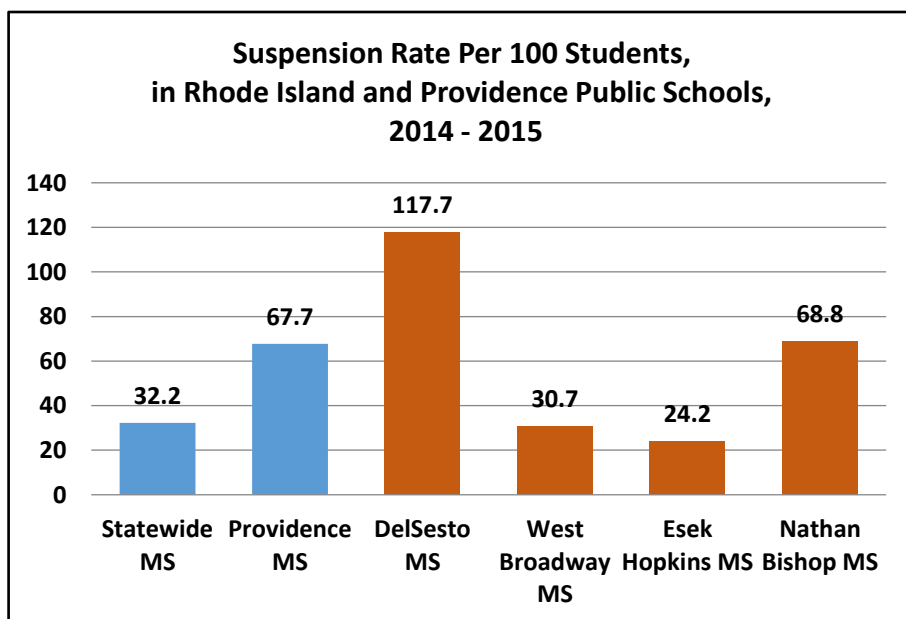
Among 3rd – 5th grade students, 59% in Rhode Island reported almost never or once in a while worrying about violence while only 41% of youth in grades 3rd – 5th in Providence responded similarly. Compared to Providence 3rd - 5th graders, a larger percentage of students in the 3rd – 5th grade intervention and control schools responded “almost never” or “once in awhile” worrying about violence (i.e., 56% at West Broadway). With regard to gender, 65% of Rhode Island and 54% of Providence female 3rd – 5th graders responded favorably. Girls at West Broadway responded similarly to 3rd – 5th grade female students statewide, with almost two-thirds of girls at West Broadway reporting that they did not worry about violence in school.



Among 6th – 12th graders, 67% in Rhode Island and 54% in Providence reported worrying about violence “almost never” or “once in awhile.” Fifty-five percent of students in West Broadway responded favorably, which is similar to the Providence Public School District. However, a lower percentage of youth in Nathan Bishop, Esek Hopkins, and DelSesto middle school students responded favorably (49%, 44%, and 43%, respectively). With regard to gender, 65% of Rhode Island and 54% of Providence 6th – 12th grade girls responded favorably. Girls at Nathan Bishop and West Broadway responded similarly to girls in the Providence Public School District (52% and 50%, respectively), however girls in Esek Hopkins (40%) and in DelSesto (42%) responded less favorably.



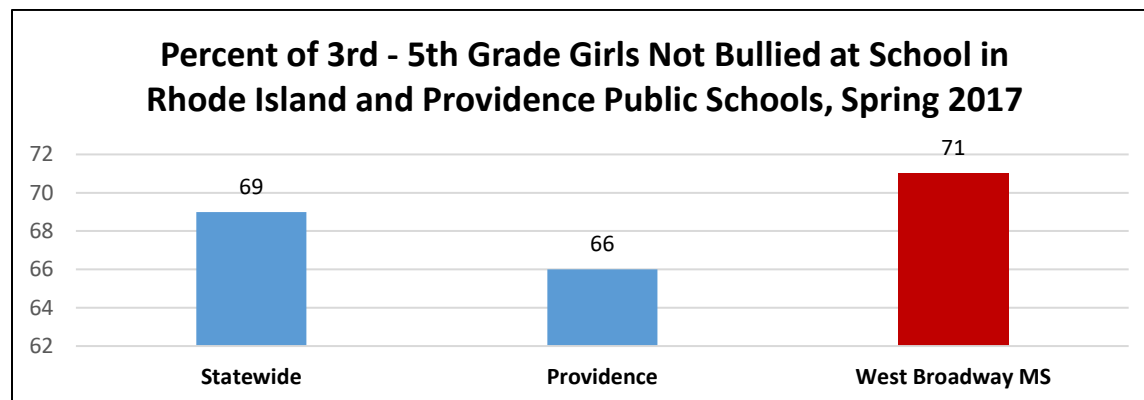
Student Suspension Rate: This is an indicator of the number of suspensions per 100 students during the 2014 – 2015 academic year. These data are from the Rhode Island Department of Education (37). Suspension is associated with lower student achievement, being behind grade level, and high dropout rates (38). The suspension rates at DelSesto Middle School and Nathan Bishop Middle School were higher than both the statewide and Providence Public School District suspension rates. For example, the suspension rate at DelSesto Middle School was 117.7 per 100 students compared to the statewide suspension rate of 32.2 per 100 students and the Providence Public School District suspension rate of



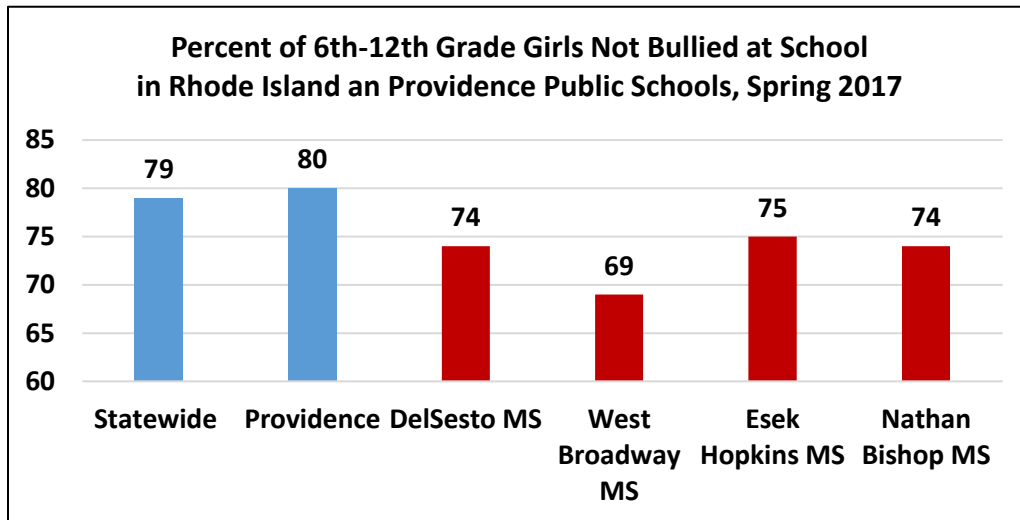
67.7 per 100 students. In the schools with available data on gender differences in suspension rate, in the 2014-2015 school year, 112 per 100 girls were suspended from DelSesto Middle school while the suspension rate statewide was 22 per 100 girls. During the 2016 - 2017 academic year, racial/ethnic minority students made up 41% of the student population, but received 53% of all disciplinary actions (39). Regarding gender, a 2015 report by the Rhode Island American Civil Liberties Union noted that Black and Hispanic females were more likely to be suspended compared to White females (7.62% and 5.99% compared to 2.10%) (40). To provide additional context, a Black female was 3.98 times more likely to be suspended than a White female (40). *Note:* In 2016, the Rhode Island General Assembly passed a law restricting out-of-school suspension and also required school districts to identify racial, ethnic, or special education disparities in suspensions and to develop a plan to reduce these disparities (39). As such, we expect that there will be significant declines in suspension rates. For instance, during the 2015 – 2016 school year, out-of-school-suspensions decreased by 14% (39).

INTERPERSONAL FACTORS

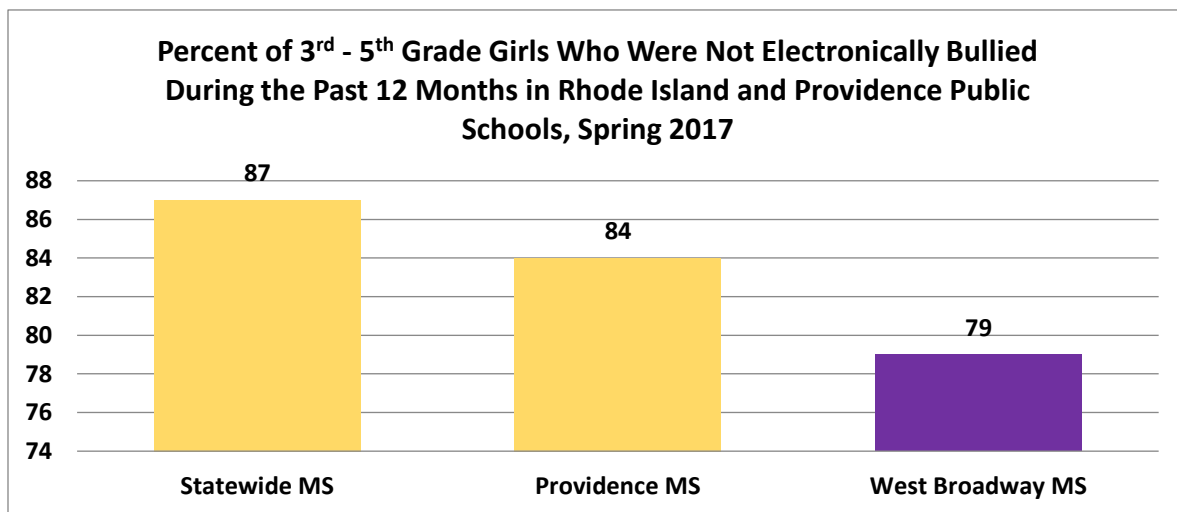
Bullying: This indicator measures the percentage of students who reported that they were not bullied on school property during the past 12 months. Data for this indicator were obtained from the Rhode Island Department of Education Spring 2017 SurveyWorks (36). Being bullied is associated with chronic absenteeism, lower student achievement, high school dropout, poverty, and poor mental health (34, 41, 42). Among 3rd – 5th grade girls, 69% in Rhode Island, 66% in Providence, and 71% at West Broadway had not been bullied on school property.



