Information to Action: Leveraging Accountability & Reporting Systems to Promote Recovery

Laura Pinsonneault

Center for Assessment

September 2022

Reidy Interactive Lecture Series

Center for Assessment

Requirements

- States must produce federal accountability designations for 2021-22.
- These requirements exist alongside a national desire to understand the educational impact of the pandemic.
- And yet, data availability has been compromised.

…and Opportunities?

As states move beyond turning at least federal accountability systems back "on", how can these systems, as well as "little a" accountability, best inform and direct supports to accelerate learning?

Outline

1. Accountability Context
2. Principles
3. State Perspective

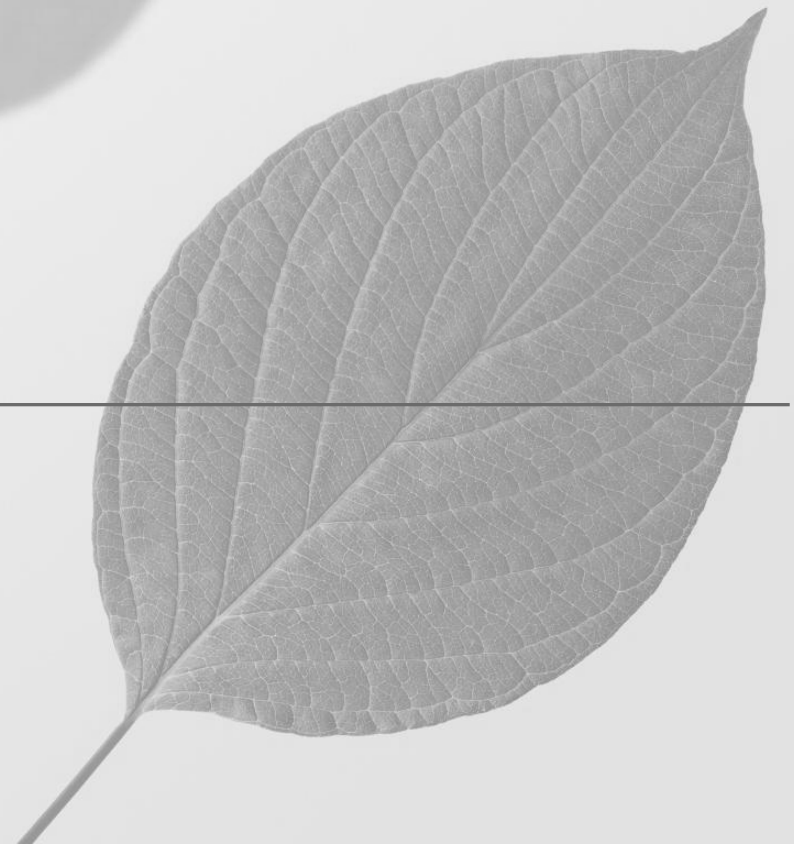
States experience different challenges as they restart ESSA accountability in 2022.

- States seek to **understand the impact of COVID-19** on their educational systems.
- Understanding is **complicated by compromised data** and varied data availability.
- States seek to inform and situate their own accountability system and reporting systems by and within the national landscape.

Center for Assessment

Accountability Context

Current Challenges & Why They Matter



A survey was distributed widely to better understand education agency accountability plans.

Center for Assessment

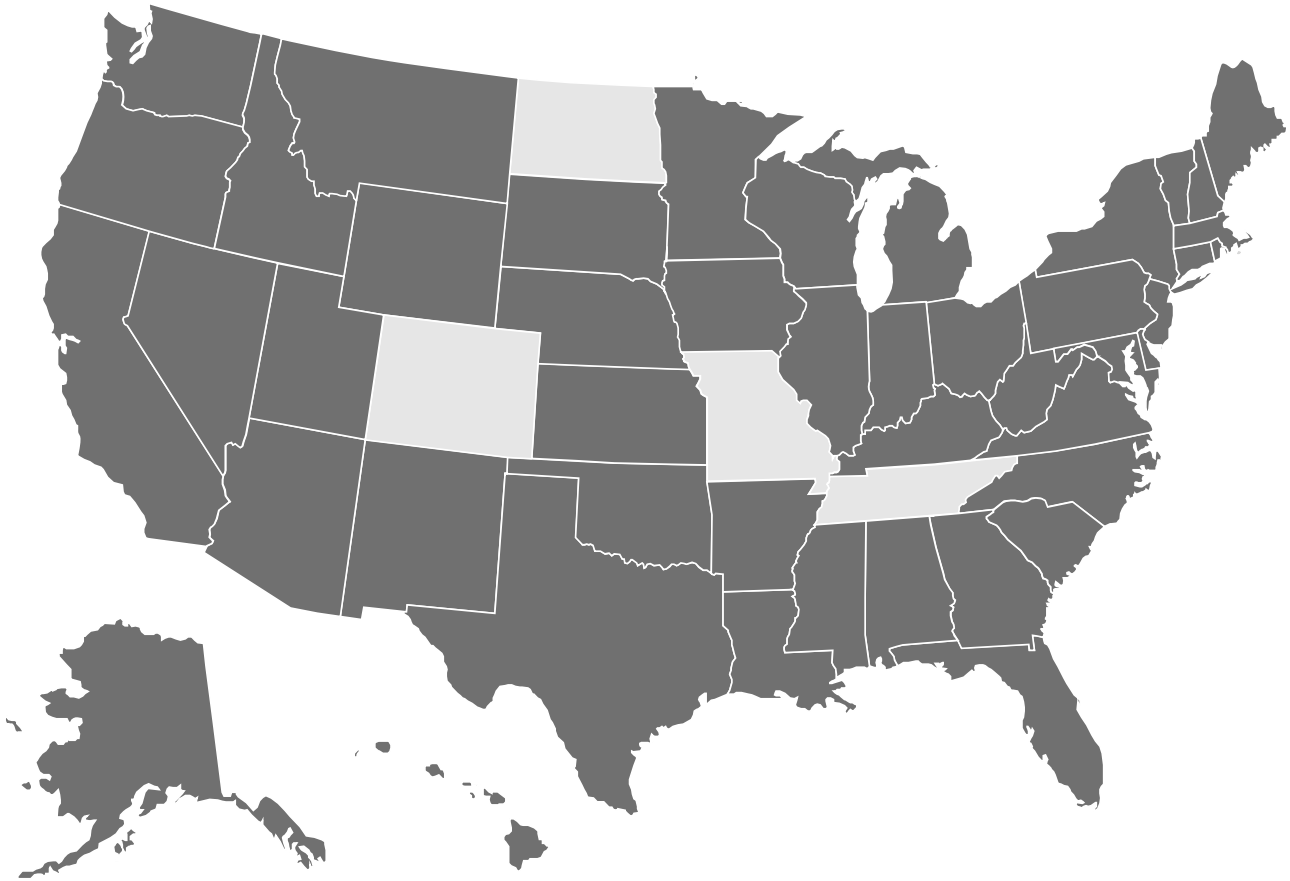
50 states + DC

Seven other agencies

American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, Puerto Rico, Bureau of Indian Education, Department of Defense Education Activity, Virgin Islands

52 total respondents

47 states
5 other agencies



Relevant Results

Center for Assessment

01 **Test participation was lower overall in 2020-21** and varied by district and student group.

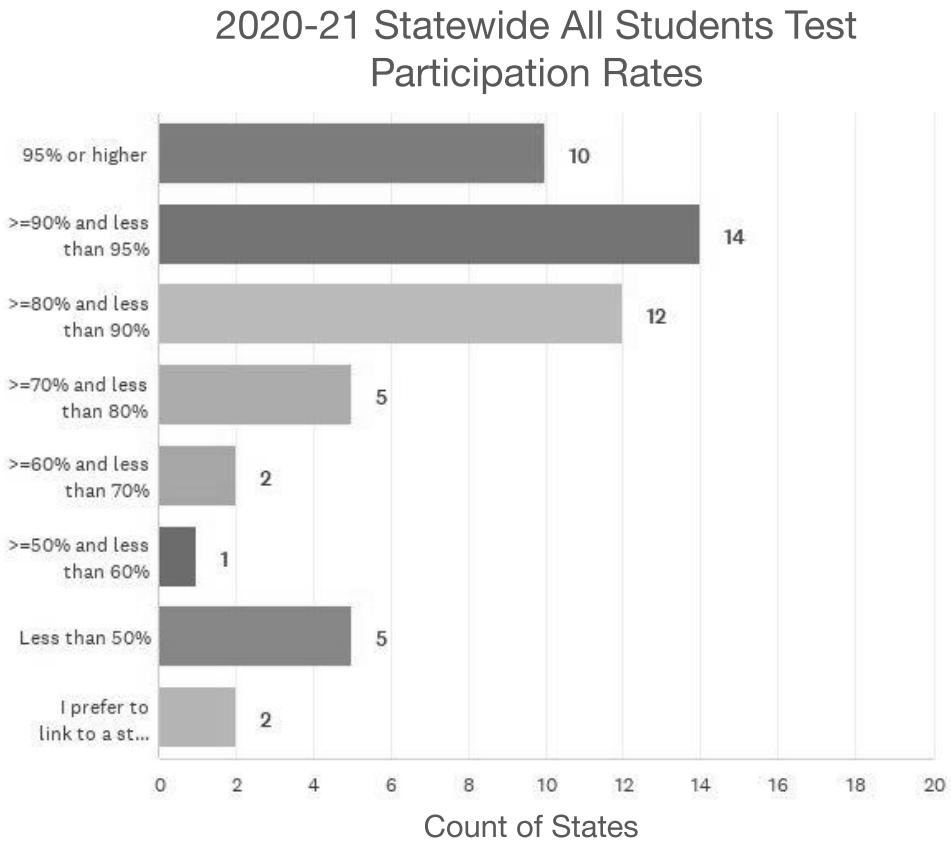
02 **Attendance rates were lower in 2019-20 and 2020-21**, and states are concerned about attendance data quality.

