



INDIANA
DEPARTMENT *of*
EDUCATION

2021-2022

Foster Youth Educational Outcomes Report



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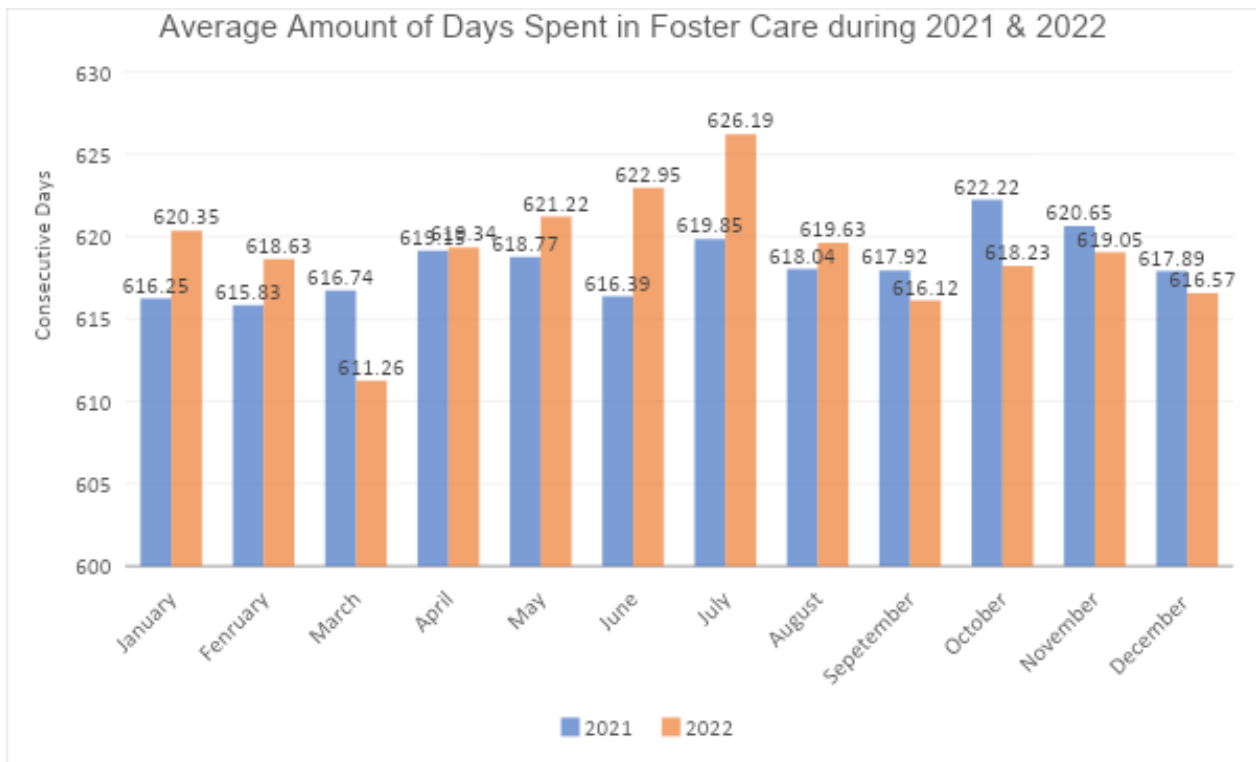
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INDIANA’S FOSTER YOUTH STATISTICS

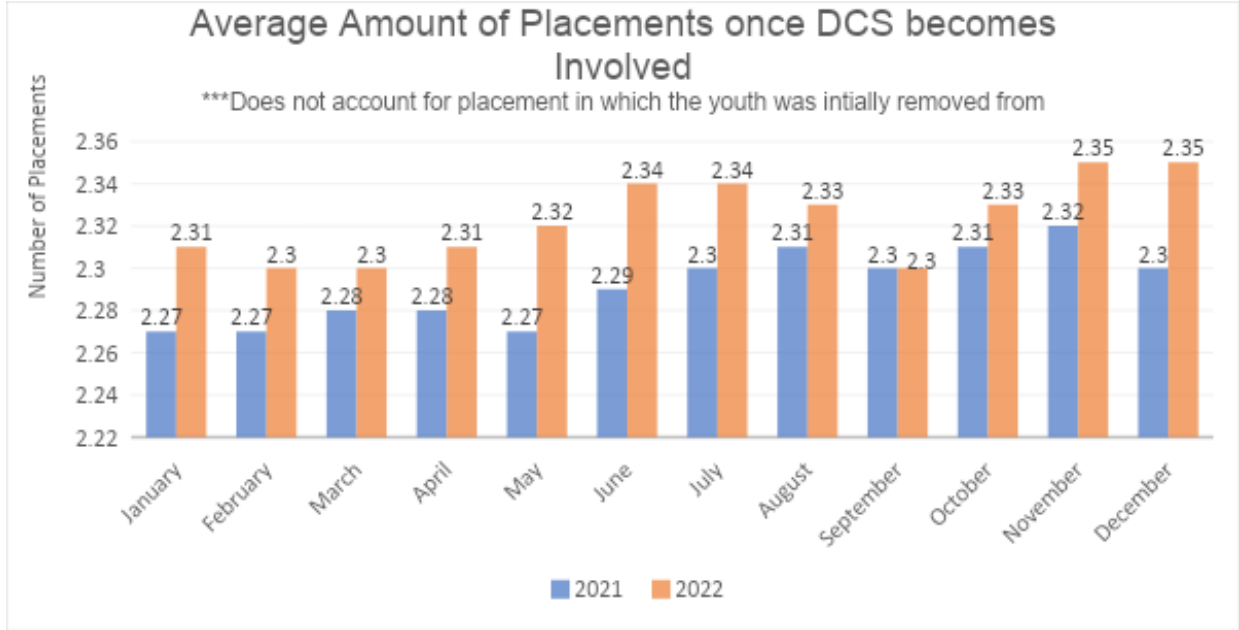
The Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) and the Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) have collaborated on this report to provide the following information: DCS identified 22,895 children in the foster care system at some point during calendar year (CY) 2021. This is a 28.1% decrease in children in out-of-home care since CY 2018 (31,857). Note that 4.2% of youth in out-of-home care during CY 2021 were under the age of 1, and 32.9% were younger than 5 years of age. Out of the 22,895 Hoosier children in foster care during CY 2021, 68.3% were white, 17.9% were Black and 13.2% were two or more races.

INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES STATISTICS TO CONSIDER

In 2021, foster youth in Indiana spent on average 618.3 days in foster care. In 2022, foster youth in Indiana spent on average approximately 619.12 days in foster care.

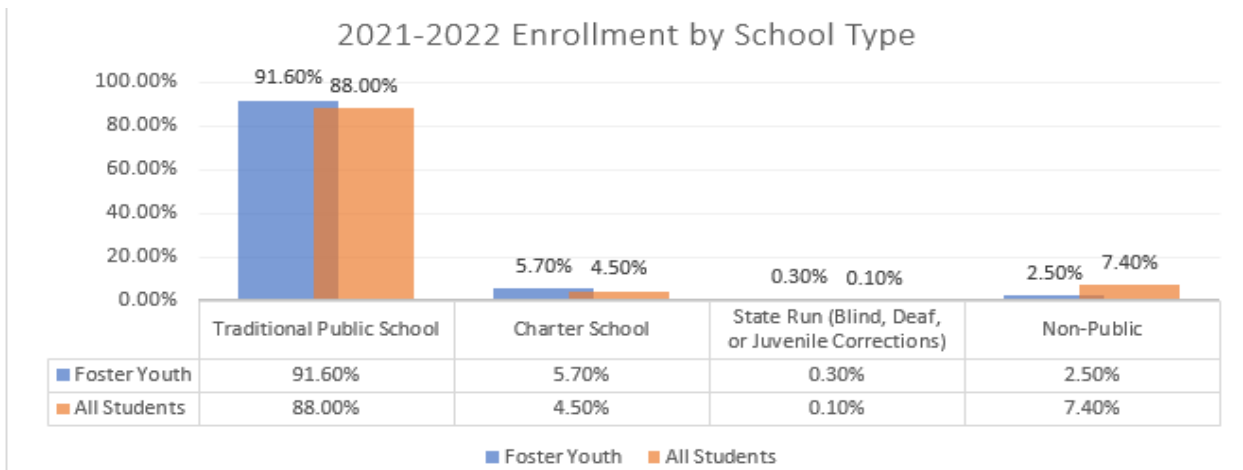


In 2021, on average, foster youth lived in 2.29 placements and in 2022, on average, a foster youth lived in 2.32 placements. These placement counts do not include the initial placement to which they were removed from, nor does this count take into consideration what barriers with housing the youth had prior to DCS’ involvement.



ENROLLMENT BY SCHOOL TYPE

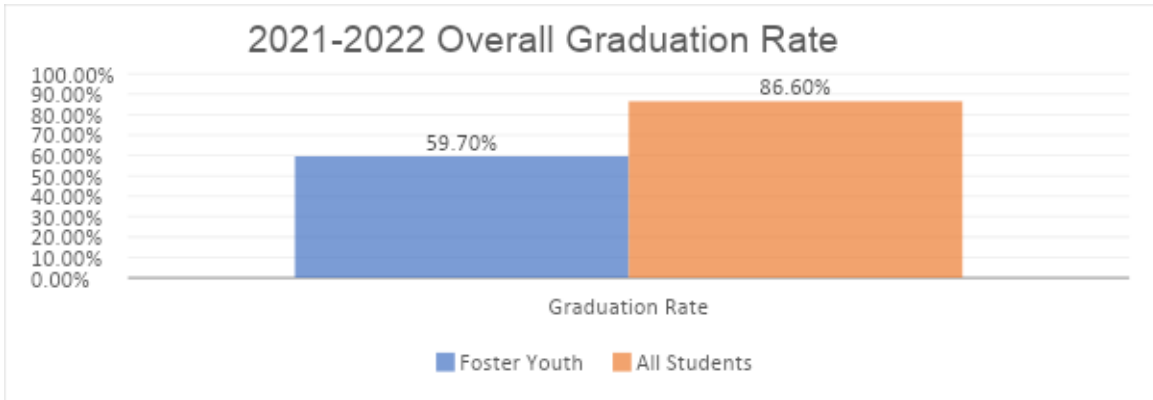
For the 2021-2022 school year, there were 1,120,125 Indiana students enrolled in K-12 in traditional public, charter, state-run (which include the Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, the Indiana School for the Deaf, and Indiana Juvenile Correctional Facilities educational programs), and non-public schools. Of the 1,120,125 students enrolled in Indiana schools, 12,978 were identified as foster youth. Within the foster youth population, 11,883 were enrolled in traditional public schools, 737 were enrolled in charter schools, 39 were enrolled in state-run schools, and 319 were enrolled in non-public schools. When comparing the total number of youths identified as foster, only 51.9% are enrolled in K-12, translating to 48.1% of foster youth falling outside of the school age range. As the Indiana Youth Institute (IYI) outlined in its 2023 *Indiana Kids Count Data Book: 29th Edition of a Profile of Hoosier Youth (IYI Data Book)*, a majority of Child In Need of Services (CHINS) cases are opened while the youth was less than zero years of age allowing for DCS to intervene sooner.