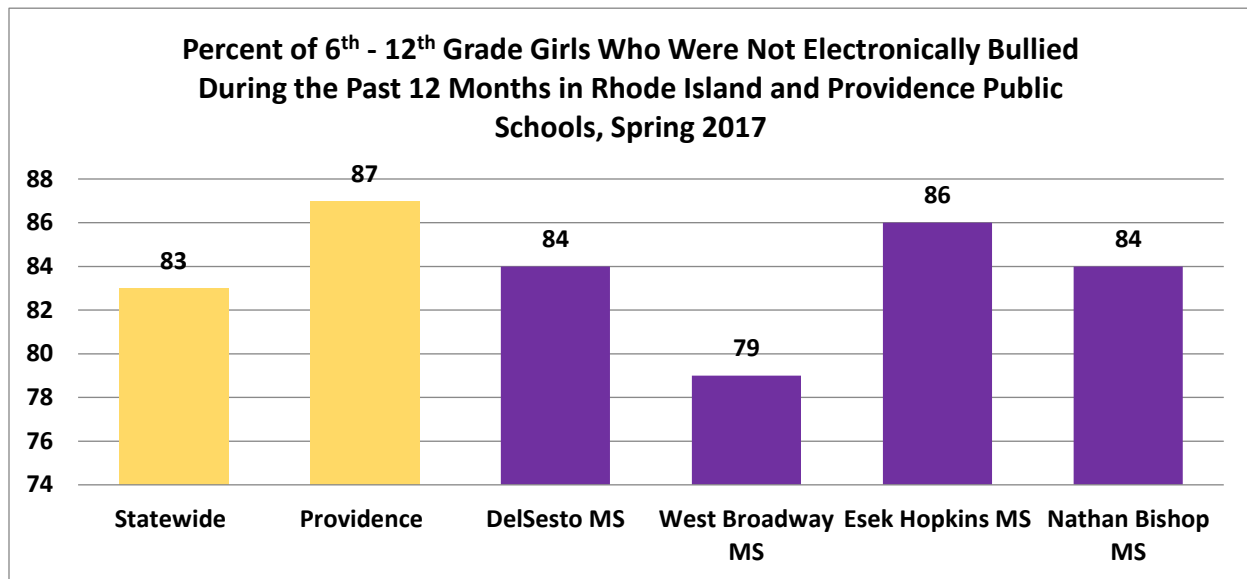
Among 6th – 12th grade girls, 79% in Rhode Island, 80% in Providence, 75% at Esek, 74% at Nathan Bishop, 74% at DelSesto, and 69% at West Broadway had not been bullied on school property.



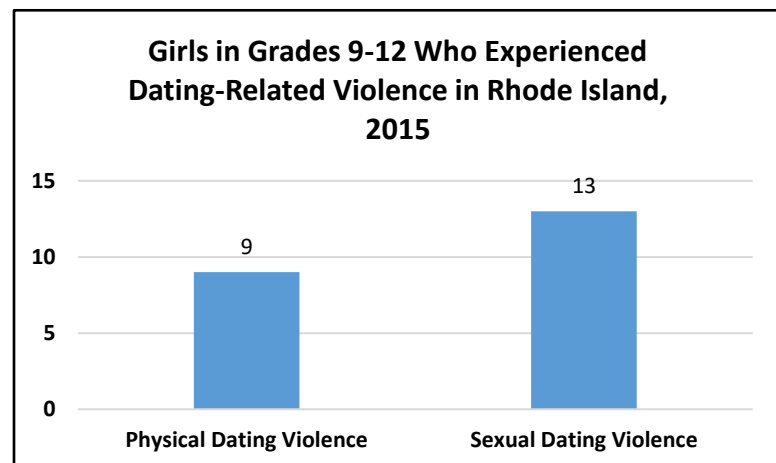
Electronic Bullying: This indicator measures the sum of the percentages of students who reported that they were not electronically bullied on school property during the past 12 months. Electronically bullying includes being bullied through e-mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, websites, or texting. Being bullied is associated with chronic absenteeism, lower student achievement, high school dropout, poverty, and poor mental health (34, 41, 42). These data are from the Rhode Island Department of Education Spring 2017 SurveyWorks [35]. Among 3rd – 5th grade girls, 87% in Rhode Island, 84% in Providence, and 74% at West Broadway were not electronically bullied on school property during the past 12 months.



Among 6th – 12th grade girls, 83% in Rhode Island, 87% in Providence, 84% at DelSesto, 79% at West Broadway, 86% at Esek Hopkins, and 84% at Nathan Bishop were not electronically bullied on school property during the past 12 months.



Dating Violence: This is an indicator of the percentage of girls in grades 9 – 12 who reported that they experienced dating-related violence in 2015. These data were obtained from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (43) and the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services Office of Adolescent Health (44). Teen dating violence is associated with suicidal ideation, substance use, injury, and death (45). In Rhode Island, 9% of females in grades 9 – 12 reported that they were victims of physical dating violence, 13% reported that they were victims of sexual dating violence (43, 44).



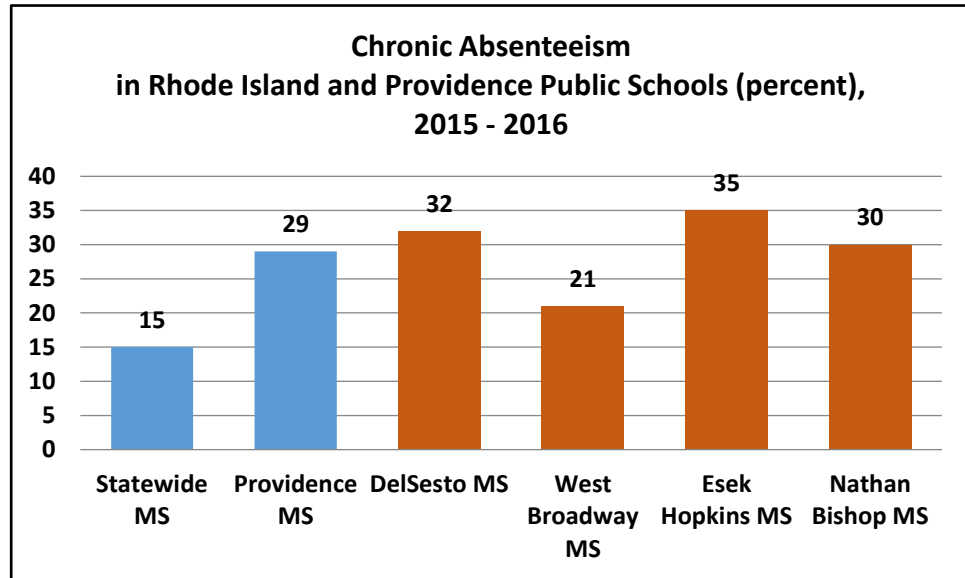
Dating violence data were also obtained from the Rhode Island Department of Education SurveyWorks Spring 2017 survey (36). Among 6 – 12th grade girls, 92% statewide, 86% in Providence, 87% at Esek Hopkins, 87% at Nathan Bishop, 87% at West Broadway, and 80% at DelSesto reported that someone who they were dating did not physically hurt them on purpose.

INDIVIDUAL LEVEL FACTORS

Student Attendance and Achievement Outcomes

Chronic Absenteeism: This indicator measures the percentage of middle school students who missed 10% or more school days during the year. These data are from the Rhode Island Department of Education (46).

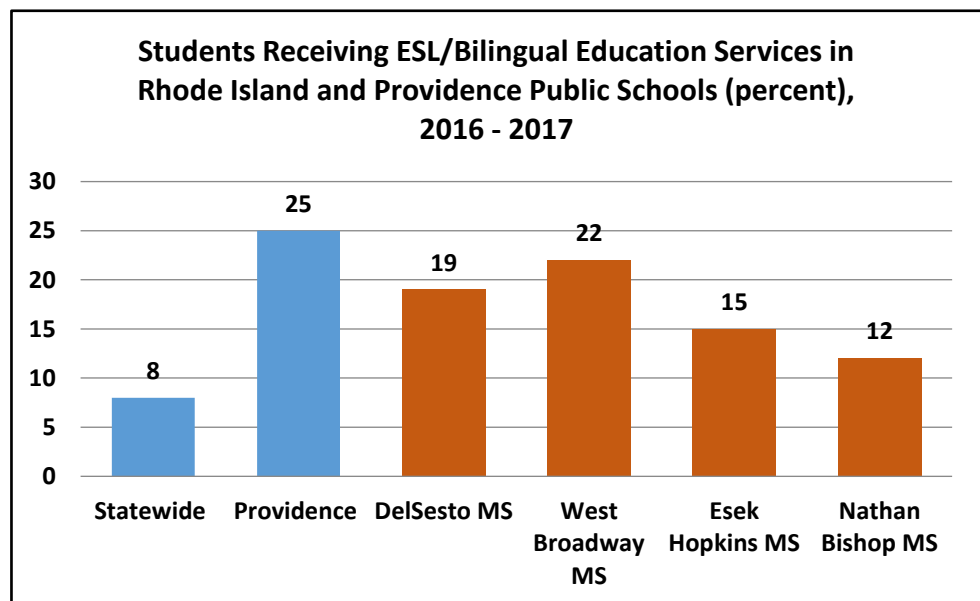
Students who are frequently absent from school miss critical academic and social learning opportunities and are at risk of disengagement from school, academic failure, and dropping out (6, 9, 38, 47, 48). Some of the family and economic factors connected to student



absenteeism include poverty, lack of access to health care, substance abuse, domestic violence, foster care placement, student employment, student disability, and lack of affordable or reliable transportation (48). Some of the school factors contributing to chronic absence include school climate, school size, attitudes of school staff, and discipline policies (48). During the 2015 - 2016 academic year, students at DelSesto and Esek Hopkins Middle Schools were over two times more likely to be chronically absent than middle school students statewide. For example, compared to 15% of students statewide, 35% of students at Esek Hopkins and 32% of students at DelSesto were chronically absent.

English as Second Language (ESL)/Bilingual Education:

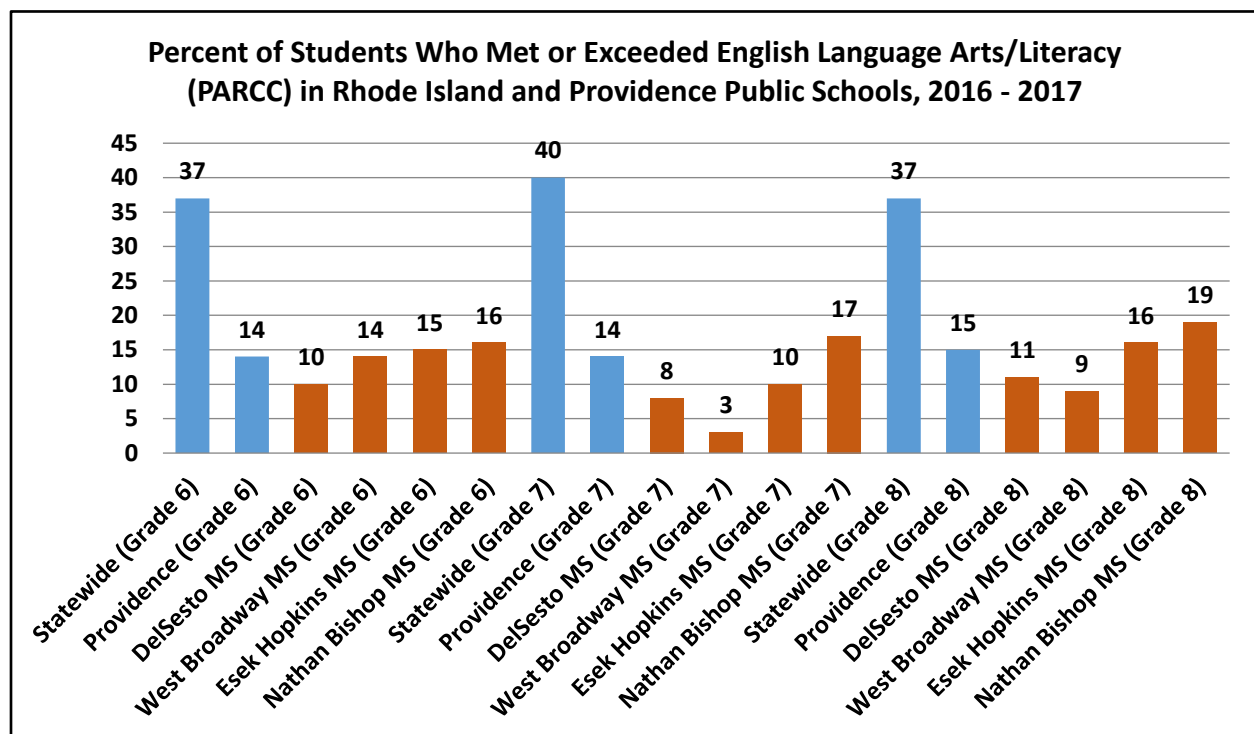
This is an indicator of the percentage of students receiving ESL/Bilingual Education during the 2016 - 2017 academic year. These data are from the Rhode Island Department of Education (27). Compared to other students, English Language Learner students are more