03 **Graduation rates in 2020-21 were less impacted** by COVID, but states have adjusted graduation requirements.

04 Most schools provided **consistent in-person instruction** in 2021-22, but there were **still disruptions.**

Test participation varied greatly in 2021, and many states had low overall participation.

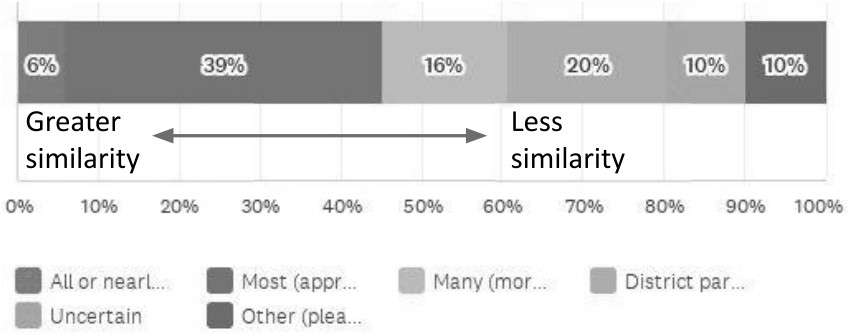
- Statewide participation rates were less than 80% in 26% of states.
- Only 20% of states had participation rates regarded as conventional (95% or higher).
- Participation further varied by grade band, test type (alternate), and content area (science).



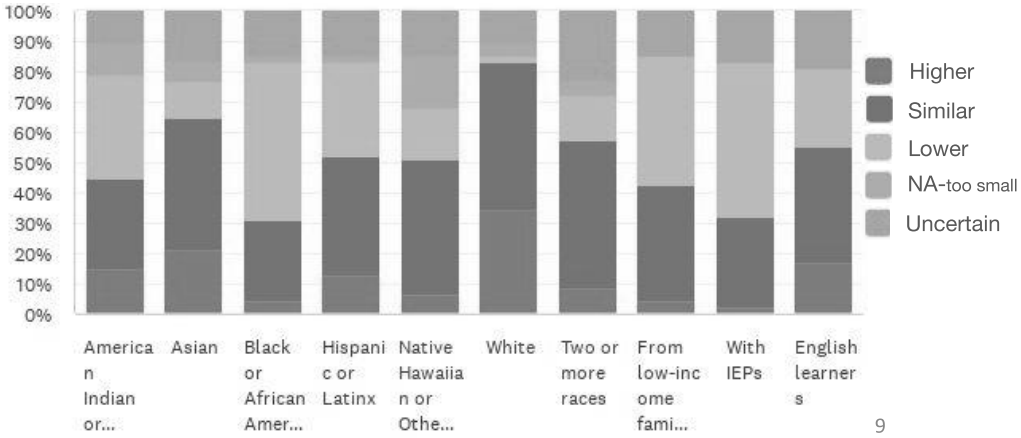
Participation in 2021 further varied across districts and student groups.

- Only 6% of states had consistent participation across districts.
- 20% of respondents indicated that participation rates were very dissimilar across districts in their state.
- Participation was uneven by student groups, with districts testing fewer students in some historically marginalized groups compared to statewide rates.

Consistency of participation rates across districts in 2021



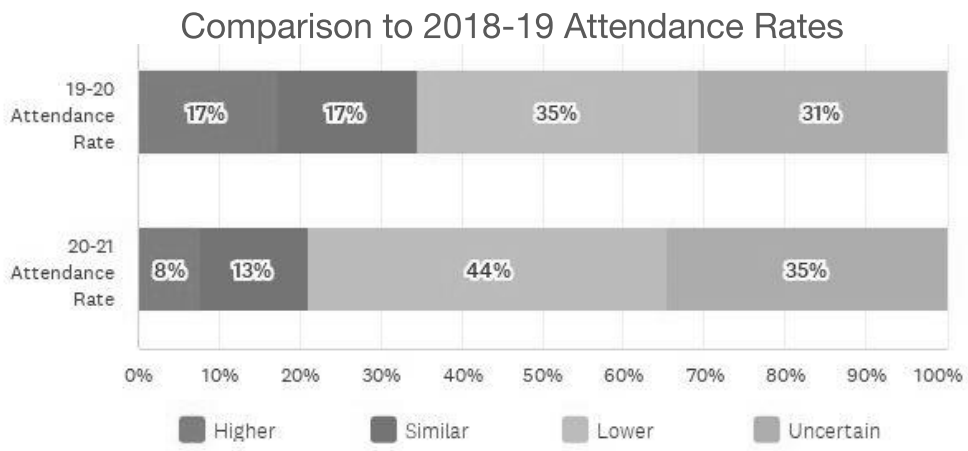
Comparison of group-level participation to statewide rates



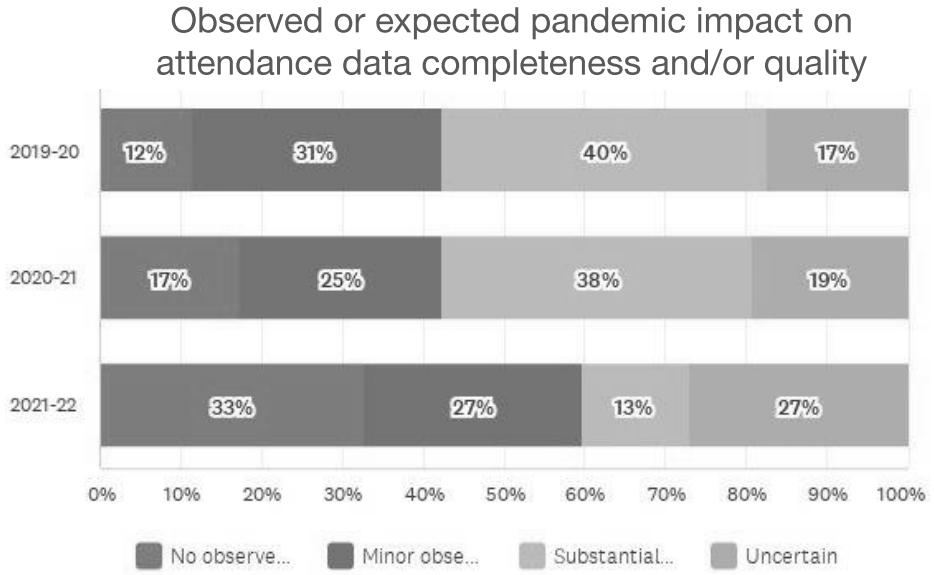
Attendance has also been impacted by changes in learning environment and other COVID-related disruptions.

Center for Assessment

Attendance rates were noticeably lower in 2020-21.

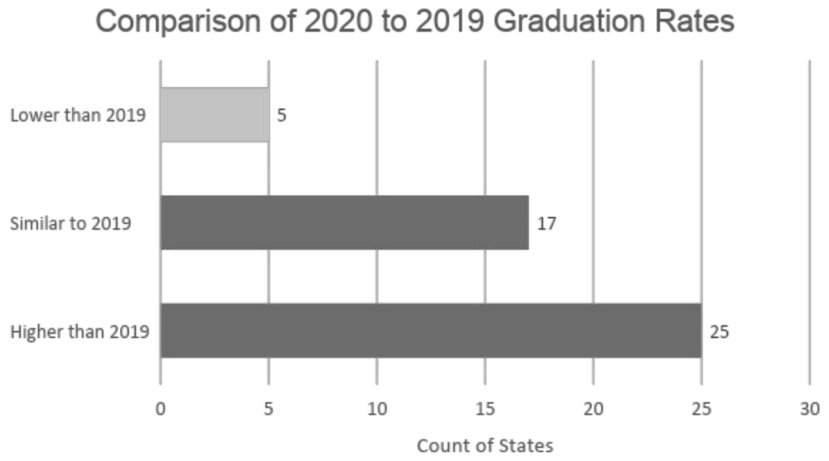


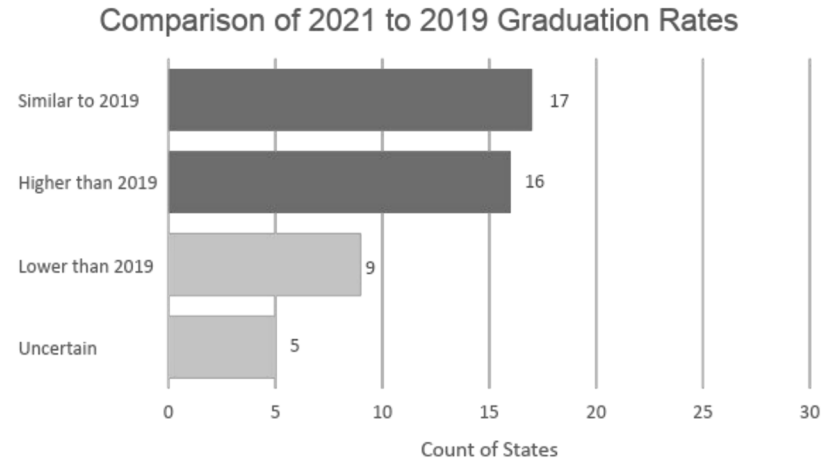
Most states noticed some negative impact on data completeness and quality.



