



MISSOURI EDUCATION PROFILE



PRIME CENTER
SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY

| Letter from the Directors |

Dear Readers,

The SLU PRiME Center is pleased to share the 2020 Missouri Education Profile. Along with descriptions of Missouri’s students and academic achievement, this year’s profile describes the state’s teacher workforce and academic growth. In the pages that follow, we present important student success indicators including state tests, ACT, and NAEP scores, as well as growth on some of these indicators. You’ll also find information on school spending and the teacher workforce in Missouri. For each of these, we’ll show you how we compare to our border states and to the rest of the country, while also examining how these numbers vary for different types of districts within the Show-Me State.

In this edition, we use data made publicly available from the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) for the 2018-19 school year, as well as the National Center for Education Statistics, the ACT, Stanford Center for Education Policy Analysis, and others. The 2018-19 academic year marked the second year of Missouri using its state test (MAP) aligned to the state’s new, more rigorous standards. This allowed for more accurate measures of year-over-year academic growth, as students were using the same assessment tool. Academic growth is an important measure, as it provides a more accurate picture of school and district effectiveness in helping students learn. In the pages that follow, we will show how student background is less influential on growth than it is on proficiency levels and how Missouri’s students are growing in comparison to our neighbor states.

The 2020 Missouri Education Profile is the PRiME Center’s second iteration of the annual dive into state education data. These data, of course, cannot tell the whole story, but instead provide a snapshot. With the COVID-19 pandemic shutting down school during the 2019-20 school year, it remains to be seen what if any meaningful data will be available for Missouri’s students and schools. That being said, we will still take a dive into the available data that can inform policymakers and schools on what steps we can take next.

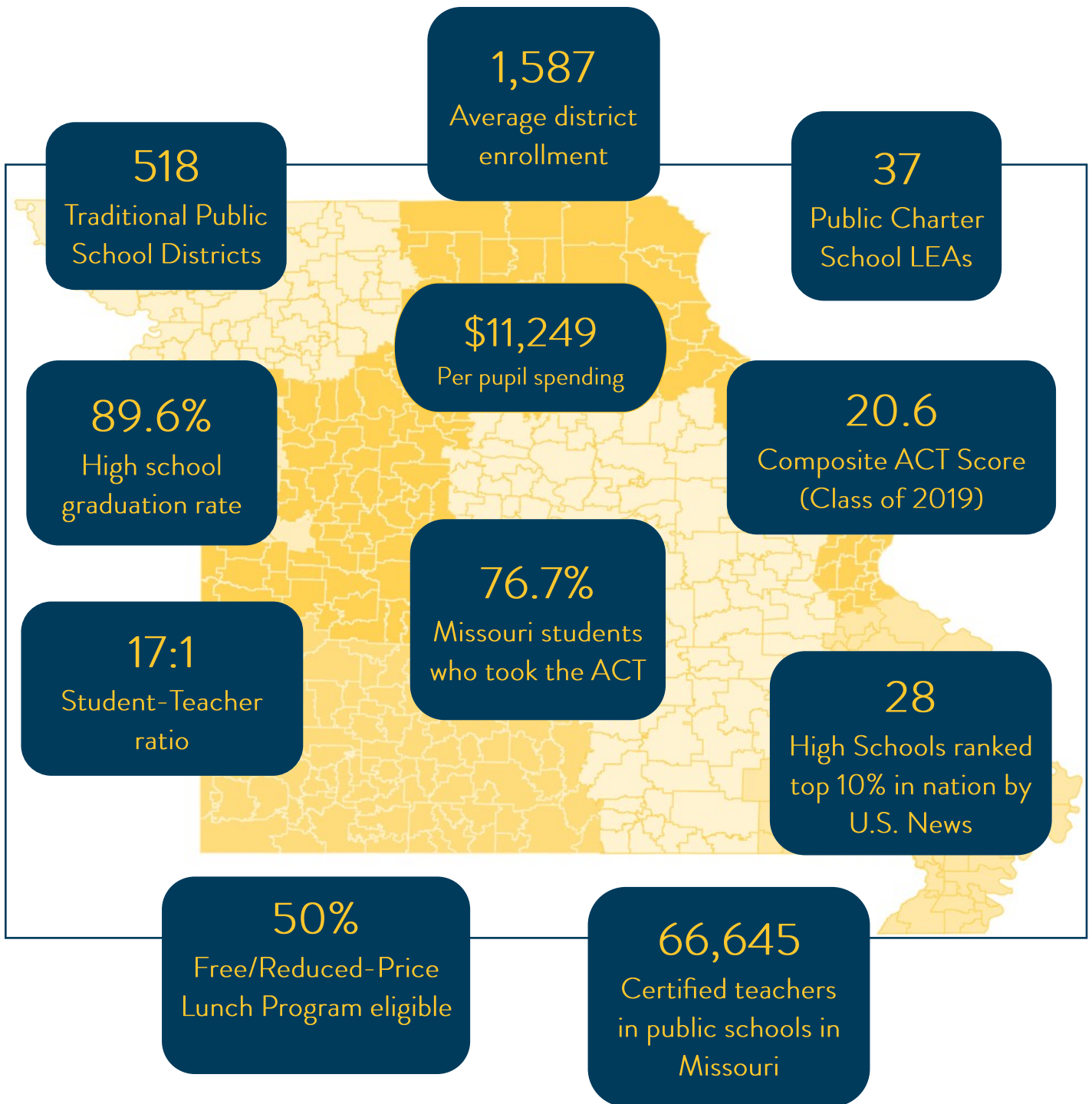
We hope that the information on these pages can be useful. As a Center committed to improving equity in education, we hope that what we have shown here will inspire questions around educational equity in the state. When the questions arise, we will be here to help answer them!