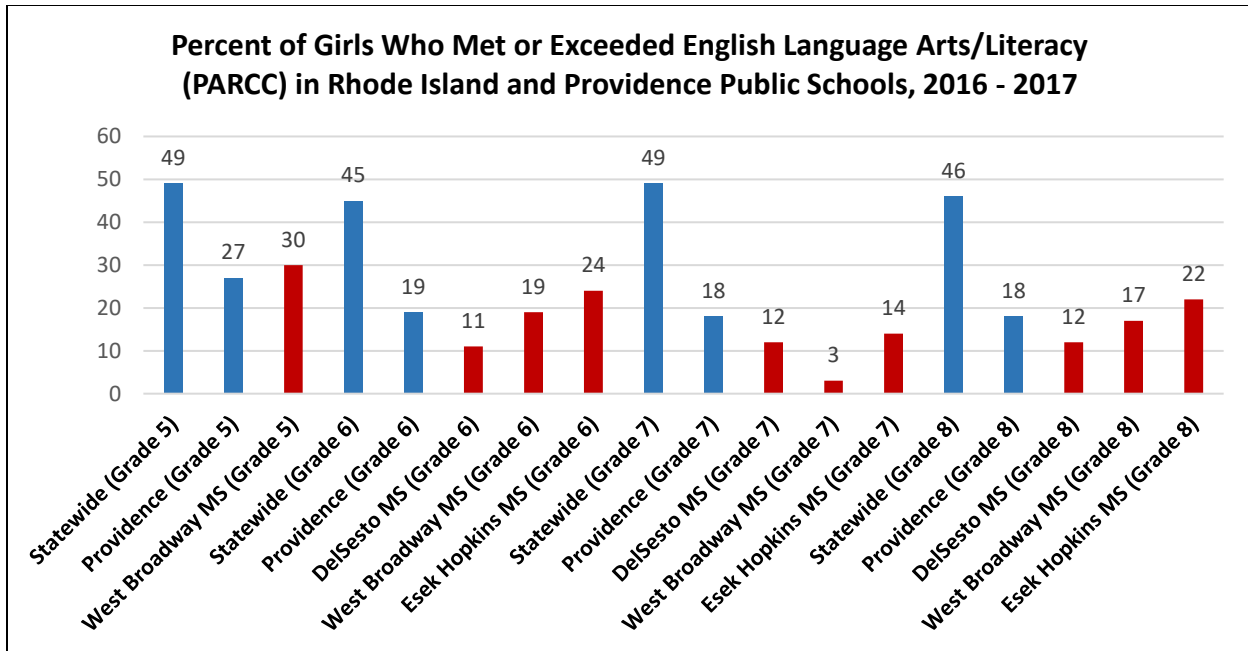
likely to dropout of high school as a result of limited English proficiency, lower socioeconomic

position and cultural factors (47, 49). Statewide, 8% of students were English Language Learners while in Providence, 25% of students were English Language Learners. West Broadway Middle School students received ESL/Bilingual Education services comparable to the percentage of students receiving these services in the Providence Public School District (22% and 25% respectively). At the remaining intervention and control schools, 12% to 19% of students received ESL/Bilingual Education services.

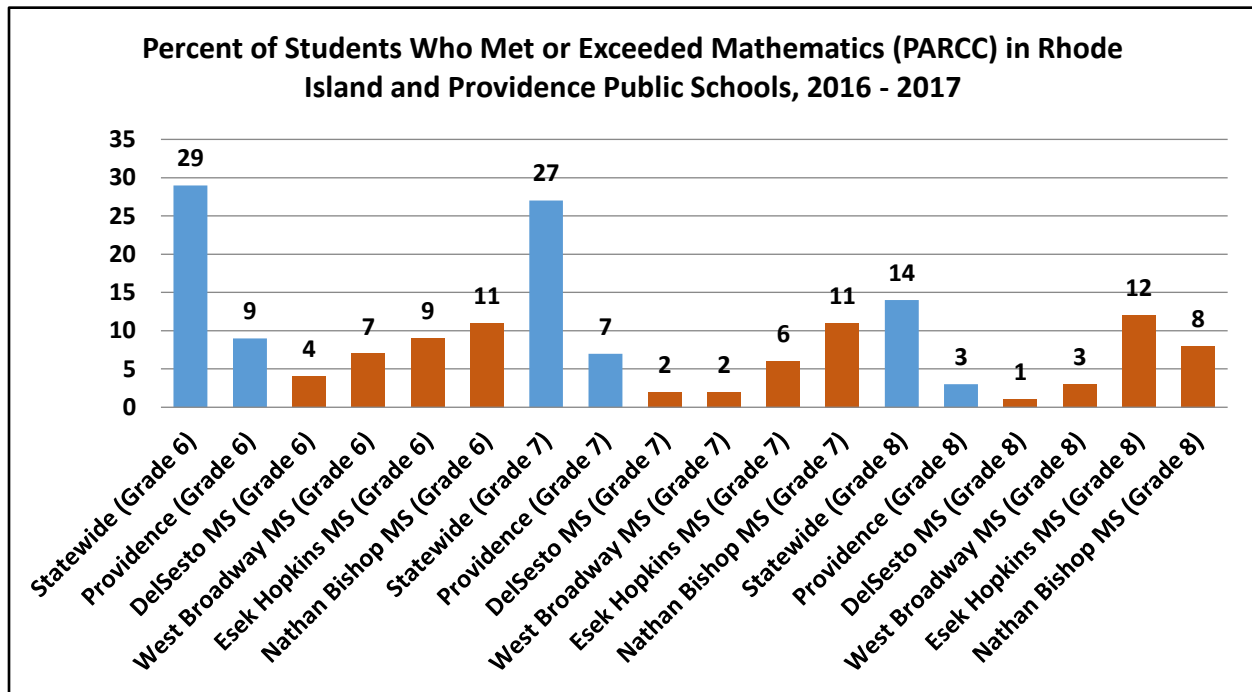
English Language Arts/Literacy: This indicator is a measure of the percentage of students who met or exceeded English Language Arts/Literacy for Grades 6 through 8 during the 2016 – 2017 academic year. These data are from the Rhode Island Department of Education Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) consortium of states (50). Student academic outcomes, especially ninth-grade academic outcomes, are strongly associated with a student’s likelihood of graduating or dropping out of high school (51). Across all schools and grade levels, DelSesto, West Broadway, Esek Hopkins, and Nathan Bishop Middle School students had lower levels of English Language Arts/Literacy relative to statewide estimates. For example, in Grade 6, 10% of students at DelSesto Middle School met or exceeded English Language Arts/Literacy compared to 37% of Grade 6 students statewide who met or exceeded expectations.



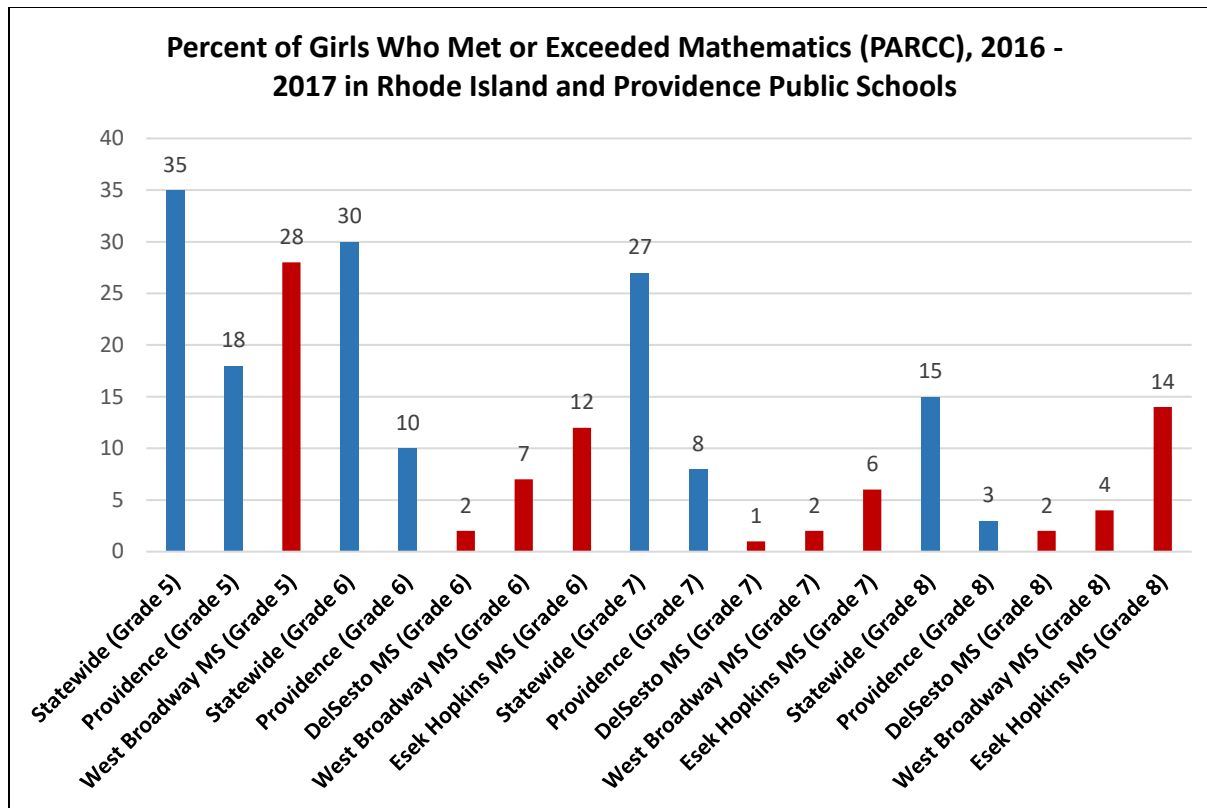
When examined by gender, across all schools and grade levels, DelSesto, West Broadway, Esek Hopkins, and Nathan Bishop middle school girls had lower levels of English Language Arts/Literacy relative to statewide estimates. For example, in 6th grade, 45% of girls statewide met or exceeded English Language Arts/Literacy relative to 19% in Providence, 19% at West Broadway, 24% at Esek, 24% at Nathan Bishop, and 11% at DelSesto, respectively.



Mathematics: This indicator is a measure of mathematics readiness for Grades 6 through 8 during the 2016 – 2017 academic year. These data are from the Rhode Island Department of Education Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) consortium of states (50). Student academic outcomes, especially ninth-grade academic outcomes, are strongly associated with a student’s likelihood of graduating or dropping out of high school (51). Across all schools and grade levels, DelSesto Middle School, West Broadway Middle School, Esek Hopkins Middle School, and Nathan Bishop Middle School had lower levels of mathematics readiness relative to middle school students statewide. For example, in Grade 6, 4% of students at DelSesto Middle School met mathematics readiness benchmarks compared to 29% of students statewide who met or exceeded expectations.