Compared to attendance, states have seen less variability in graduation rates since 2019.

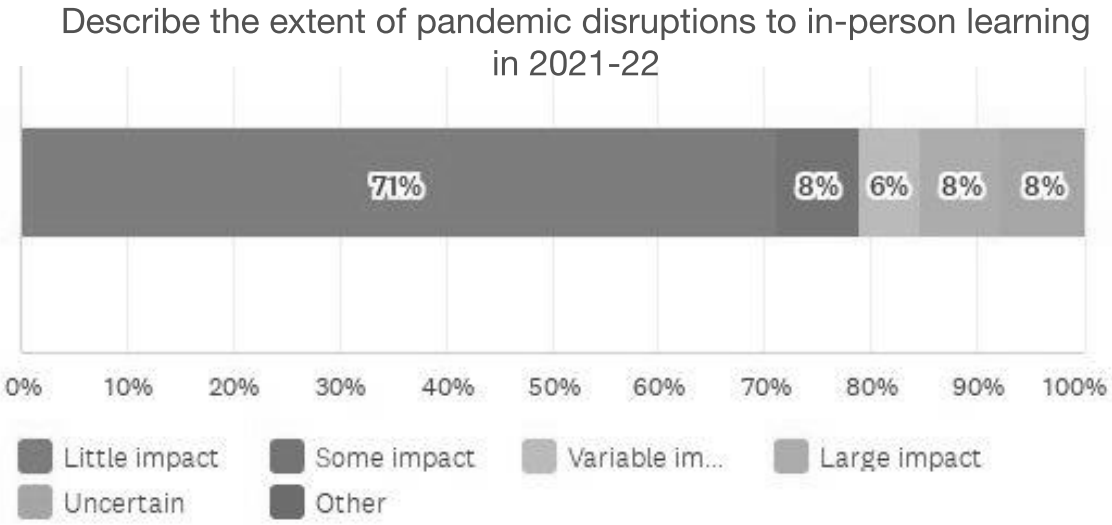
- Most states indicated that graduation rates in 2020 and 2021 were similar to or higher than 2019 rates.
- This may have been influenced by changes in policy.
  - 15 states changed requirements for 2020; all had similar or higher graduation rates that year.
  - 10% of the 47 states that did not change requirements saw lower graduation rates in 2020.





Pandemic-related disruptions to learning continued in 2021-22.

11 states (22%) indicated there have been some disruptions to in-person learning in 2021-22. In four of these states, the impact was large.



We also asked about accountability systems

Leveraging Accountability to Monitor and Support Learning Recovery

Chris Domaleski
Center for Assessment

September 2022
Reidy Interactive Lecture Series

Pandemic Challenges

- Missing achievement data due to test suspension in 2020 and uneven participation in 2021 and 2022
- Adjustments to growth due to missing priors
- Potential data quality questions
- New performance targets
- Modifications to design decisions (e.g., weights, aggregation methods)

Principles to Consider

1. Minimize the influence of ‘fragile’ indicators
2. Prioritize utility
3. Don’t overload the ESSA system
4. When in doubt, support

Principle 1: Minimize influence of fragile indicators

- For most states, there is probably no way to avoid using some imperfect data in their accountability system.
- When compelled to use more fragile indicators, such as those based on data that are less reliable or less representative, consider how to mitigate their influence for consequential decisions.
- Some examples include:
  - Reduce the weight and/or adjust performance thresholds for some indicators.
  - Adopt shorter-term classification cycles (e.g., 1 year instead of 3 years) in order to revisit the decision sooner with better data.
  - Eschew potentially disruptive or restrictive sanctions.

Principle 2: Prioritize Utility

- Key question: “How does this information help education leaders understand and support the needs of students and schools, particularly for the most disenfranchised students?”
- For example, adding additional status measure will likely do little to help understand the academic performance of underserved students
- Examples:
  - Progress or gap closure measures
  - Data on access and/ or opportunity to learn

Principle 3: Don't Overload ESSA

- The state's ESSA accountability system is not the only tool to understand and support students and schools.
- Examples:
  - Local assessment information
  - Inputs (e.g., professional development, supplemental services)
  - District specific measures.
    - Districts have a unique responsibility and shouldn't be treated as a 'super school'
- Many states may conclude that streamlined ESSA systems are preferred especially during the 'build back' transitional period

Continuum of Accountability

Beware of Campbell's Law!

Principle 4: When in doubt, support

- Missing and less reliable data will create more uncertainty in decisions about school classifications.
- In the face of such uncertainty, it may be best to err on the side of deploying supports to schools, particularly when those supports are widely available and non-restrictive.
- Such supports may already be contemplated through Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funded initiatives.
- Application:
  - Set a high bar for discontinuing support
  - Establish multiple tiers of support

Which is more problematic?

- **Type I Error**: The system falsely identifies a school that is not among the those most in need of support
- **Type II Error**: The system fails to identify a school that is among those most in need of support

Availability and Consequences Influence Decisions

Avoid type II error!

	Support is Widely Available	Support is Scarce
Consequences are Not Restrictive	Example: Access to curricular resources or training materials	Example: Access to an instructional coach or mentor to provide close support to the school
Consequences are Restrictive	Example: Loss of flexibility in personnel decisions	Example: Compulsory deployment of state-directed/funded school improvement program

The Road Ahead…

Every challenge presents an opportunity!

Even as states work to ‘repair’ accountability in the short-term, it makes sense work toward a vision of improved accountability systems in the longer term.

I’ll share some ideas to build-back better.

Center for Assessment

Seven ideas to improve accountability systems

Idea	What does this mean?
Address **reciprocity**	The system should specify what conditions, resources, and actions are necessary at all levels (e.g., state, system, school) to achieve the intended outcomes.
Prioritize **utility**	Include more timely and useful information to promote school improvement. For example, include both inputs and outcomes and provide reports during the year not just at the end of the year.
Include a **broader range of information**	More fully capture the dimensions associated with school quality and student success that go beyond academic measures. For example, address components such as teaching and learning, readiness for post-secondary options, and school climate.
Differentiate	A one-size-fits all model is too limiting. Consider solutions that allow schools to demonstrate success in different ways. This is particularly important for alternative programs and schools
Don't forget about **districts**	Districts should not be treated like 'super schools.' Design district systems that address their unique areas of responsibility and contributions to student success.
Incorporate **Opportunity to Learn**	Collect and report data on opportunity to learn to help put outcomes in context and guide support
Establish more **meaningful performance expectations**	There is no inherent meaning in letter grades or other labels. Set performance expectations that are meaningfully tied to policy priorities with clear descriptions to guide interpretation.

CSDE
CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The Role of State Accountability and Reporting to Support Recovery