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| Missouri Fast Facts 2018-19 | >> 881,258 students >> 2,414 public schools



| Executive Summary |

In the pages that follow, we describe the students who attend traditional public and public charter schools across the state of Missouri and the resources that support them. We then spend the rest of the pages in our 2020 Missouri Education Profile describing student performance and success in the context of the neighboring states and observed national trends.

Who are Missouri's Students? Students in Missouri are not as diverse as students across the United States. While fewer than half of the students across the nation identify as White, 71% of Missouri students are White. Nevertheless, Missouri's student population has grown more diverse over the past 15 years. With respect to poverty, as measured by student eligibility for Free- or Reduced-Price school lunches (FRL), students in Missouri (50% FRL) are slightly more advantaged than their peers in the border states (51% FRL) and their peers across the nation (52% FRL).

Who are Missouri's Teachers? Missouri's teaching workforce is overwhelmingly female (78%) and overwhelmingly White. While just over 70% of our students identify as White, 96% of teachers and staff in Missouri are White. Nearly always, students of color in Missouri are taught by teachers who are a different race.

How Much Do Missouri Schools Spend? With regard to per pupil expenditures, Missouri schools spend approximately \$11,500 per pupil, which is roughly \$400 less than border states and about \$1,600 less than the national average. Similarly, average teacher pay in Missouri is about \$4,000 less than in border states and about \$11,000 less than the national average. Missouri's low teacher pay remains when we adjust for the cost of living in the state. Perhaps most striking is that Missouri's average starting salary is less than the national and border state averages.

How Are Missouri's Students Doing? Missouri had its second year with the new Missouri Assessment Program