When examined by gender, across all schools and grade levels, DelSesto, West Broadway, Esek Hopkins, and Nathan Bishop middle school girls had lower levels of Mathematics readiness relative to statewide estimates. For example, in 6th grade, 30% of girls statewide met or exceeded Mathematics standards relative to 10% in Providence, 2% at DelSesto, 7% at West Broadway, and 12% at Esek Hopkins, respectively. It should be noted, however, that a larger percentage of 6th grade girls at Esek Hopkins met or exceeded mathematics standards than 6th grade girls in Providence overall. When compared to 8th grade girls statewide, a similar percentage of girls at Esek Hopkins met or exceeded mathematics standards (i.e., 15% and 14%, respectively).

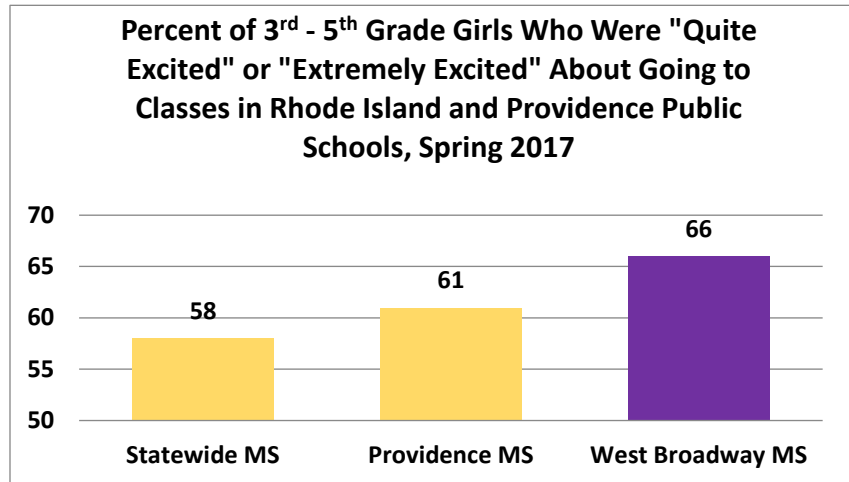


Student School-Related Engagement, Learning Strategies, and Self-Confidence

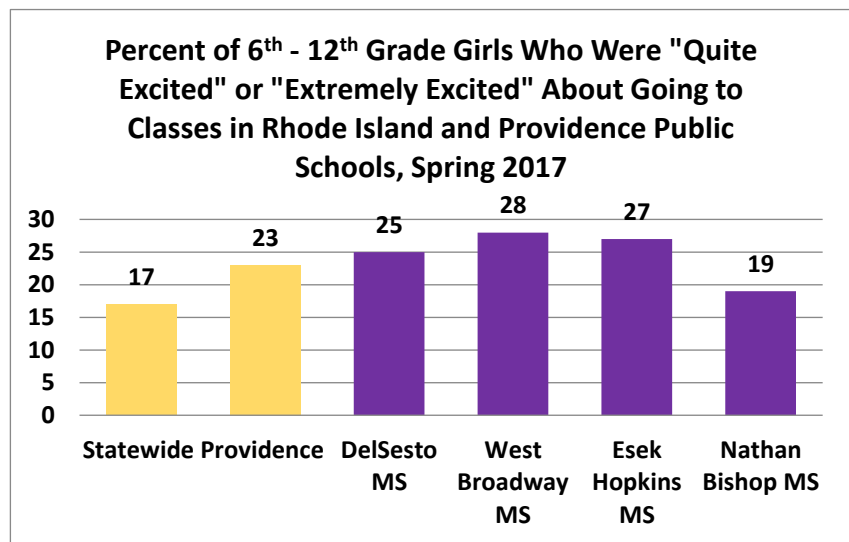
School engagement is a multi-dimensional construct related to “students’ feelings, behaviors, and thoughts about their school experience” (52). Higher school engagement is associated positively with achievement and high school completion (52).

Excited about Going to Classes: This indicator measures the sum of the percentages of girls who reported that they were “quite excited” or “extremely excited” about going to classes. These data are from the Rhode Island Department of Education Spring 2017 SurveyWorks [35].

Among 3rd – 5th grade girls, compared to their counterparts statewide and in Providence, more girls at West Broadway were “quite excited” or “extremely excited” about going to classes. The percentages were, 58% in Rhode Island, 61% in Providence, and 66% at West Broadway, respectively.

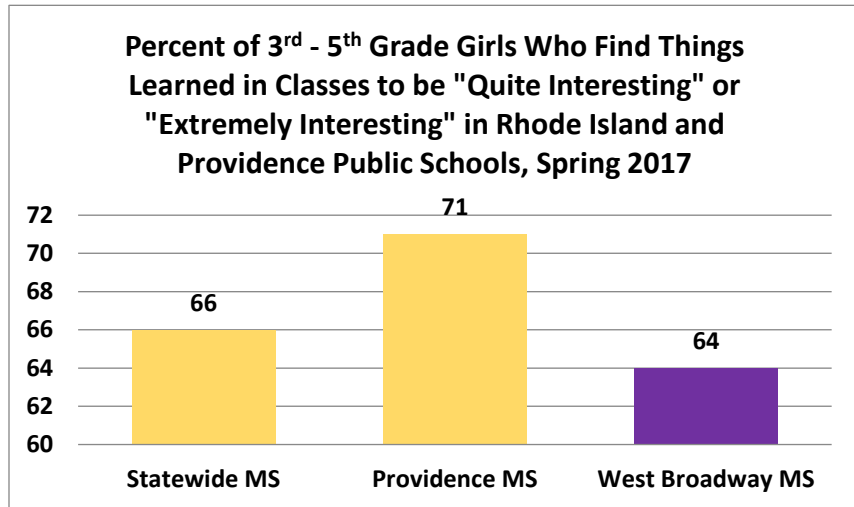


Among 6th – 12th grade girls, 17% in Rhode Island, 23% in Providence, 25% at DelSesto, 28% at West Broadway, 27% at Esek Hopkins, and 19% at Nathan Bishop were “quite excited” or “extremely excited” about going to classes. Thus, a higher percentage of girls at most of the intervention and control schools, were excited about school compared to their counterparts statewide and in Providence.

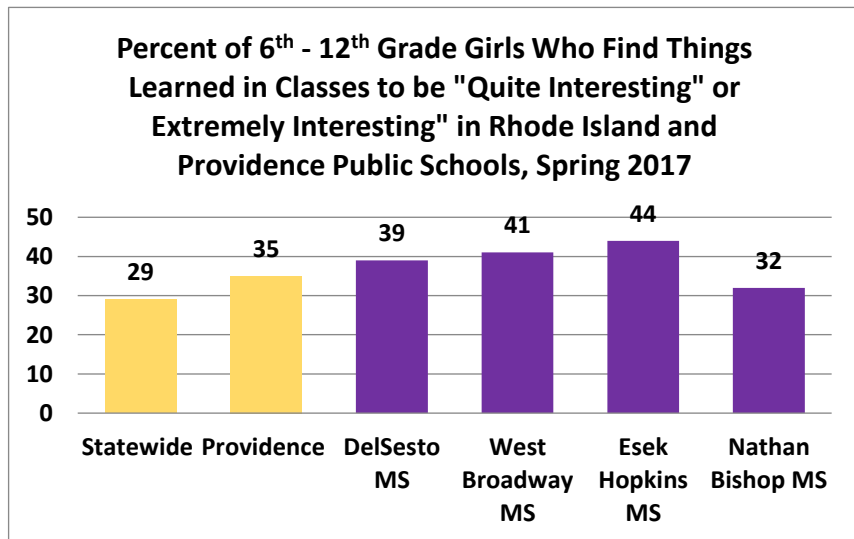


Class Learning: This indicator measures the sum of the percentages of students who reported that they found things learned in classes to be “quite interesting” or “extremely interesting”. These data are from the Rhode Island Department of Education Spring 2017 SurveyWorks [35].

Among 3rd – 5th grade girls, 66% in Rhode Island, 71% in Providence, and 64% at West Broadway found things learned in classes to be “quite interesting” or “extremely interesting”.

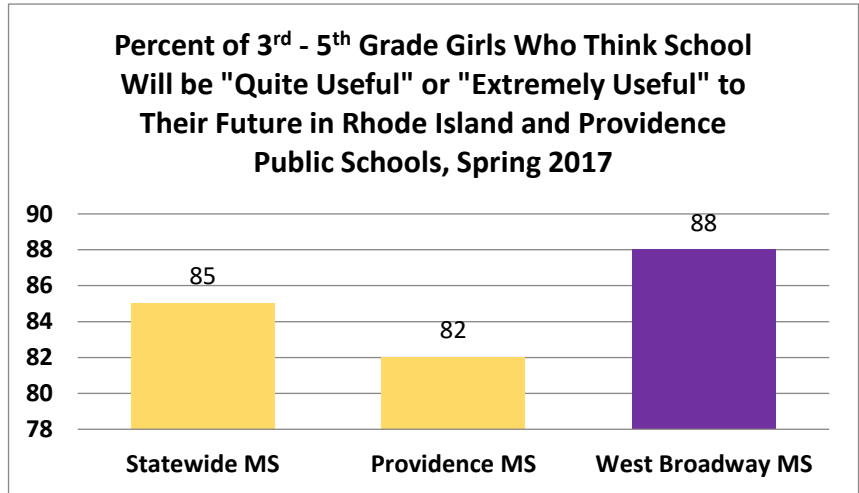


Among 6th – 12th grade girls, 29% in Rhode Island, 35% in Providence, 39% at DelSesto, 41% at West Broadway, 44% at Esek Hopkins, and 32% at Nathan Bishop found things learned in classes to be “quite interesting” or “extremely interesting”.

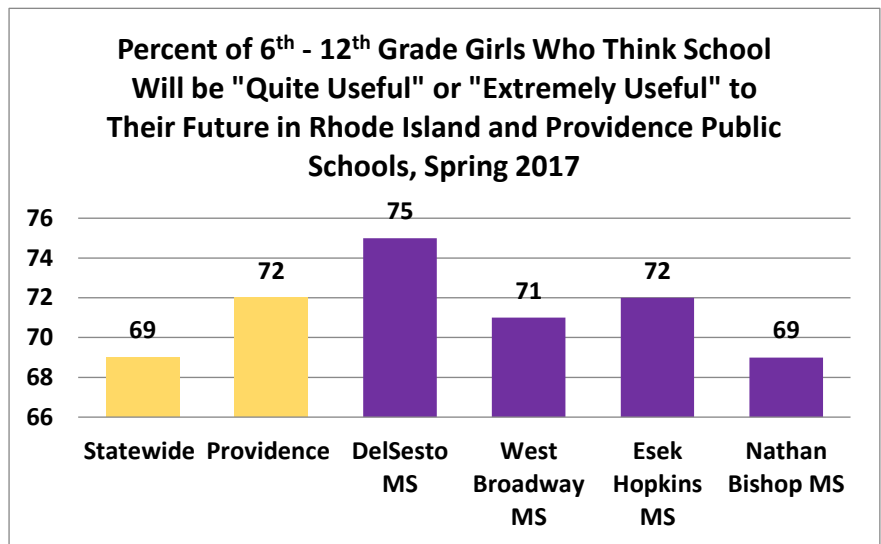


Usefulness of School: This indicator measures the sum of the percentages of students who reported that they thought that school would be “quite useful” or “extremely useful” to their future. These data are from the Rhode Island Department of Education Spring 2017 SurveyWorks [35].