RILS - September 23, 2022

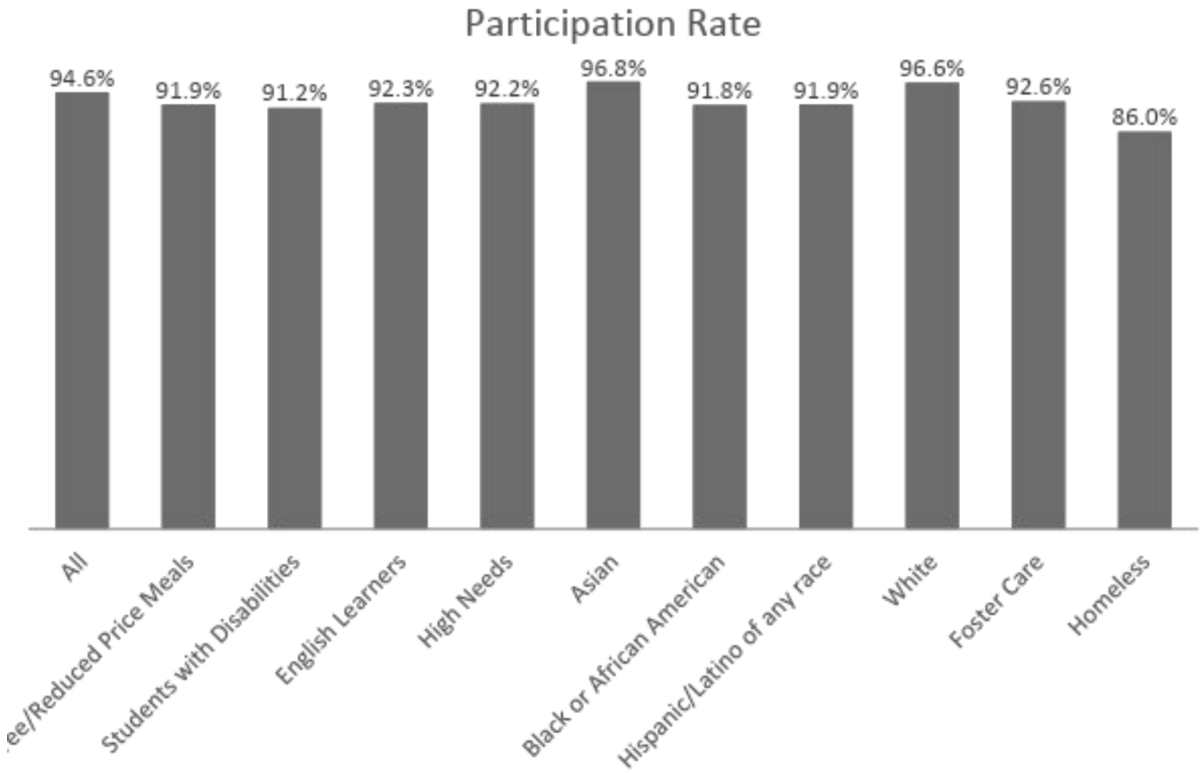
Agenda

- Pandemic Disruptions and School/District Accountability:
- Using Accountability and Reporting Systems to Influence Support
- Implementing a Research and Evaluation Agenda

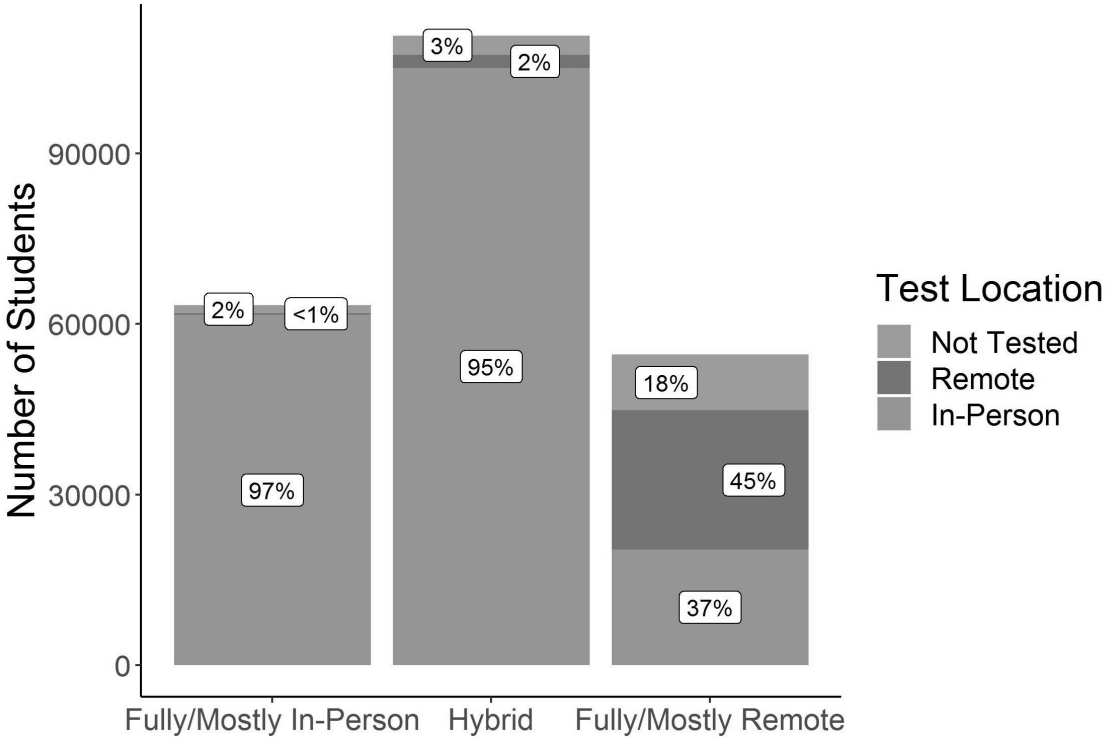
The 2020-21 School Year: Commitment to Assessment, not Accountability

- Robust Assessment Participation in 3-8

- Centerline Blogpost: Rethinking School Accountability | Center for Assessment (nciea.org)



How You Tested on Smarter Balanced (3-8) Depended on How You Learned

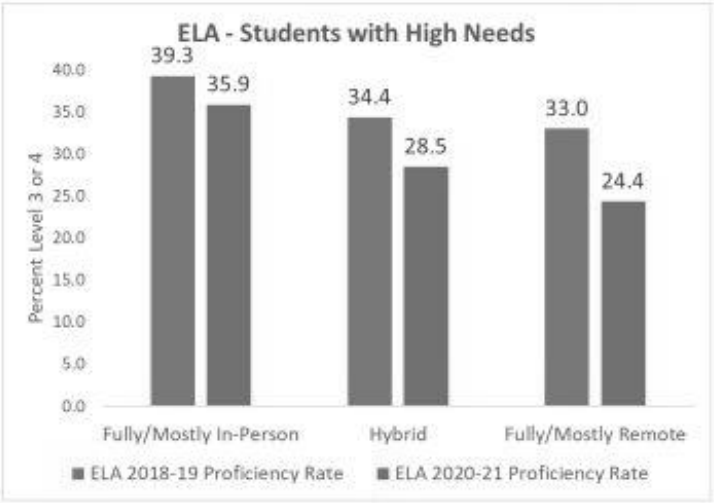


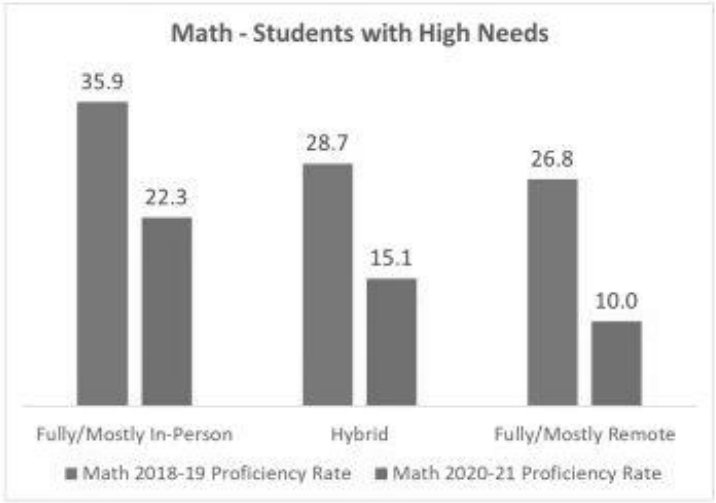
- If you LEARNED *fully/mostly in-person* or *hybrid*, you tested in-person.
- If you LEARNED *fully/mostly remotely*, you were more likely to test remotely.
- Non-participation was greatest among those who LEARNED *fully/mostly remotely.*

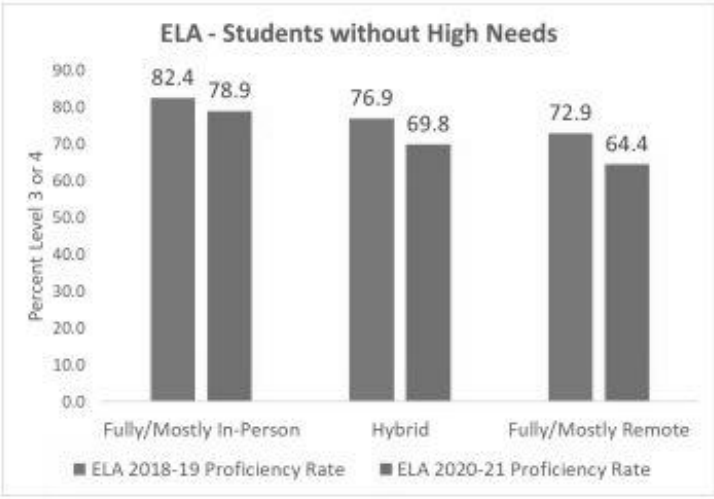
Remote proctoring was also offered on the NGSS Assessment (5, 8, 11), and our ELP Assessment (LAS Links).