GRADUATION

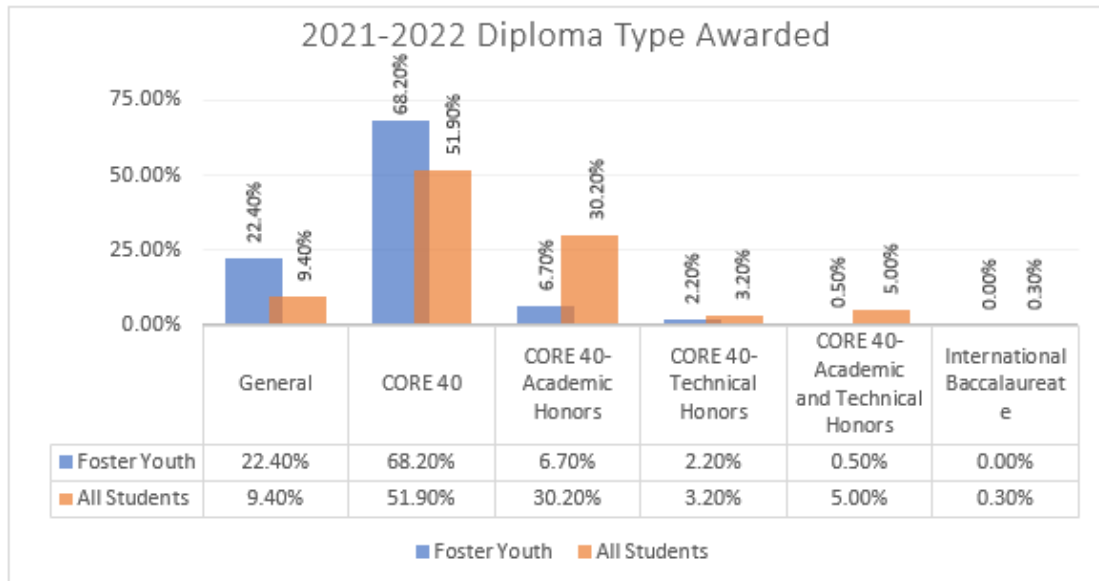
Overall Graduation Rate

Of the foster youth enrolled in K-12, there were 680 foster youth identified within the 2021-2022 graduation cohort, and of those, 406 students graduated on time, translating to a 59.7% graduation rate. When compared to the 2020-2021 Foster Youth Educational Outcomes Report, the numbers have remained consistent as it pertains to the foster youth graduation cohort size of 679 foster youth with an increase from last school years' graduation rate of 54.2%.