Among 3rd – 5th grade girls, 85% in Rhode Island, 82% in Providence, and 88% at West Broadway thought that school would be “quite useful” or “extremely useful” to their future.



Among 6th – 12th grade girls, 69% in Rhode Island, 72% in Providence, 75% at DelSesto, 71% at West Broadway, 72% at Esek Hopkins, and 69% at Nathan Bishop thought that school would be “quite useful” or “extremely useful” to their future.

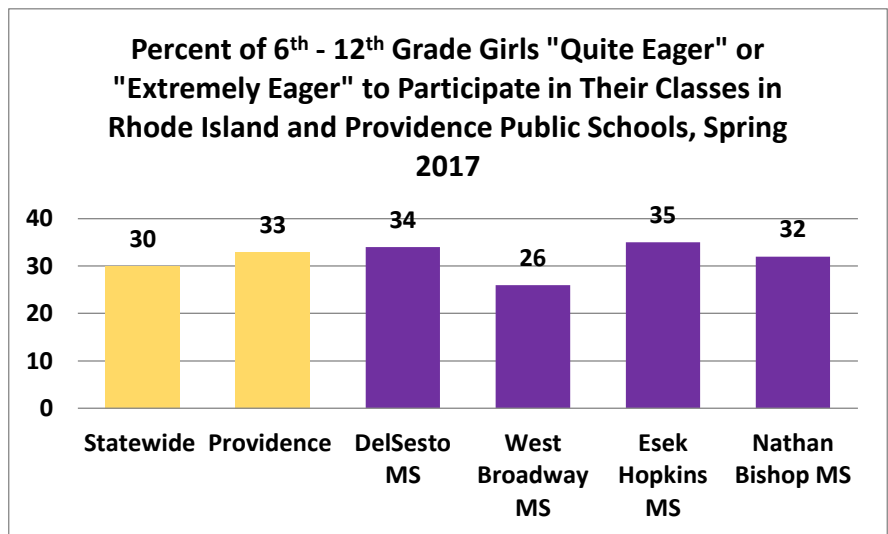
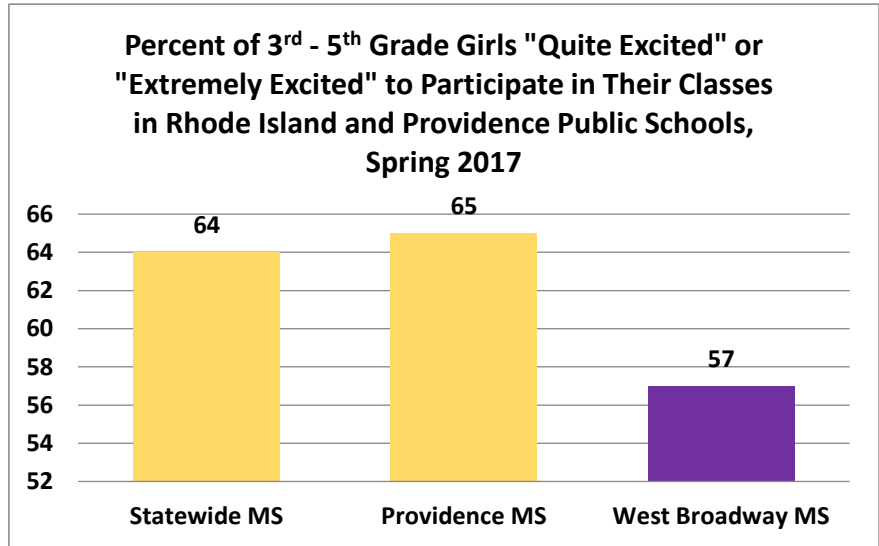


Excited to Participate in

Classes: This indicator measures the sum of the percentages of students who reported that they were “quite excited” or “extremely excited” to participate in their classes. These data are from the Rhode Island Department of Education Spring 2017 SurveyWorks [35].

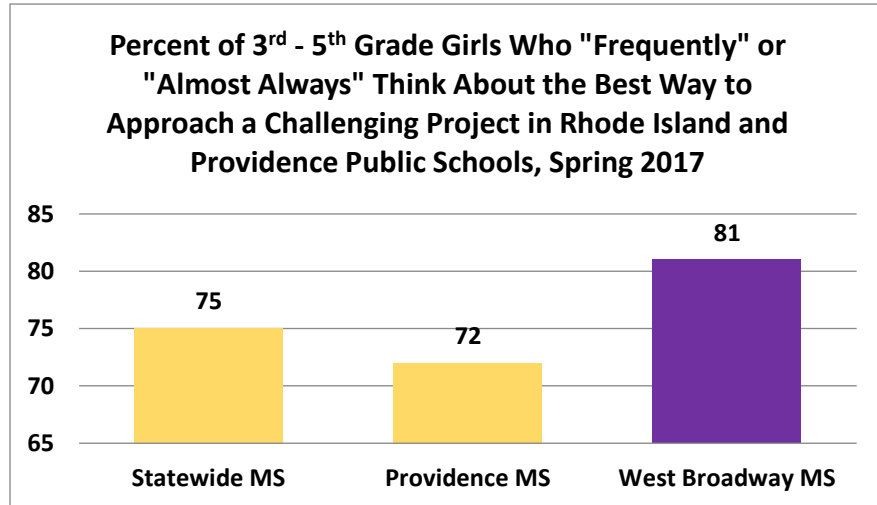
Among 3rd – 5th grade girls, 64% in Rhode Island, 65% in Providence, and 57% at West Broadway were “quite excited” or “extremely excited” to participate in their classes.

For 6th to 12th graders, respondents were asked how eager they were to participate in classes. This results depict the sum of the percentages of girls who reported that they were “quite eager” or “extremely eager.” Thirty percent in Rhode Island, 33% in Providence, 34% at DelSesto, 26% at West Broadway, 35% at Esek Hopkins, and 32% at Nathan Bishop were “quite eager” or “extremely eager” to participate in their classes.

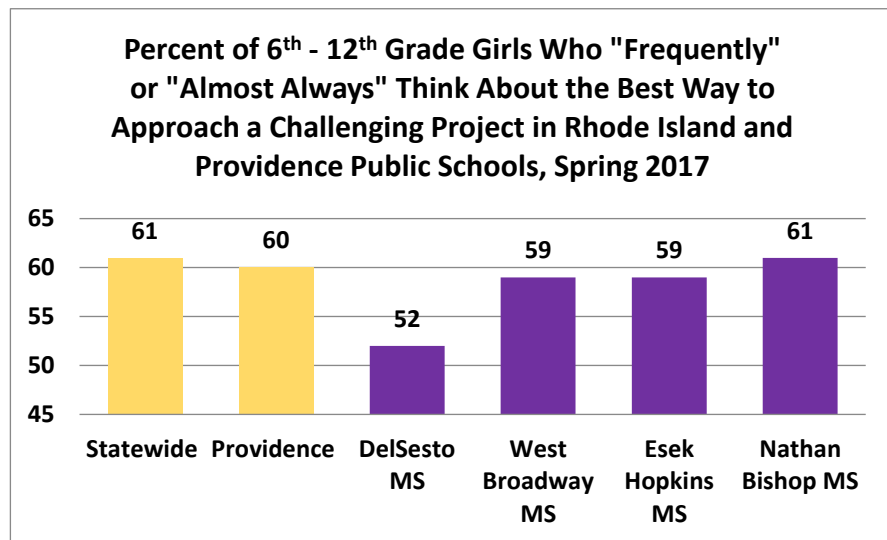


Thought about how to Approach a Challenge: This indicator measures the sum of the percentages of students who reported that they “frequently” or “almost always” thought about the best way to approach a challenging project before starting it. These data are from the Rhode Island Department of Education Spring 2017 SurveyWorks [35].

Among 3rd – 5th grade girls, 75% in Rhode Island, 72% in Providence, and 81% at West Broadway “frequently” or “almost always” thought about the best way to approach a challenging project before starting it.

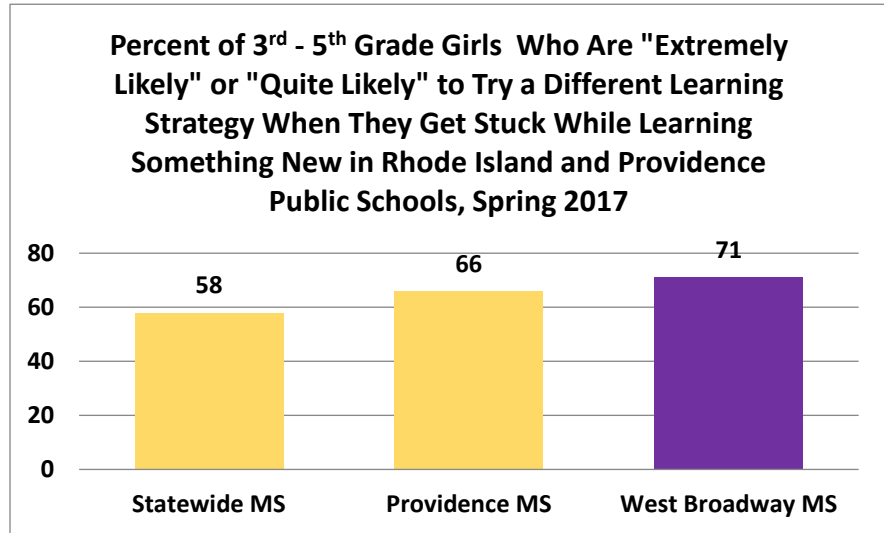


Among 6th – 12th grade girls, 61% in Rhode Island, 60% in Providence, 52% at DelSesto, 59% at West Broadway, 59% at Esek Hopkins, and 61% at Nathan Bishop “frequently” or “almost always” thought about the best way to approach a challenging project before starting it.

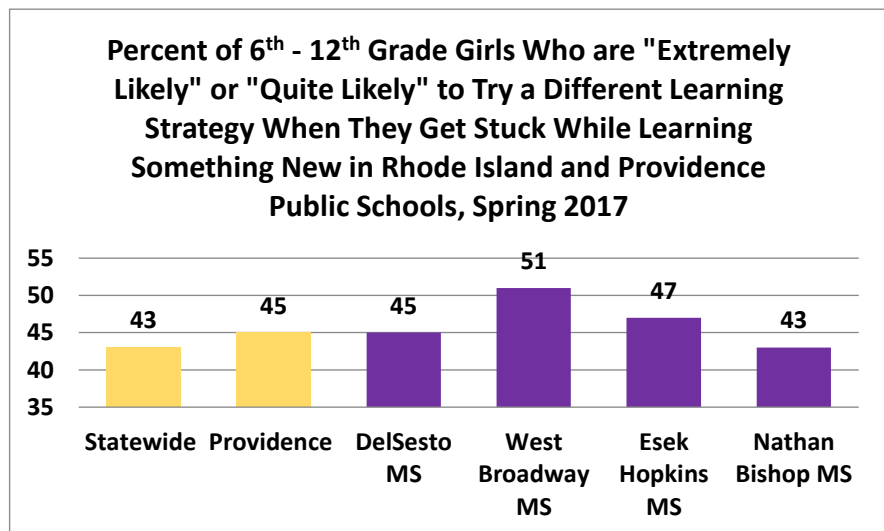


Try Different Learning Strategies: This indicator measures the sum of the percentages of students who reported that they were “extremely likely” or “quite likely” to try a different strategy when they get stuck while learning something new. These data are from the Rhode Island Department of Education Spring 2017 SurveyWorks [35].