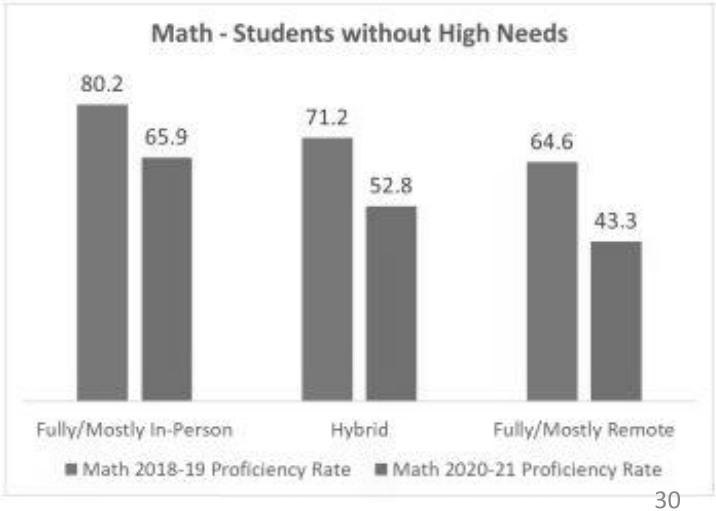
Understanding Pandemic Impact: *Skip Year Growth*

Figure 4: Matched Cohort (2018-19 to 2020–21) Proficiency Rates by High Needs Status (Grades 5-8)