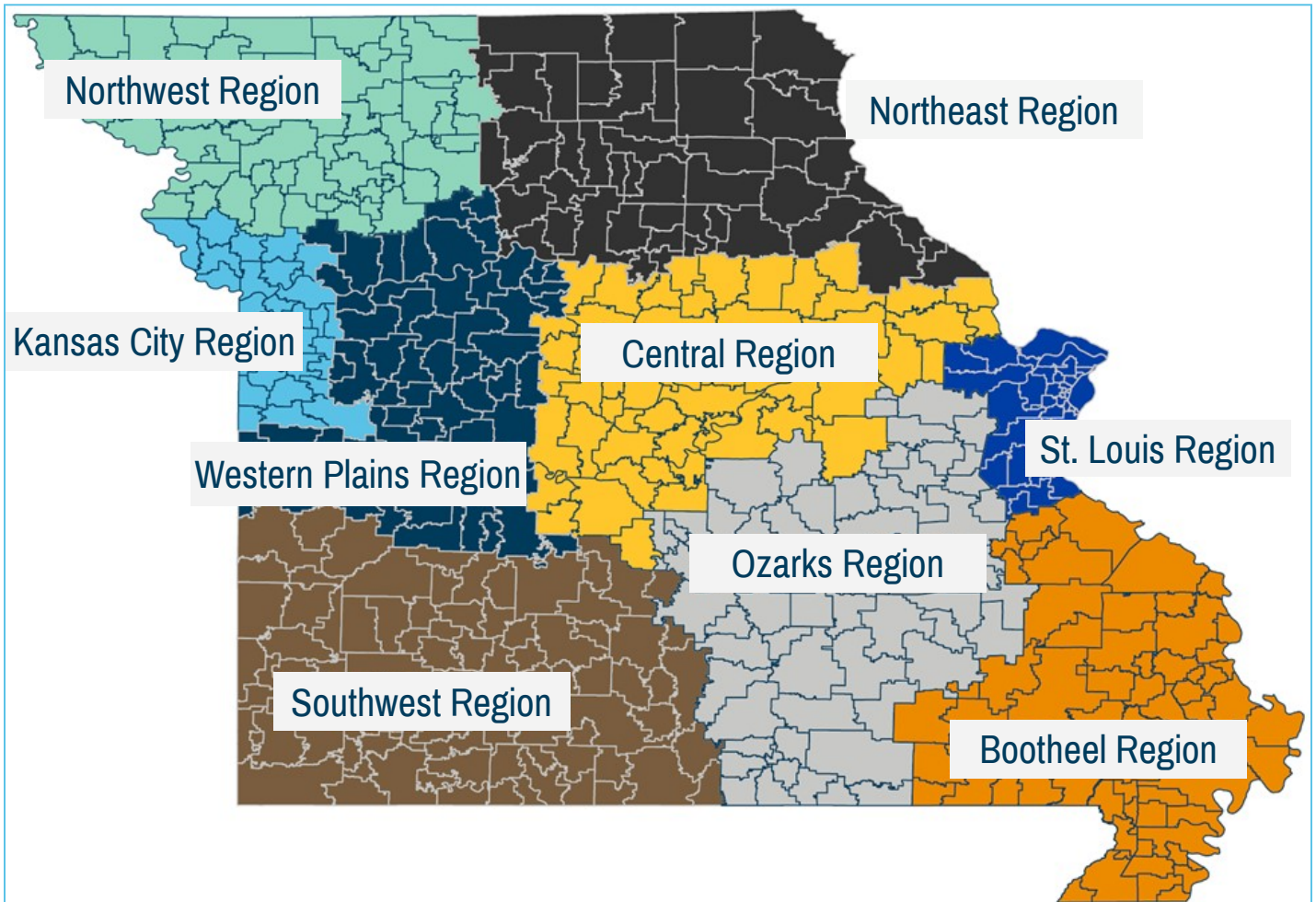
(MAP) assessment and standards program, allowing the state to provide a more accurate depiction of overall student growth. For the 2018-19 school year, 47% and 40% of students in the publicly-available data from DESE met the state's readiness benchmarks in Communication Arts and Math respectively. Because state-designed exams (like MAP) do not allow for across-state comparisons, we also examine the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Overall, Missouri's NAEP scores across subjects and grade levels tracked with national trends. Math remained relatively flat, while reading scores fell. The biggest hit Missouri took was in 4th grade reading, where students scored five scale score points worse at a statistically significant level.

The 2018-19 school year saw a sizable drop in the percentage of students who participated in the ACT, as the state and several districts opted to no longer pay for students to participate in the test. With fewer students taking the test, Missouri's average ACT score increased.

Why Growth? Academic growth is arguably more important than proficiency levels, as growth provides a measure of how much students are learning each year. While achievement levels do help us to understand whether students are meeting the expected standards of their current grade level, it is likely more useful to examine how much more students learn each year. Unlike growth, achievement is much more dependent on out of school factors. This does not mean achievement scores are useless. Rather, achievement scores are useful for finding patterns and trends in performance. We can use these to understand how schools serving similar students are performing, whether we are performing well in one subject versus another, and if there are certain strategies to help students grasp information that we should be helping implement on a larger scale. Mapping these changes will be especially important in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, this analysis will have to wait until spring 2021 data are available as the spring 2020 shutdown canceled standardized testing.