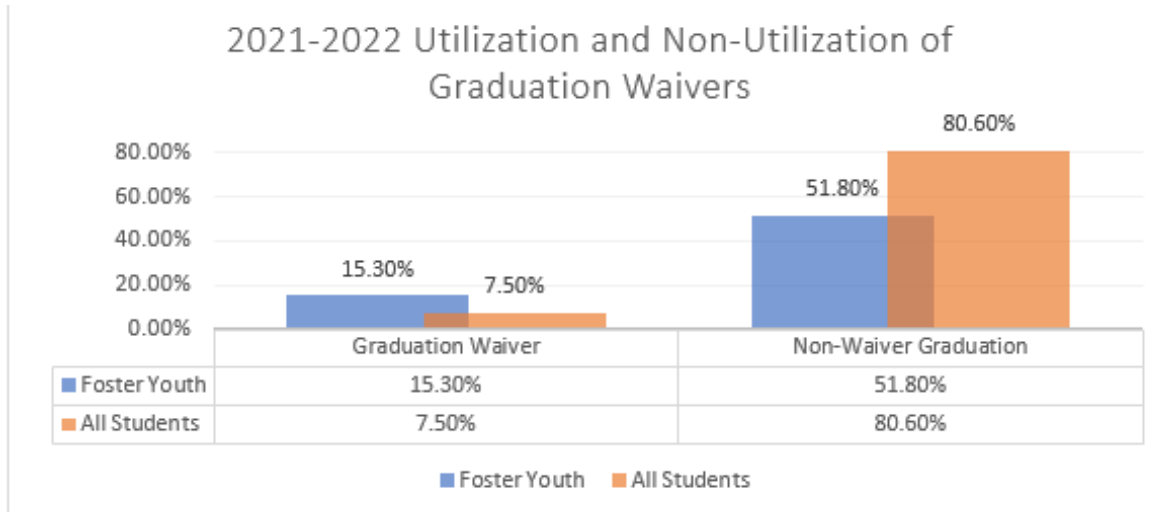
Diploma Type Awarded

For the 2021-2022 academic year, foster youth out earned their peers in obtaining General Diplomas and CORE 40 Diplomas. However, this was not the case when it came to earning more rigorous diploma types. Non-foster youth students were nearly 5 times more likely to earn a CORE 40 with Academic Honors and a CORE 40 with Academic and Technical Honors than their foster youth peers.



Waivers

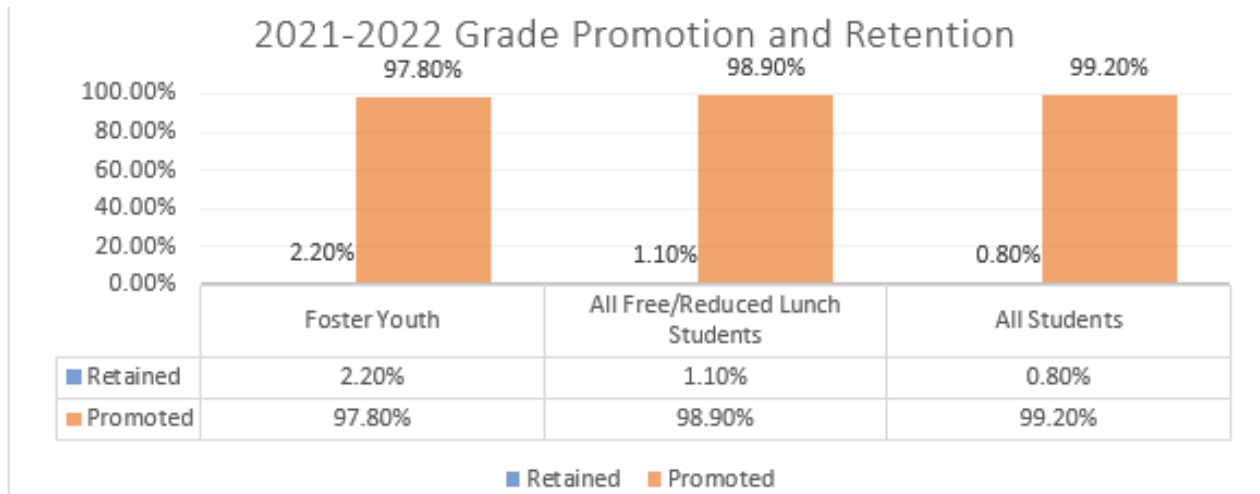
Foster youth were determined to be two times more likely to need the assistance of a graduation waiver when compared to their peers. According to the 2020-2021 Foster Youth Educational Outcomes Report, 25.6% of special education students and 74.4% of general education students needed a waiver to graduate high school. Of the foster youth within the 2021-2022 graduation cohort, 15.3% graduated with a waiver compared to 7.5% of all students. The *2023 IYI Data Book* further explores the effects of utilizing a waiver.



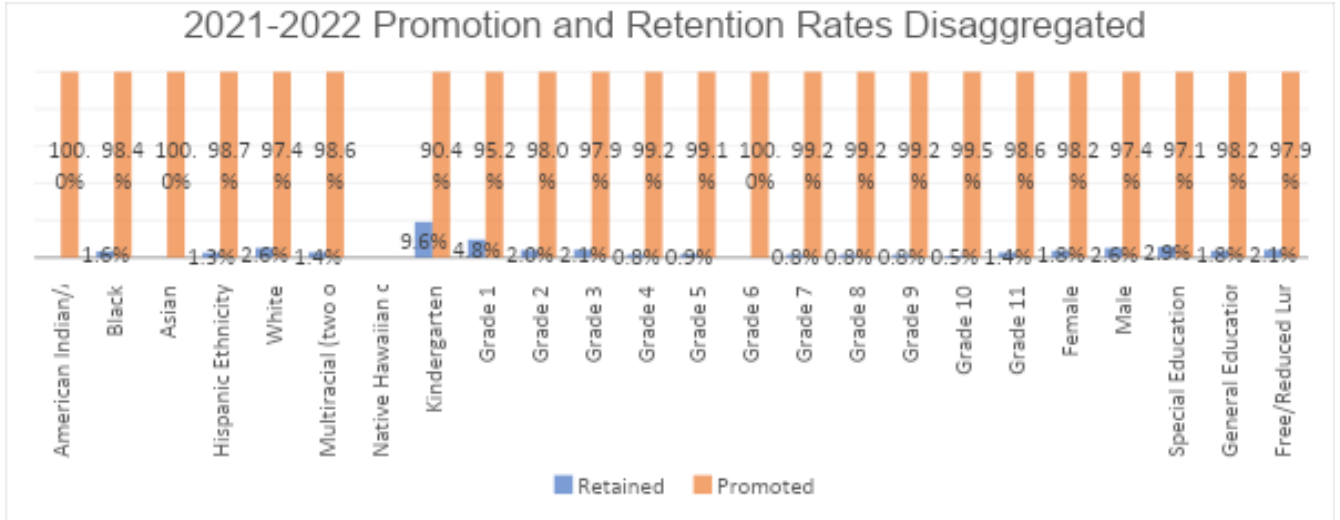
GRADE PROMOTION AND RETENTION

As appears in the graph below, there is not a significant difference in grade promotion between foster youth, free and reduced lunch students, and the general student population.