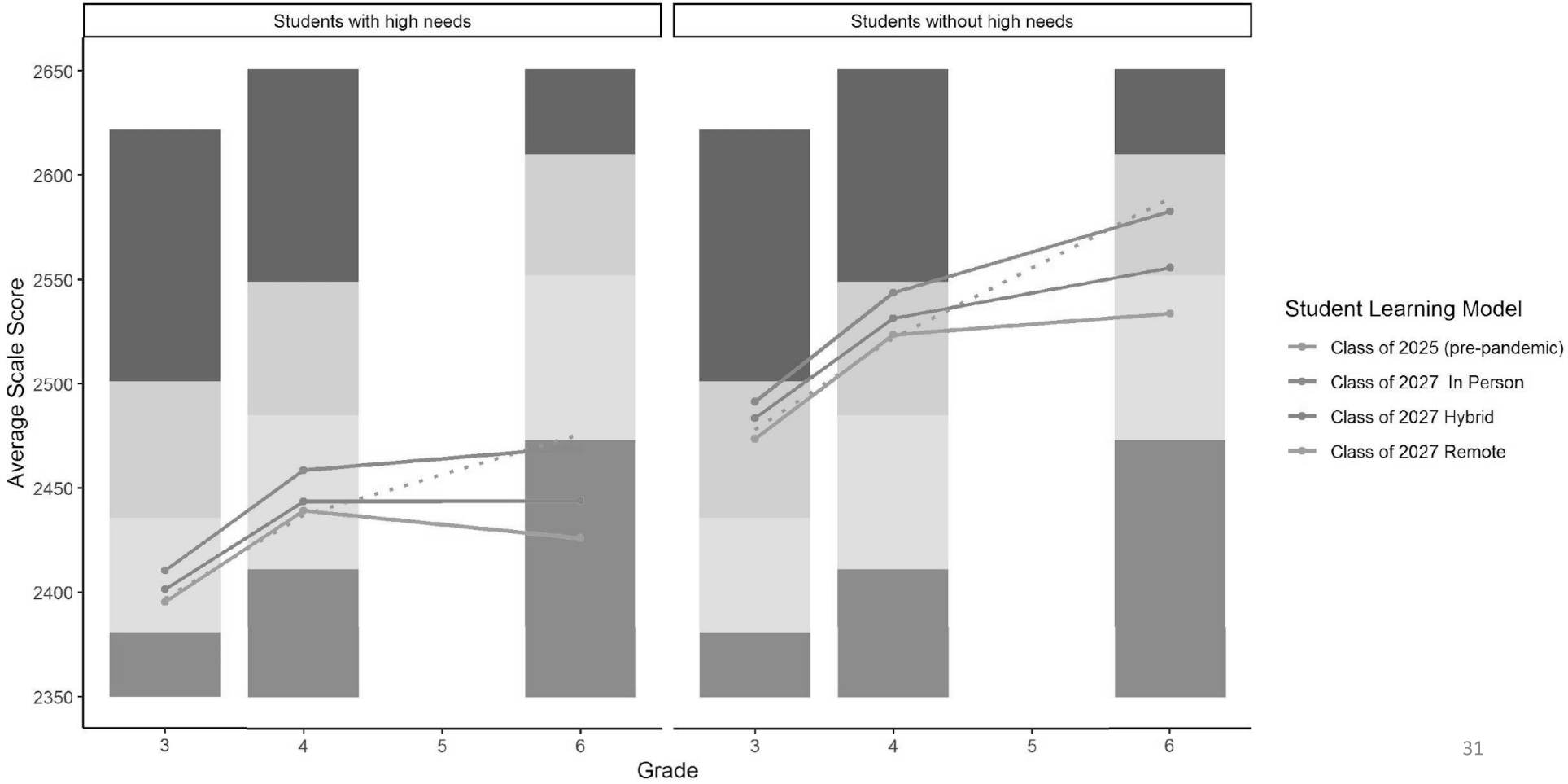




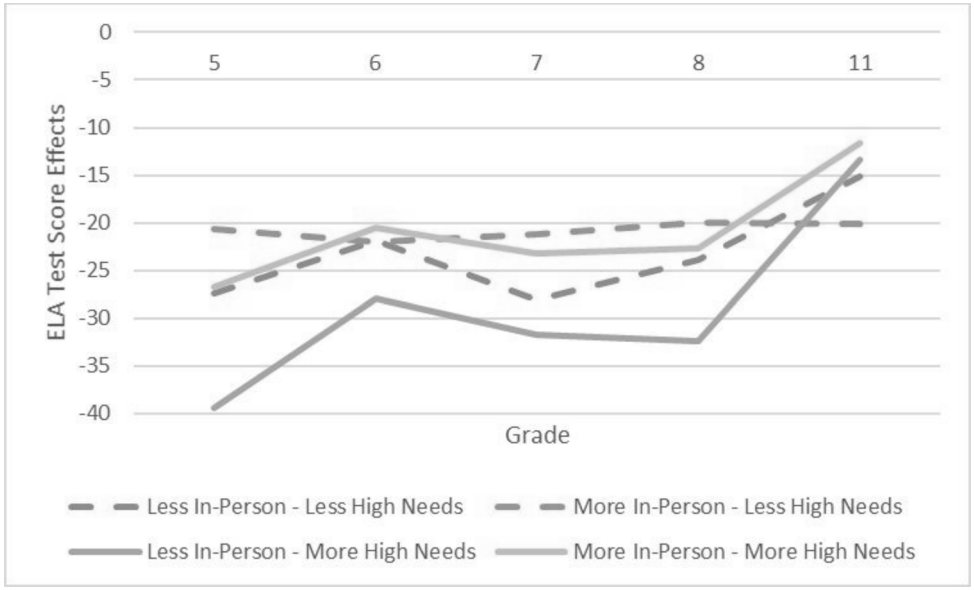


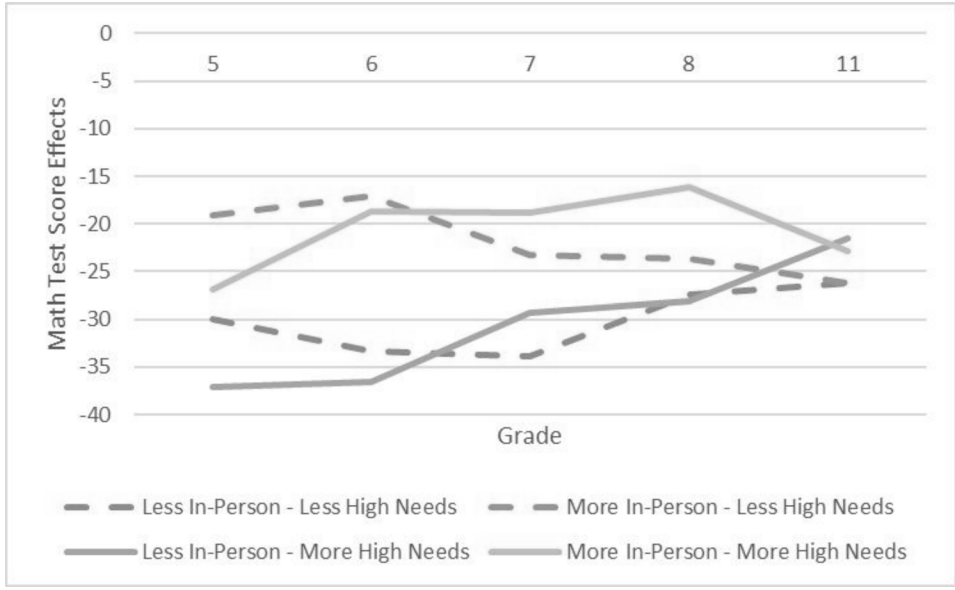


Matched Cohort Math Grade 6 in 2020-21



Test Scores Effects by High Needs Share and In-Person Opportunity



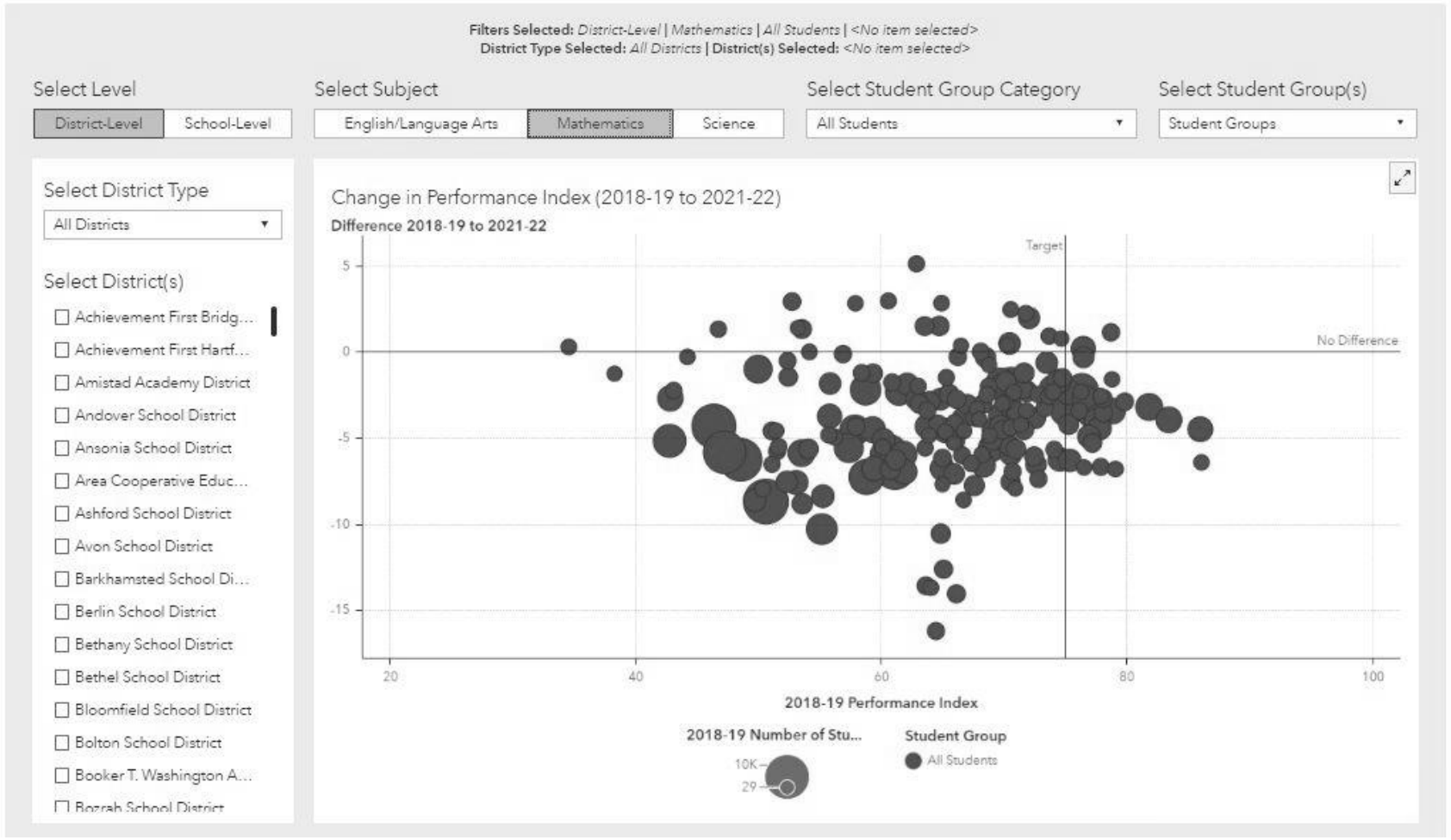


The 2021-22 School Year

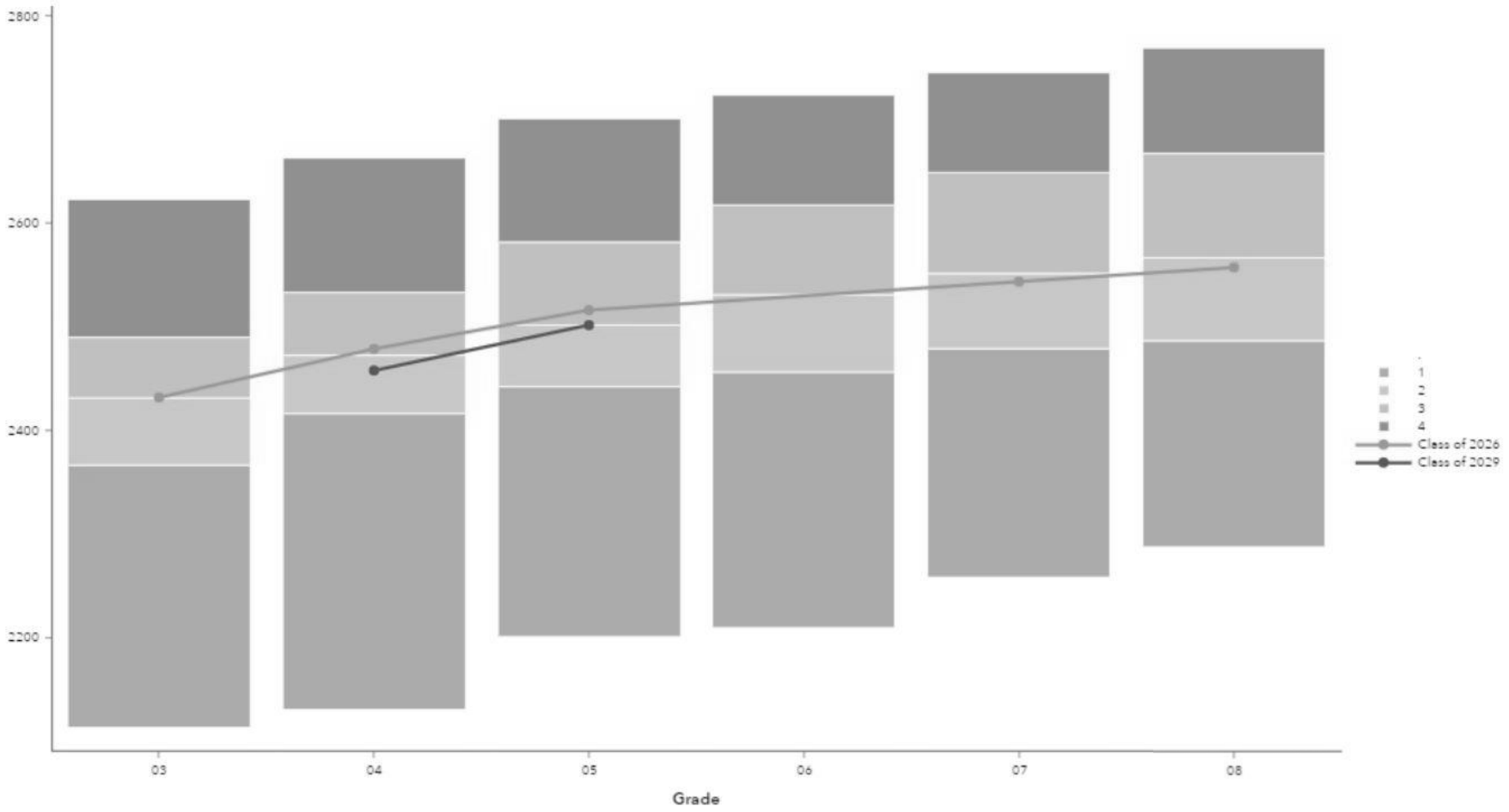
- Understand pandemic impact by looking at:
  - Achievement
  - Rough Cohort
  - Matched Cohort

- Restart School/District Accountability

Achievement: Pandemic Recovery Dashboard



Rough Cohort Growth: Grade 5 ELA Example



Matched Cohort Growth

Smarter Balanced Growth Report, Trend

State of Connecticut, ELA and Math, All Grades, All Students

Export .csv file

District	Grade	Subject	Growth Rate					Average Percentage of Target Achieved				
			School Year					School Year				
			2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2021-22	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2021-22
State of Connecticut	4	ELA	45.7%	38.4%	43.2%	41.4%	43.3%	70.2%	62.1%	67.5%	64.9%	67.5%
		Math	43.7%	40.0%	41.6%	43.6%	49.3%	73.4%	68.3%	69.8%	71.3%	76.4%
	5	ELA	43.9%	36.2%	41.9%	40.8%	44.1%	67.3%	58.6%	65.4%	63.6%	67.3%
		Math	43.8%	41.6%	43.6%	44.7%	50.8%	65.9%	62.5%	64.4%	65.1%	71.2%
	6	ELA	42.1%	35.5%	39.4%	38.4%	38.3%	61.0%	53.3%	57.8%	56.7%	57.1%
		Math	43.4%	43.4%	42.1%	41.2%	43.3%	63.0%	62.2%	60.5%	59.1%	60.8%
	7	ELA	42.0%	36.4%	38.0%	40.7%	38.0%	60.8%	54.2%	56.7%	59.5%	56.7%
		Math	44.1%	41.4%	40.2%	42.7%	47.0%	62.8%	58.8%	56.4%	59.6%	64.5%
	8	ELA	41.9%	33.3%	39.2%	38.4%	37.5%	59.8%	49.2%	56.3%	55.3%	54.0%
		Math	44.3%	40.9%	42.9%	42.5%	38.5%	60.0%	56.5%	58.6%	57.7%	53.4%

New Identifications

- Alliance District (state program)