Among 3rd – 5th grade girls, 58% in Rhode Island were “extremely likely” or “quite likely” learn things a different way when they get stuck learning something new. Larger percentages of girls in Providence and West Broadway were more likely try different learning strategies than girls statewide. For instance, 66% in Providence, and 71% at West Broadway were “extremely likely” or “quite likely” learn things a different way when they get stuck learning something new.

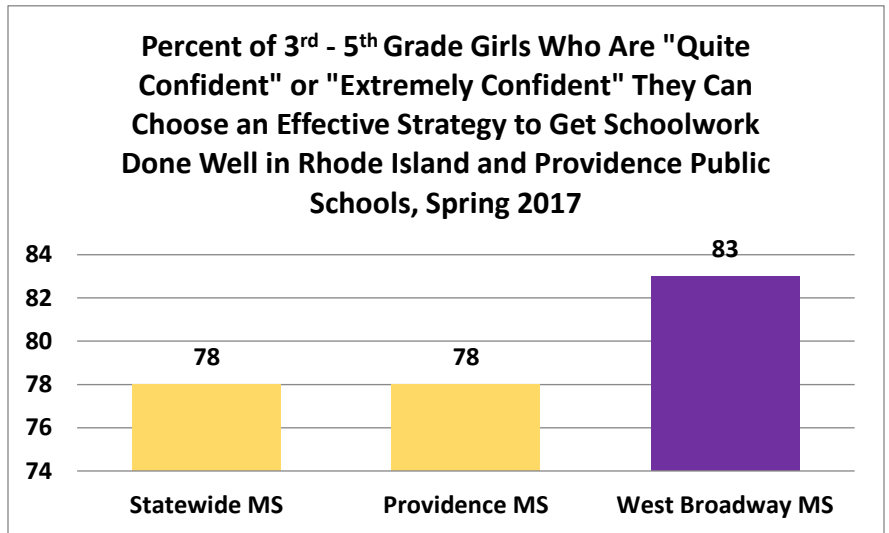


Among 6th – 12th grade girls, 43% in Rhode Island, 45% in Providence, 45% at DelSesto, 51% at West Broadway, 47% at Esek Hopkins, and 43% at Nathan Bishop were “extremely likely” or “quite likely” to learn things a different way when they get stuck learning something new.

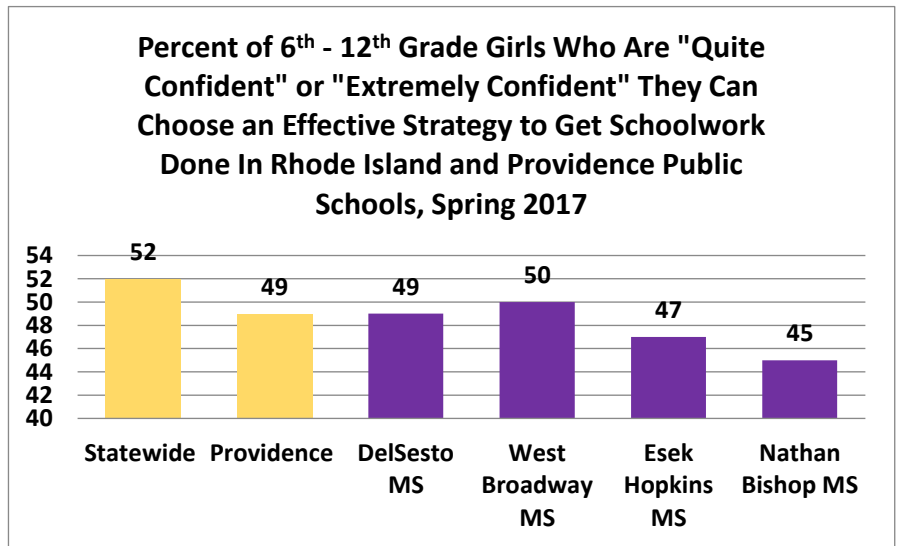


Self-Confidence in Completing Schoolwork: This indicator measures the sum of the percentages of students who reported that they were “quite confident” or “extremely confident” that they could choose an effective strategy to get schoolwork done well. These data are from the Rhode Island Department of Education Spring 2017 SurveyWorks [35].

Among 3rd – 5th grade girls, a larger percentage at West Broadway responded favorably than did girls statewide or in Providence. More specifically, 78% in Rhode Island, 78% in Providence, and 83% at West Broadway are “quite confident” or “extremely confident” they can choose an effective strategy to get schoolwork done well.



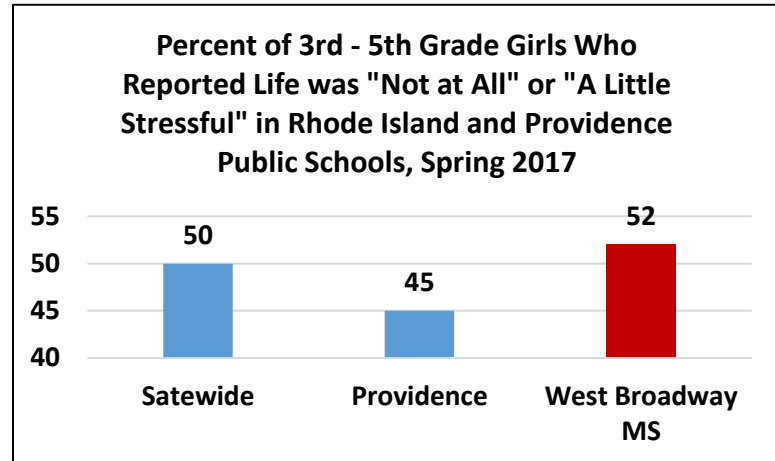
Among 6th – 12th grade girls, 52% in Rhode Island, 49% in Providence, 49% at DelSesto, 50% at West Broadway, 47% at Esek Hopkins, and 45% at Nathan Bishop are “quite confident” or “extremely confident” they can choose an effective strategy to get schoolwork done well.



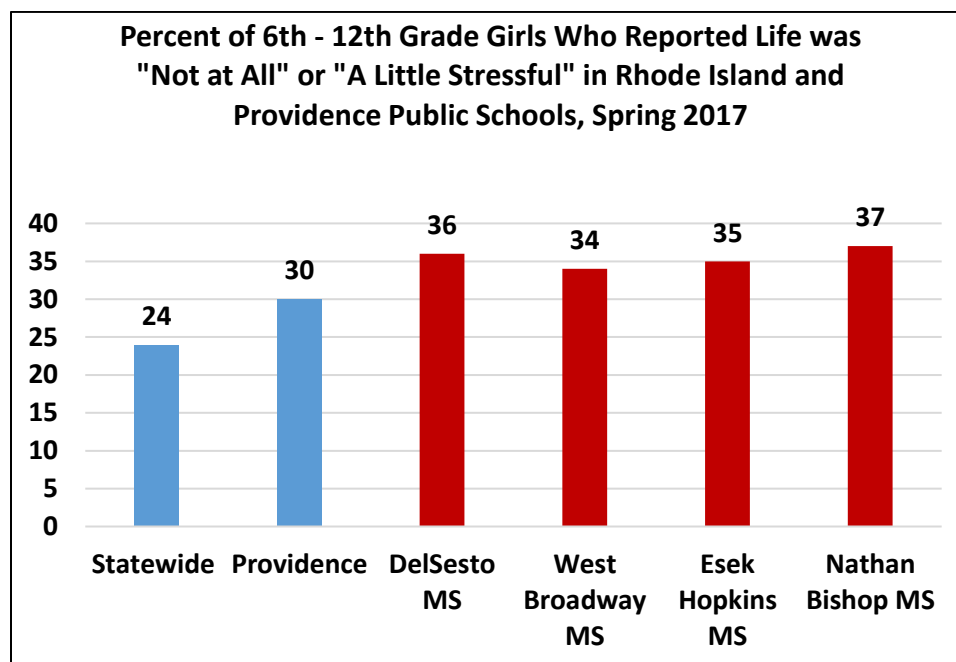
Mental Health

Life stress: This indicator measures the sum of the percentages of students who reported that life was “not at all stressful” or “slightly stressful”. These data were collected through the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education SurveyWorks Spring 2017 (36).

Among 3rd – 5th graders, 51% in Rhode Island, 46% in Providence, and 47% at West Broadway responded that life was “not at all” or “slightly stressful.” With regard to gender, 50% of girls in Rhode Island, 45% of girls in Providence, and 52% girls at West Broadway responded this way.

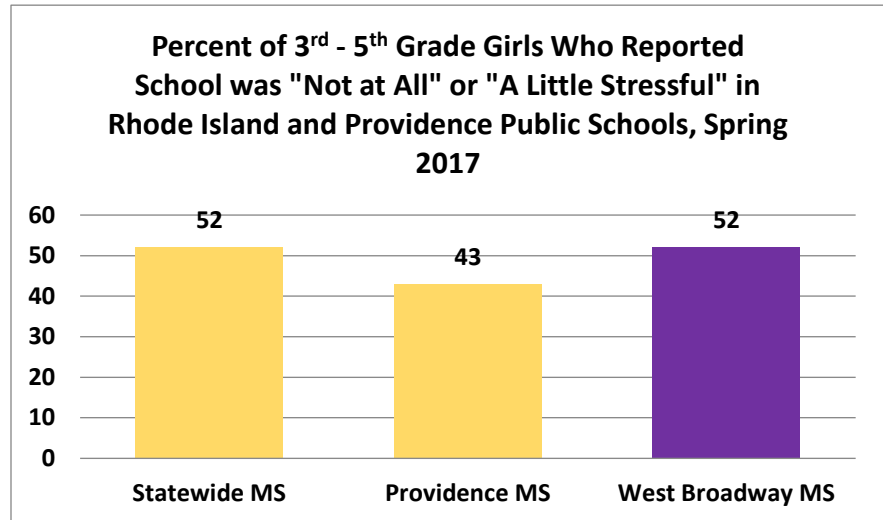


Among students in grades 6 – 12, 32% in Rhode Island, and 35% in Providence responded favorably. Among intervention and control school students, relative to statewide and Providence district reports, larger percentages of students reported that life was “not at all” or “a little” stressful (i.e., 41% at DelSesto, 40% at Nathan Bishop, 39% at West Broadway, and 38% at Esek Hopkins). With regard to gender, 24% of girls in Rhode Island and 30% of girls in Providence responded favorably. Among the intervention and controls schools, 36% of girls in DelSesto, 37% of girls in Nathan Bishop, 34% of girls at West Broadway, and 35% at Esek Hopkins responded that life was “not at all stressful” or “slightly stressful.”