However, foster youth were 2 times more likely to be retained when compared to all students. When compared to their free and reduced lunch peers, foster youth were 1.1% more likely to be retained when compared to all students.



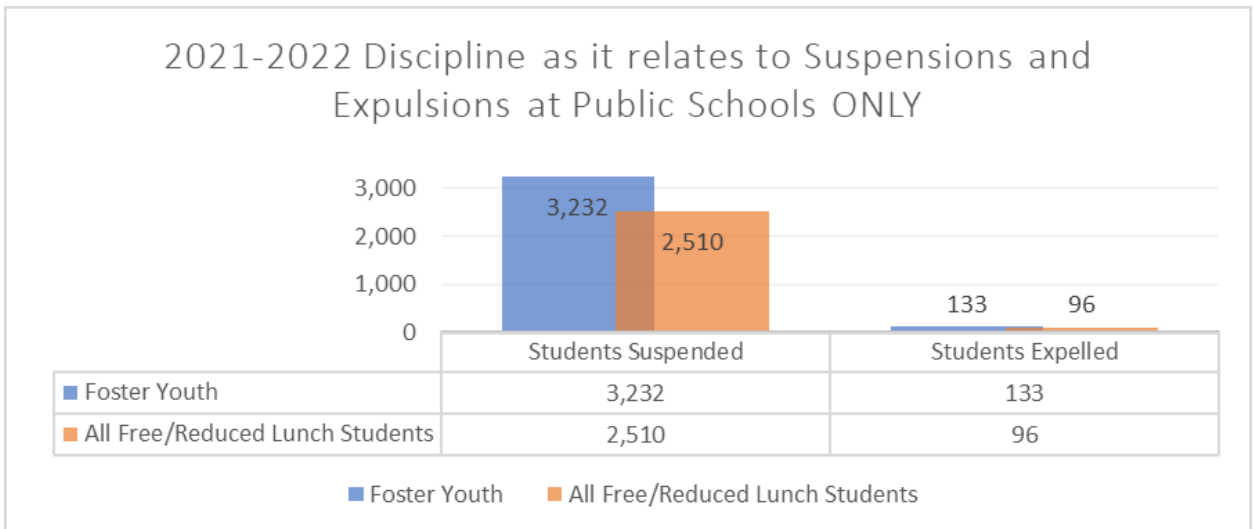
Looking closer at the data disaggregated by grade and student population, there is a trend within kindergarten and first grade where a majority of students are being retained regardless of student population (i.e. foster youth, free and reduced lunch students, etc.).



Discipline: Suspensions and Expulsions

During the 2021-2022 school year, there were 3,232 foster youth suspended and 133 foster youth expelled. Additionally, during the school year there were 2,510 free and reduced lunch students suspended and 96 free and reduced lunch students expelled. As reported in the *IYI Data Book* “The suspension and expulsion rates for 2021-2022 were significantly higher than the previous year – most likely due to the return of in-person instruction.”

However, there continues to be a similar trend of suspensions and expulsions when it comes to students of color, students who are males, and students who receive special education services.