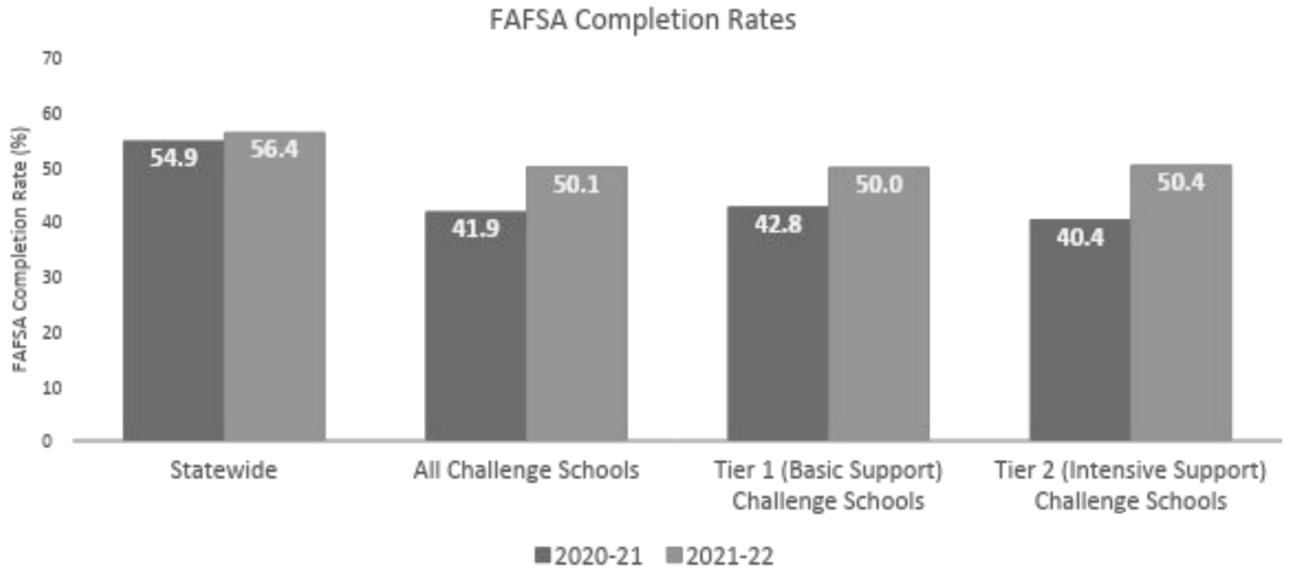
- Schools
  - Comprehensive Support
  - Targeted Support
  - Additional Targeted Support

Supporting Attendance

- Learning Model weekly tracker in 2020-21
- Monthly collection and reporting in 2020-21 and 2021-22 which includes state dashboard and district/school/student group data files
- District support (Talk Tuesdays, Community of Practice,)
- Home visitation program (LEAP)
- Research with Attendance Works: Chronic Absence Patterns and Prediction During Covid-19: Insights from Connecticut

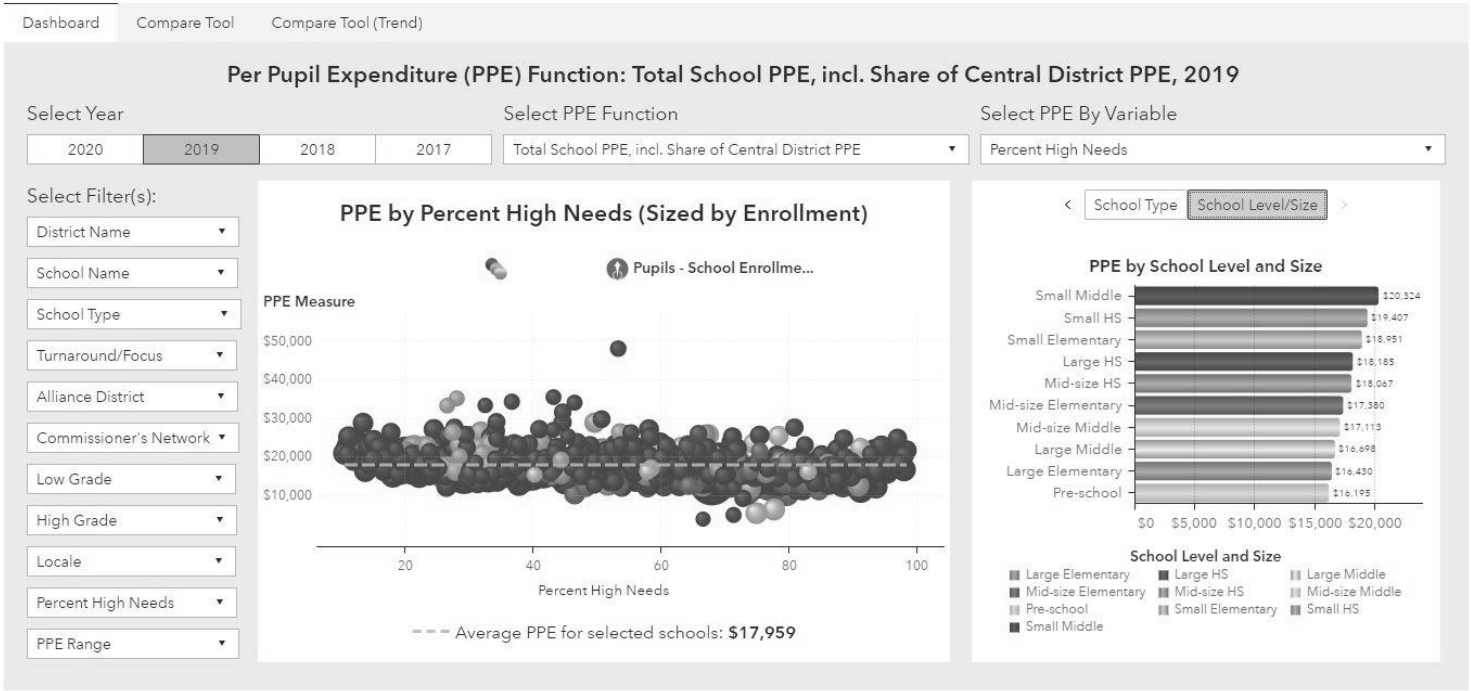
Promoting FAFSA Completion

- State dashboard and student-level data to districts (updated weekly)
- FAFSA Challenge produces results – targets high-needs schools and offers mini grants, in-depth training, community of practice



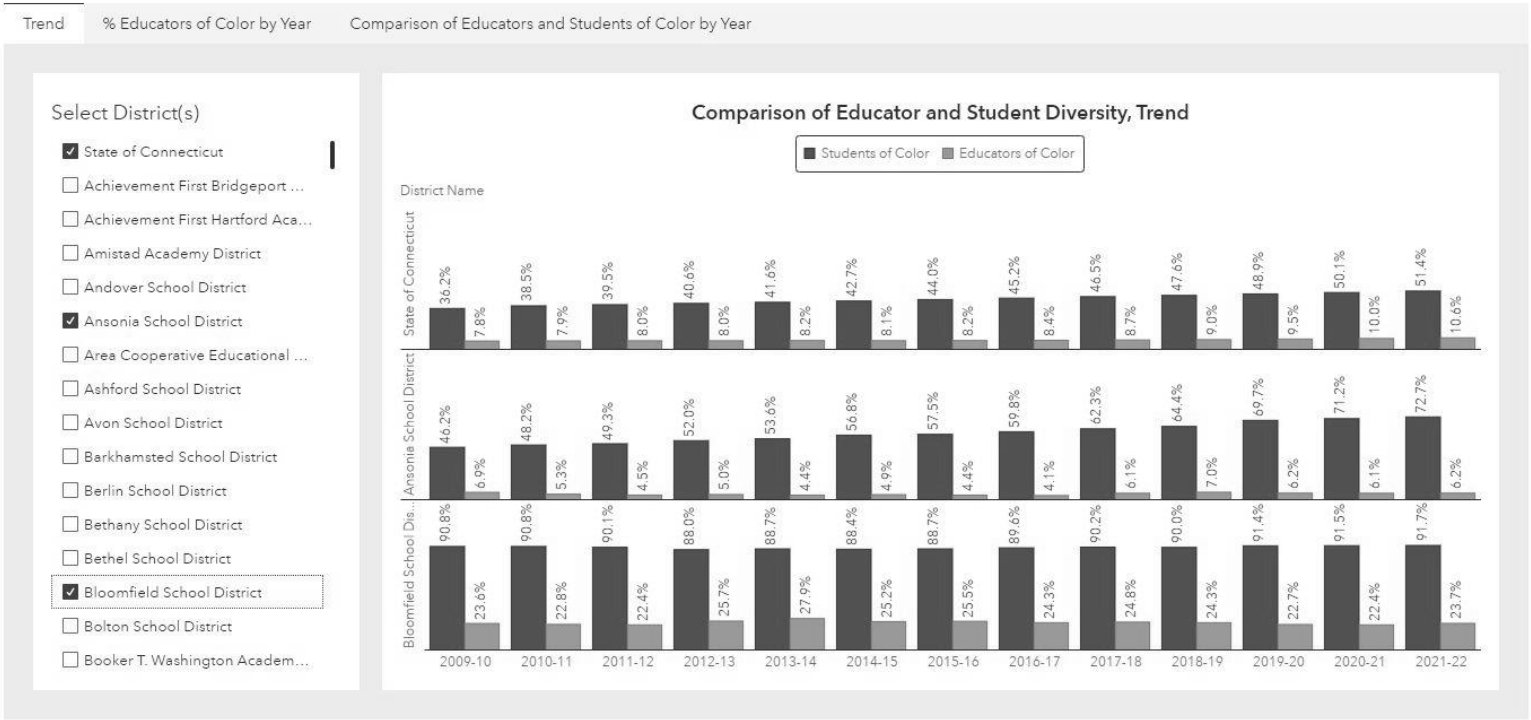
Equitable Allocation of Resources

- ESSA Requirement – created Resource Allocation Review dashboard to help CSDE staff work with districts around resource allocations across their schools