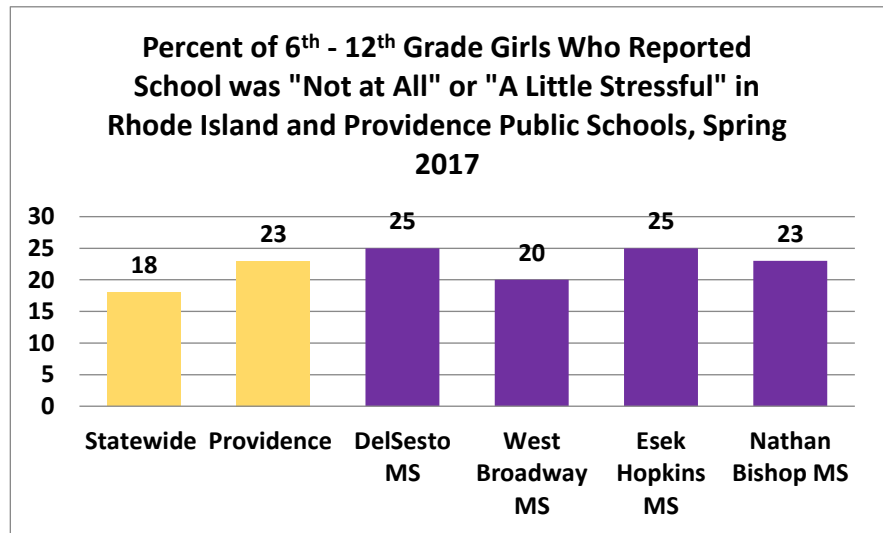


School stress: This indicator measures the sum of the percentages of students who reported that school was “not at all stressful” or “slightly stressful” in the spring of 2017. These data are from the Rhode Island Department of Education Spring 2017 SurveyWorks [35]. School-related stress during adolescence is associated with worse academic performance during high school (53).

Among 3rd – 5th grade girls, 52% in Rhode Island, 43% in Providence, and 52% at West Broadway responded that school was “not at all stressful” or “slightly stressful.”



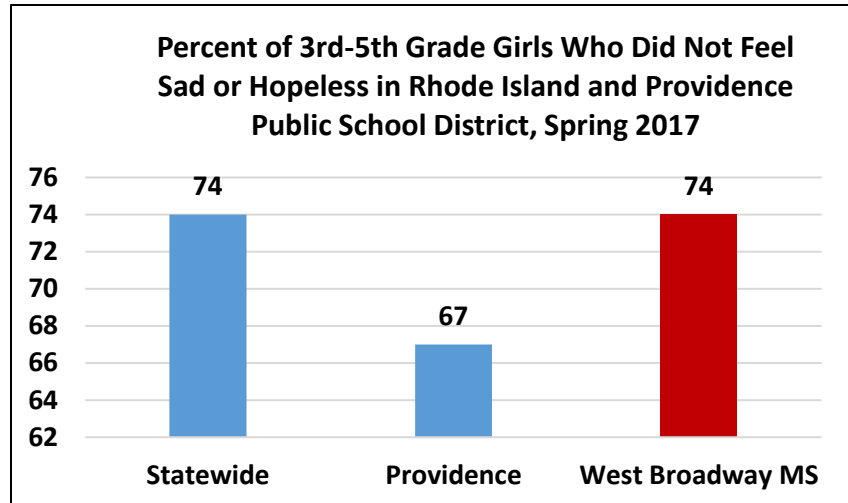
Among 6th – 12th grade girls, 18% in Rhode Island, 23% in Providence, 25% at DelSesto, 20% at West Broadway, 25% at Esek Hopkins, and 23% at Nathan Bishop responded that school was “not at all stressful” or “slightly stressful.”



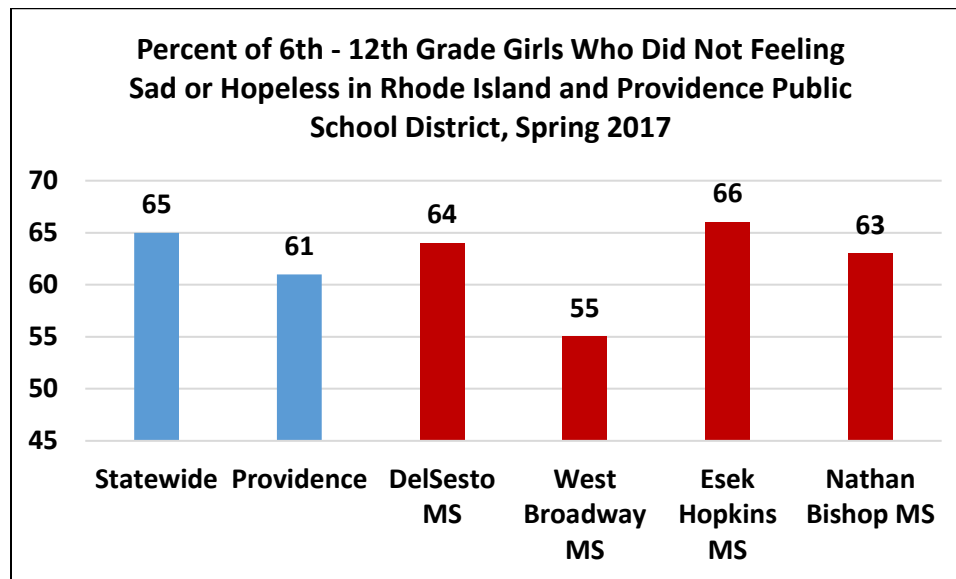
Feeling Sad or Hopeless:

This indicator measures the percentage of students who reported that they did not feel sad or hopeless almost every day for two or more weeks in a row during the past 12 months, which resulted in them stopping some of their usual activities. These data were collected through the SurveyWorks Spring 2017 (36). Feeling sad or hopeless is a symptom of depression (54). The U.S. Preventive

Services Task Force identifies that depression in childhood and adolescence is associated with depression in adulthood, other mental disorders, suicidal ideation, as well as negative associations with healthy childhood development, social development, and work and school performance (55). Among 3rd – 5th grade female students, 74% in Rhode Island, 67% in Providence, and 74% at West Broadway responded that they did not feel sad or hopeless.

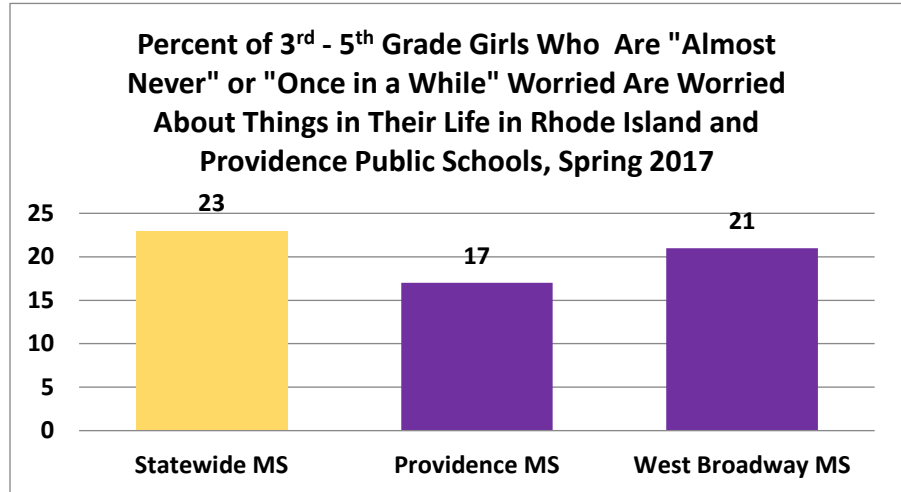


Among 6th – 12th grade females, 65% in Rhode Island, 61% in Providence, 64% in DelSesto, 66% at Esek Hopkins, 63% at Nathan Bishop, and 55% at West Broadway responded that they did not feel this way.

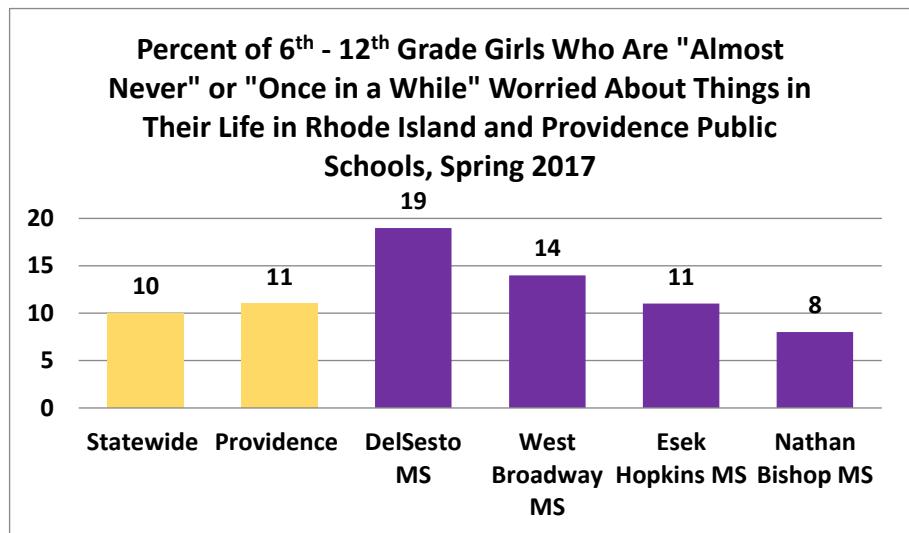


Worrying about Things in Life: This indicator measures the sum of the percentages of students who reported that they were “almost never” or “once in a while” worried about things in their life. These data are from the Rhode Island Department of Education Spring 2017 SurveyWorks [35].

Among 3rd – 5th grade girls, 23% in Rhode Island, 17% in Providence, and 21% at West Broadway were “almost never” or “once in a while” worried about things in their life.



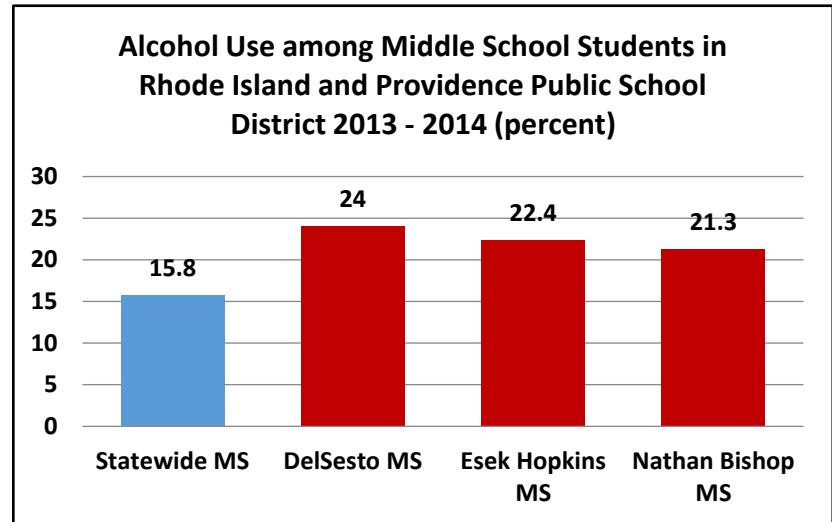
Among 6th – 12th grade girls, 10% in Rhode Island, 11% in Providence, 19% at DelSesto, 14% at West Broadway, 11% at Esek Hopkins, and 8% at Nathan Bishop were “almost never” or “once in a while” worried about things in their life.