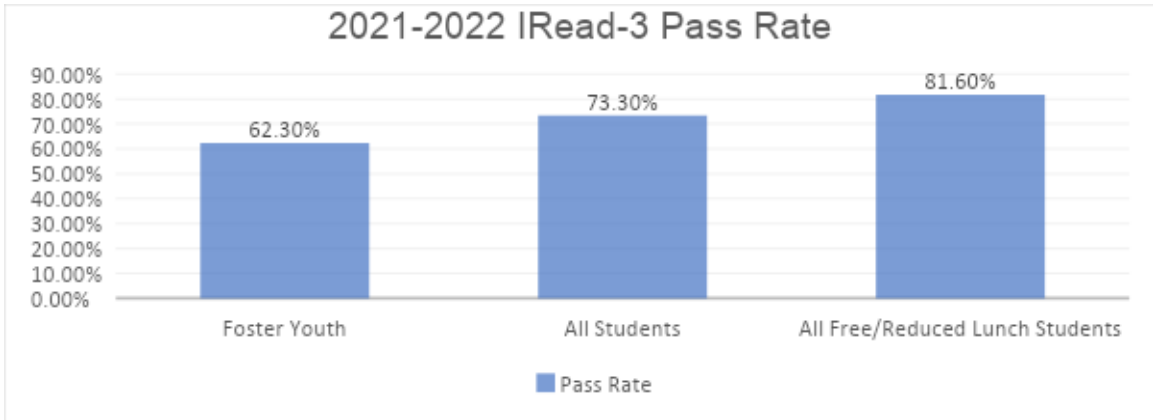


2021-2022 Suspensions and Expulsions at Public Schools				
Student Population		Students Suspended	Students Expelled	Total Students
Race/ Ethnicity	American Indian/Alaskan Native	4	0	25
	Black	840	33	2492
	Asian	15	0	89
	Hispanic Ethnicity and of any race	221	14	1085
	White	1842	71	8491
	Multiracial (two or more races)	309	15	1215
	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	1	0	13
Grade Level	Pre-Kindergarten	4	0	629
	Kindergarten	123	0	1169
	Grade 1	88	0	996
	Grade 2	126	0	1075
	Grade 3	147	1	998
	Grade 4	143	0	923
	Grade 5	215	4	928
	Grade 6	326	7	935
	Grade 7	402	14	973
	Grade 8	440	24	1025
	Grade 9	464	39	1098
	Grade 10	389	24	1125
	Grade 11	262	13	961
Grade 12	109	7	711	
Sex	Female	1256	48	6591
	Male	1976	85	6819
Services	Special Education	1350	24	4577
	General Education	1882	109	8833
	Free and Reduced Lunch	2510	96	9975