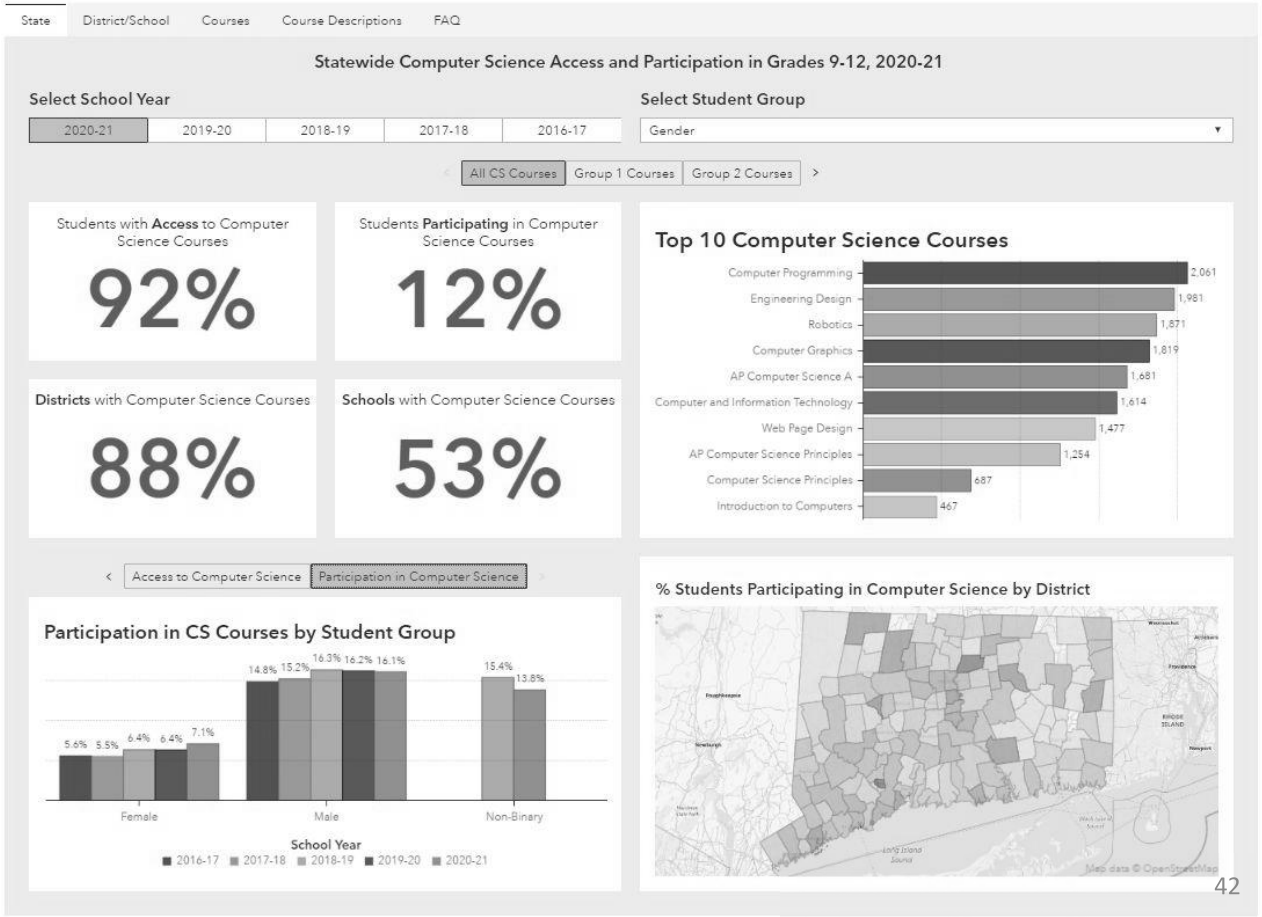
Increasing Educator Diversity

- Dashboard to visualize trends and facilitate comparisons



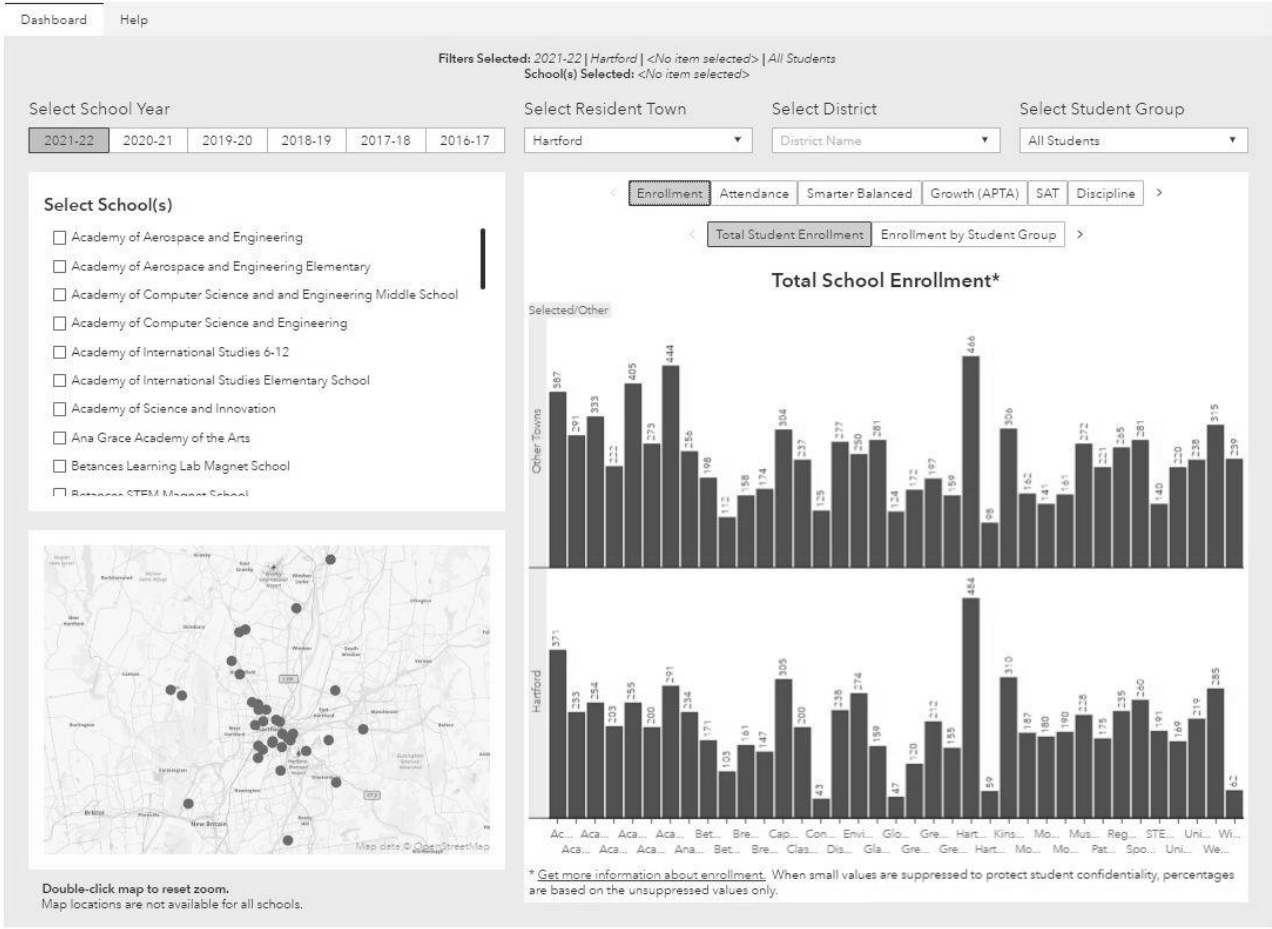
Computer Science Participation

- Dashboard to visualize trends , facilitate comparisons, and highlight course enrollments at the state, district, and school levels.



School Desegregation

- Metrics by resident town of the student
- Focal town compared to all other towns



Implementing a Research and Evaluation Agenda

CSDE
CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

- Started a new research collaborative of public and private university faculty across Connecticut to support evaluation of ARP ESSER investments CCERC (ct.gov)

CCERC

UCONN UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT
CSCU
Fairfield University
Goodwin University
Mitchell College
Quinnipiac University
Rensselaer
Sacred Heart University
Trinity College
University of Bridgeport
University of Hartford
University of New Haven
University of Saint Joseph Connecticut
Wesleyan University
Yale