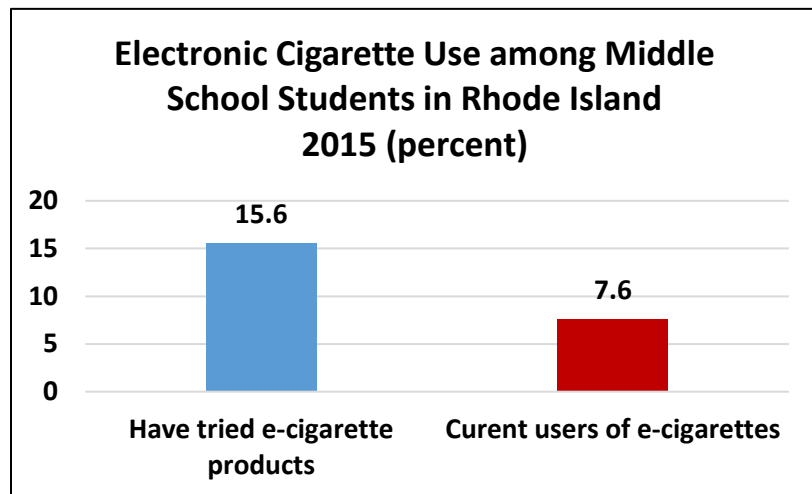
Alcohol and Drug Use

Alcohol Use: This indicator measures the percentage of students who consumed alcohol during the 2013 – 2014 academic year. These data were obtained from the Rhode Island Department of Education (56). Consuming alcohol can make youth more vulnerable to unintended pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, violence, and other negative outcomes, including sexual victimization (57). Students at DelSesto Middle School, Esek Hopkins Middle School, and Nathan Bishop Middle School

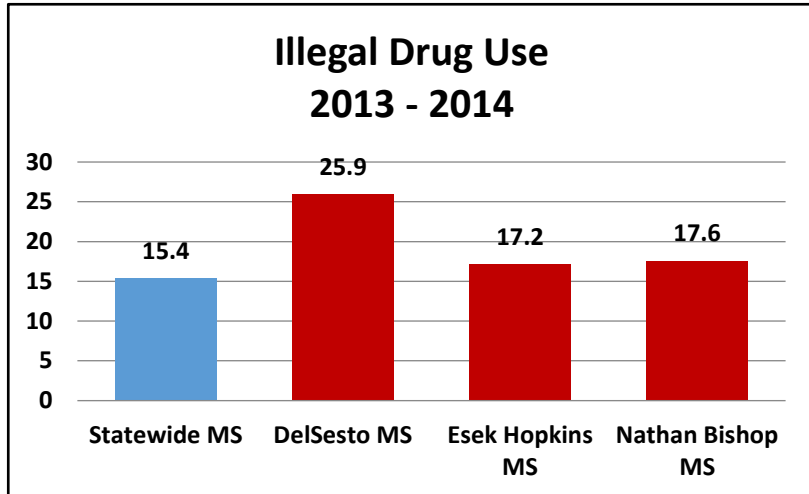
consumed more alcohol than their counterparts statewide. For example, 24% of DelSesto Middle School students consumed alcohol compared to 15.8% of middle school students statewide. (Data on alcohol use was not available for West Broadway Middle School). Data from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey indicates that in 2015, 16.4% of middle school students reported that they had ever drunk alcohol (43). These data were unavailable by gender.



Electronic Cigarette Use: This is an indicator of the percentage of students who tried an electronic cigarette product. These data were obtained from the 2015 Youth Risk Behavior Survey results for Rhode Island Middle School Students (43). Among middle school students, 15.6% had tried an electronic cigarette product and 7.6% were current users of e-cigarettes. These data were unavailable by gender.

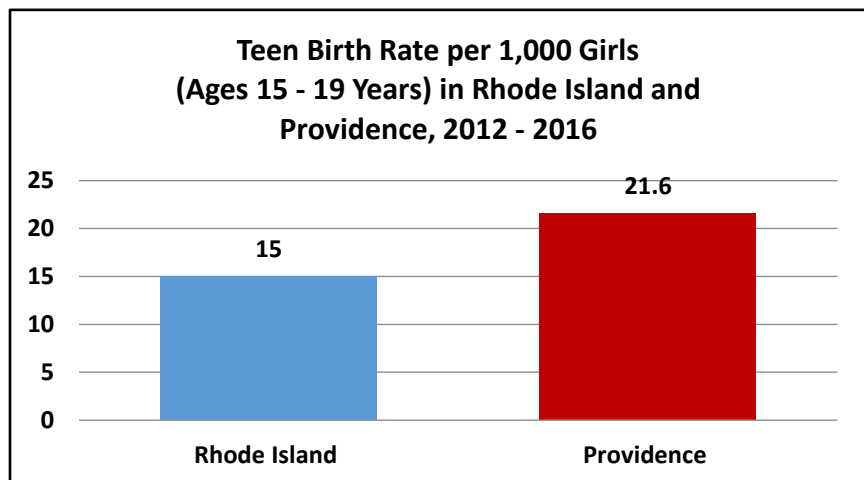


Illegal Drug Use: This indicator measures the sum of the percentages of students who reported trying illegal drugs (i.e., marijuana, prescription drugs without a doctor's prescription, inhalants, and other illegal drugs) during the 2013 – 2014 academic year (56). Consuming drugs can make youth more vulnerable to adverse educational and health outcomes (58, 59). At DelSesto, Esek Hopkins, and Nathan Bishop Middle Schools, students were more likely than their peers in Rhode Island to ever take an illegal drug (25.9%, 17.2%, 17.6% vs. 15.4%). (Data on illegal drug use was not available for West Broadway Middle School).



Teen Pregnancy

Births to Teens: This indicator measures the rate of births per 1,000 girls ages 15 to 19 years. These data were obtained from the Rhode Island KIDS COUNT Factbooks (39, 60). Teenage motherhood is associated with lower educational attainment, lower earnings, and poverty and other negative consequences for teenage mother and their children (61). In Rhode Island and in Providence, teenage birth rates declined sharply between 2012 – 2016 compared to 2002 – 2006. During 2012 – 2016, 15 per 1,000 girls statewide gave birth while in Providence, the rate was 21.6 per 1000 girls (62). Also, teen birth rates among racial/ethnic minority females declined from 2011 – 2015 rates (39, 60). However, rates for some racial and ethnic minority girls remain higher than Rhode Island and Providence rates. When disaggregated by race and ethnicity, data from 2012 – 2016 indicate that the teen birth rates were 37.9 per 1,000 for Hispanic, 24.9 per 1,000 for Black, 9.4 per 1,000 for White, and 8.3 per 1,000 for Asian girls, respectively (39).

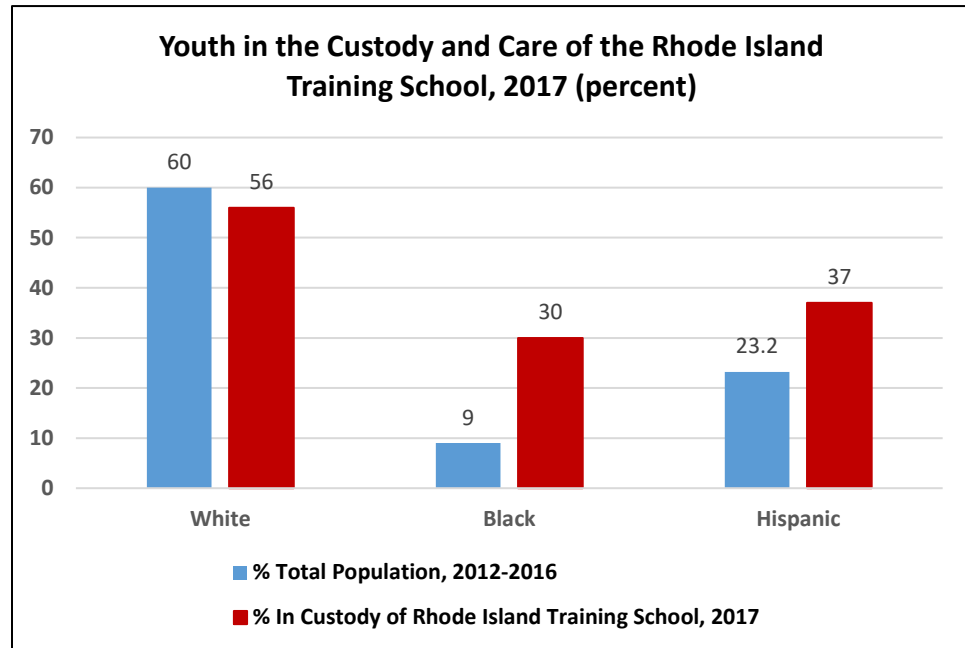


Youth Incarceration-Related Factors

Youth Detention: This is an indicator of the percentage of youth age 18 or under who were in the custody or care of the Rhode Island Training School. These data were obtained from the Rhode Island KIDS COUNT Factbooks (63). The percentage of children in the care or custody of the Rhode Island Training School has declined. In 2008, the RI General Assembly capped the number of detained and adjudicated youth at the training school to a maximum of 148 boys and 12 girls (64). In 2015, 470 children were in the care or custody of the training school, 24%

of these children were female (65).

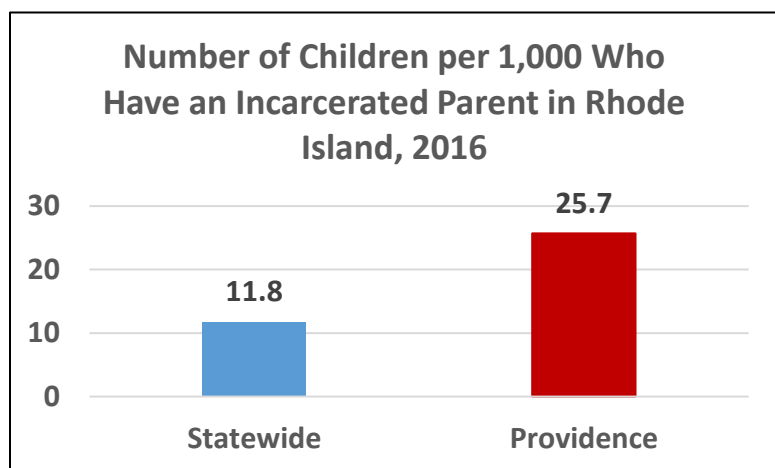
Racial and ethnic minority youth are disproportionately represented at every stage of the juvenile justice system. According to the 2018 Rhode Island KIDS COUNT Factbook, racial and ethnic minority “youth are more likely to be arrested, be formally charged in court, are more likely to be placed in secure detention, and also receive harsher



treatment than white youth” (63). Although Hispanic youth represented 23.2% of the total child population under age 18 (American Community Survey 2012 – 2016, Five-Year Estimates), in 2017 they accounted for 37% of youth in the custody or care of the Rhode Island Training School (63). The disparity appeared to be even greater for Black youth. While Black youth represented 9% of the total child population under age 18 (American Community Survey 2012 – 2016, Five-Year Estimates), in 2017 they accounted for 30% of youth in the custody or care of the Rhode Island Training School (63). Among White youth, the proportion of youth detained in the custody of the Rhode Island Training School was lower than their percentage in the total population (56% in custody or care in 2017 (63) compared with 60% of the total child population under age 18 (American Community Survey 2012 – 2016, Five-Year Estimates). In 2017, approximately 40% of children ages 13-18 in the custody or care of the Rhode Island Training School were from Providence (39).

Rate of Youth with an Incarcerated Parent:

This indicator presents the rate of children per 1,000 with incarcerated parents in 2016. These data were obtained from the Rhode Island KIDS COUNT Issue Brief (66). Providence youth were more likely to have an incarcerated parent (25.7 per 1,000 children) than their counterparts throughout the state (11.8 per 1,000 children). Statewide, Black or African American youth disproportionately felt the burden of having an incarcerated parent (85.1 per 1,000 children) compared to all other racial and ethnic groups (34.7 per 1,000 for Native



American, 23.6 per 1000 for Hispanic, 10.5 per 1,000 for white, and 4.2 per 1,000 for Asian, respectively) (66).

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