TESTING

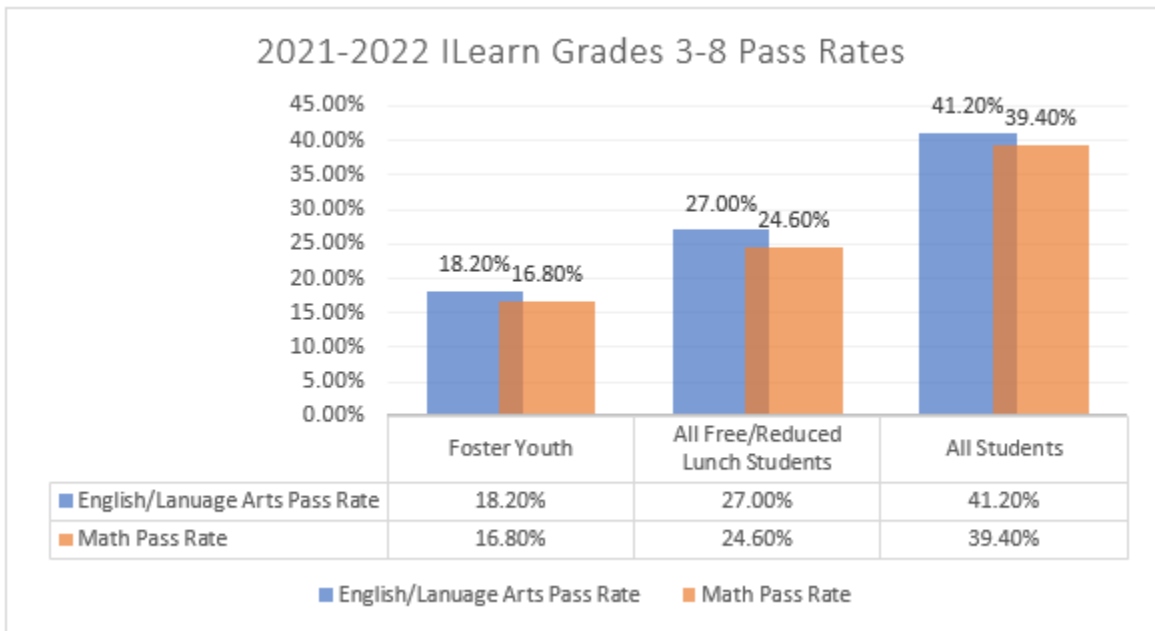
IREAD-3

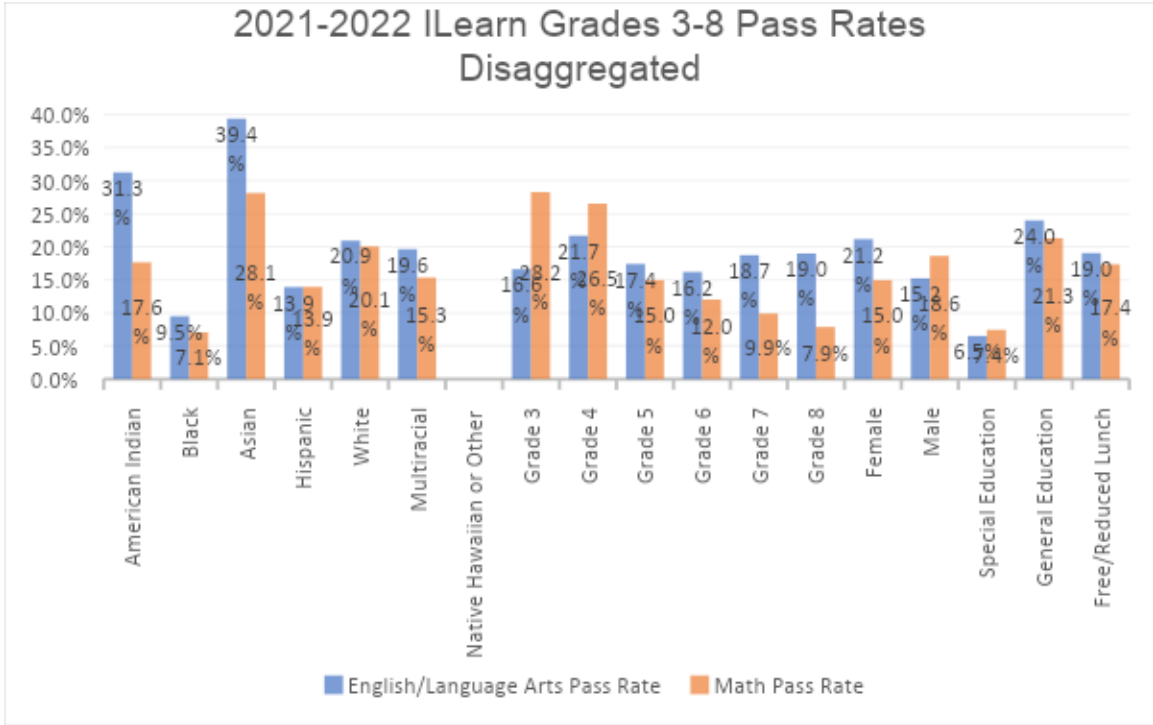
In the 2021-2022 school year, 948 foster youth participated in IREAD-3. 591 students met a passing score or above, resulting in a 62.3% pass rate. This is compared to a 71% pass rate the previous school year where 1,004 students sat for the exam and 713 earned at least a passing score. The number of foster youth sitting for the test and passing the test both declined during the 2021-2022 school year.



ILEARN English/Language Arts and Math (Grades 3-8)

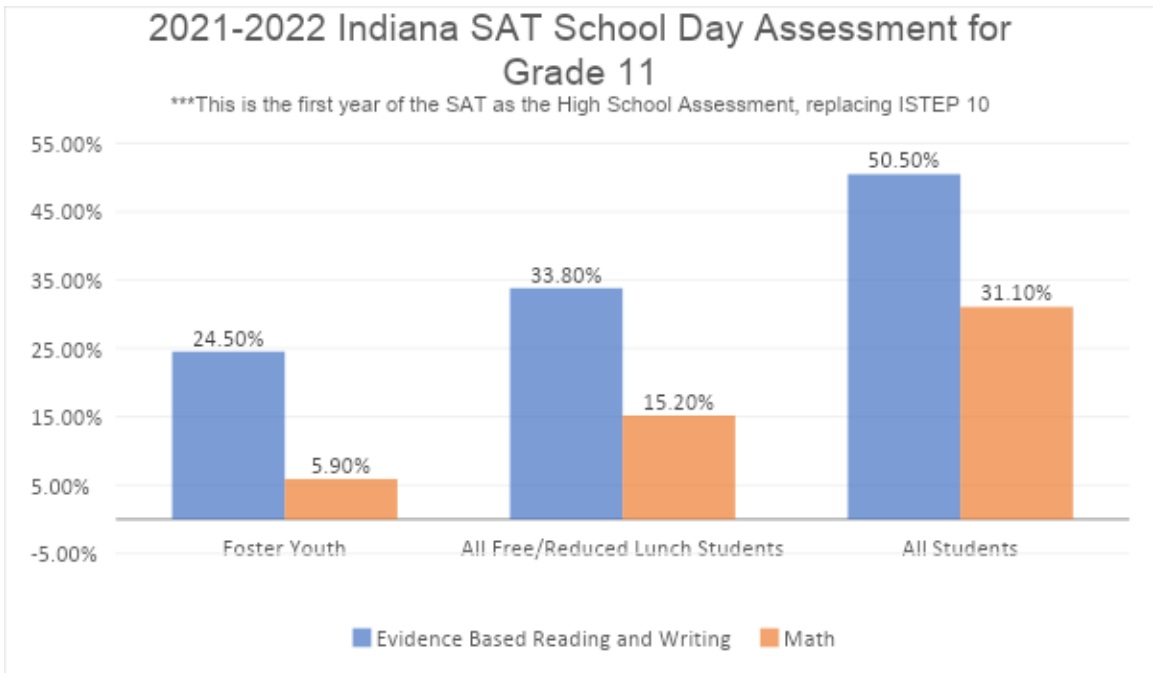
Foster youth participating in the 2021-2022 ILEARN English/language arts and math exams fall behind their peers by more than 20% when compared to all students. We also see this similar trend among free and reduced lunch students compared to all other students.



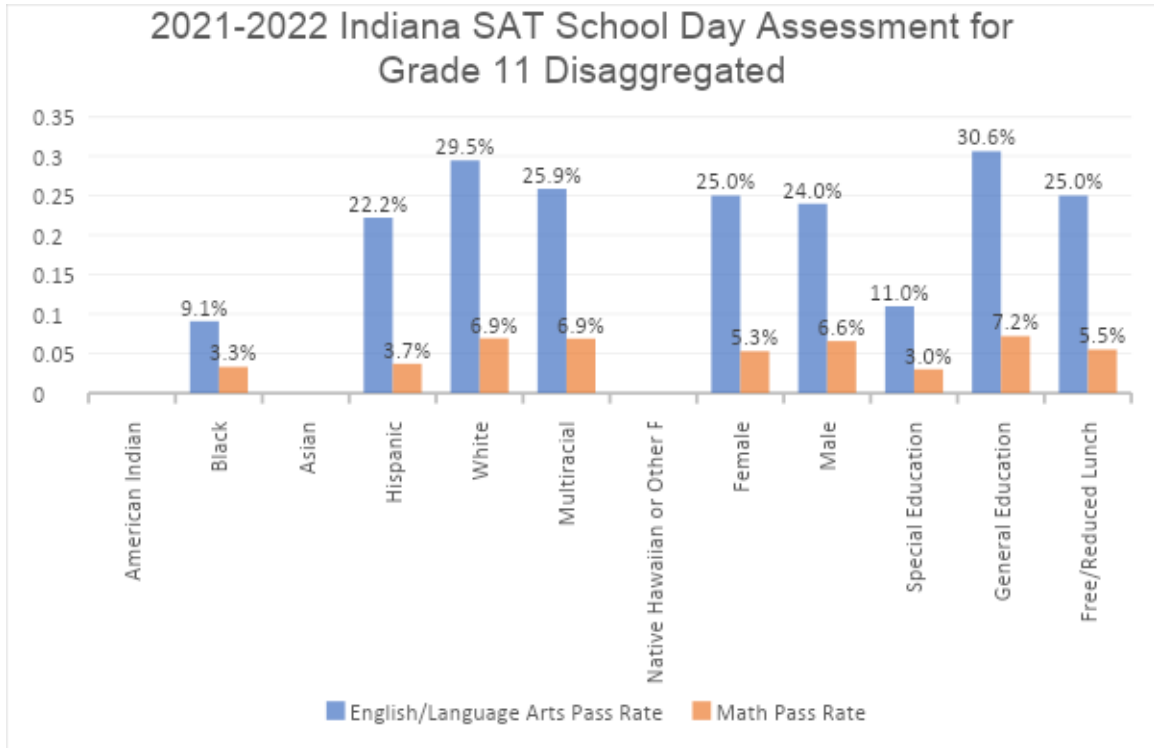


Indiana SAT School Day Assessment (Grade 11)

The SAT School Day test replaced ISTEP 10 during the 2021-2022 school year. As this transition took place during the 2021-2022 school year, comparative data is not available from the previous school year. However, there are statistically significant achievement gaps noted between foster youth and free and reduced lunch students compared to the general student population.



Additionally, there are some achievement gaps noted based on race/ethnicity, gender, educational assistance, or free and reduced lunch status on both the Evidence Based Reading and Writing and Math portions of the SAT school day assessment. The most significant achievement gaps are found within Black students and students who receive special education services.



FREE AND REDUCED LUNCH PROGRAM

Foster children are categorically eligible for free meal benefits per the United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA’s) Food and Nutrition Services Eligibility Manual.

SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY GRADES

Schools were not given accountability grades during the 2020-2021 school year.

2020-2021 FOSTER CARE REMEDIATION PLAN

In response to the feedback received through both the original stakeholder group created in 2018 per HEA 1134 and Foster Care Points of Contact (POC) from across the state, the previous remediation plan has been updated.

The local school corporation Foster Care POCs have been engaged in ongoing opportunities to provide feedback regarding goals, needs, and next steps for students in care. The following goals have been discussed at length and approved by stakeholders:

1. Encourage districts to enact positive discipline practices to prevent actions and deliver resources to districts that will reduce the suspension and expulsion of students in foster care.
2. Broaden and intensify services and supports offered to students in foster care in order to increase graduation.
3. Create and share a variety of targeted professional development resources specific to the role of Foster Care POC clarifying the expectations and responsibilities of the POC and the specific needs of foster youth.
4. Create a blueprint of communication and processes to help and support increased collaboration among foster youth, foster families, DCS education services, LEAs, and community-based service providers. Successful models of collaboration will then have the opportunity to be replicated across the state.

More specific information regarding these goals can be found [here](#).

PROPOSED 2021-2022 FOSTER CARE REMEDIATION PLAN ADDITIONS

Due to a transition in leadership, the 2021-2022 Foster Care Remediation Plan is still in the process of being updated and IDOE and DCS will continue to collaborate on this effort. While keeping the 2020-2021 Remediation Plan at the forefront, the listed additions below serve to enhance the 2020-2021 Remediation Plan.

1. Continue to encourage school districts/corporations to incorporate and enhance their positive discipline practices such as restorative practices.
2. Continue to intensify services and supports offered to students in foster care in order to increase graduation rates such as educational liaisons through the youth's respective foster care agency or advocacy agency.
3. Due to a majority of foster youth being retained in kindergarten, create/enhance an access pipeline for foster youth to be evaluated and enrolled in First Steps and/or enrolled in On My Way Pre-K.

IDOE continues to partner with agencies across the state, including DCS, to ensure collaboration and commitment to support our state's foster youth population.