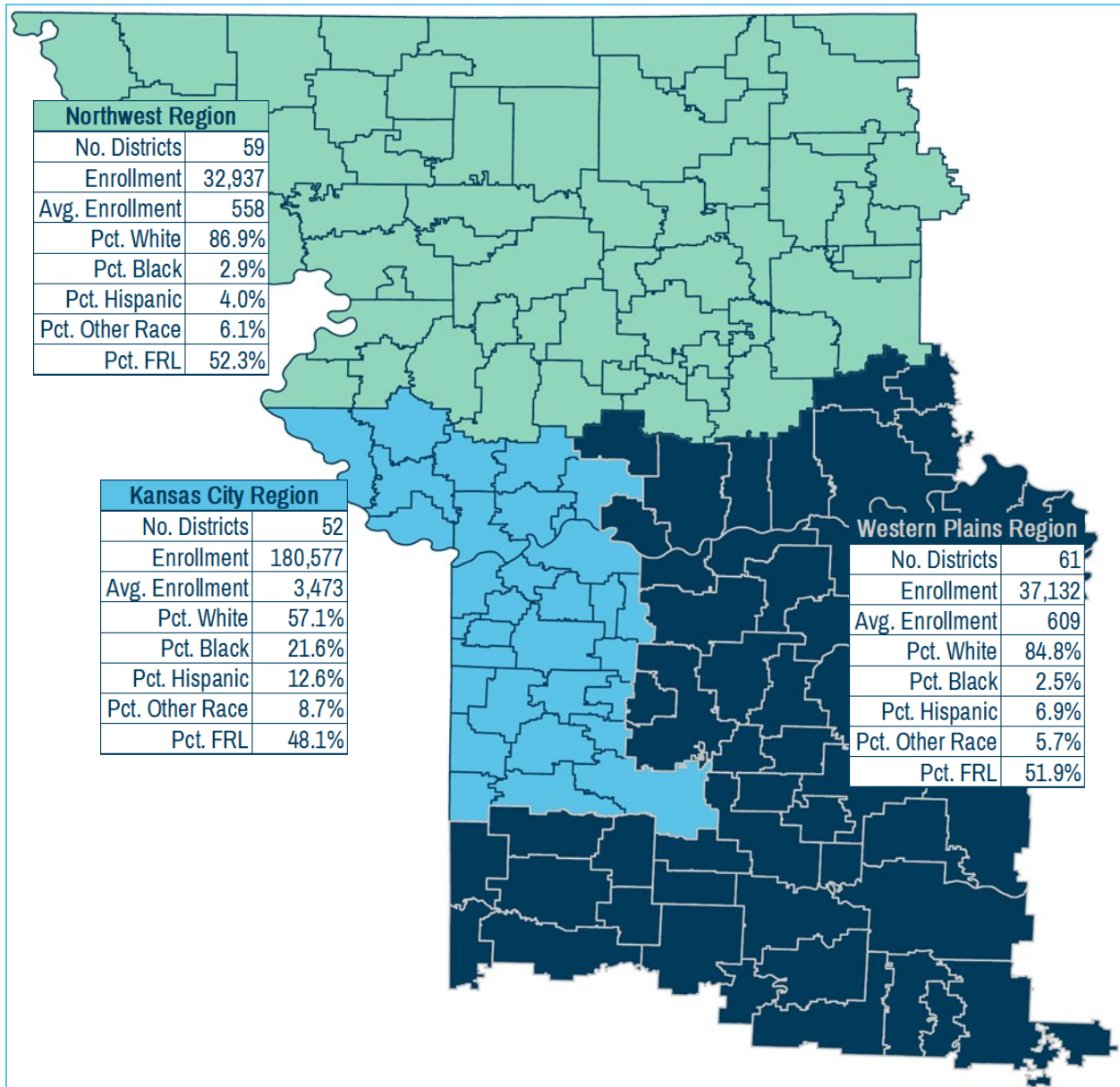
| Missouri Student Demographics, 2018-19 |

	White	Black	Hispanic	All Other Races	Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligible	English Language Learners
Missouri	71%	16%	6%	7%	52%	4%
National Average	48%	15%	27%	11%	52%	10%
Border States	63%	12%	15%	9%	54%	8%



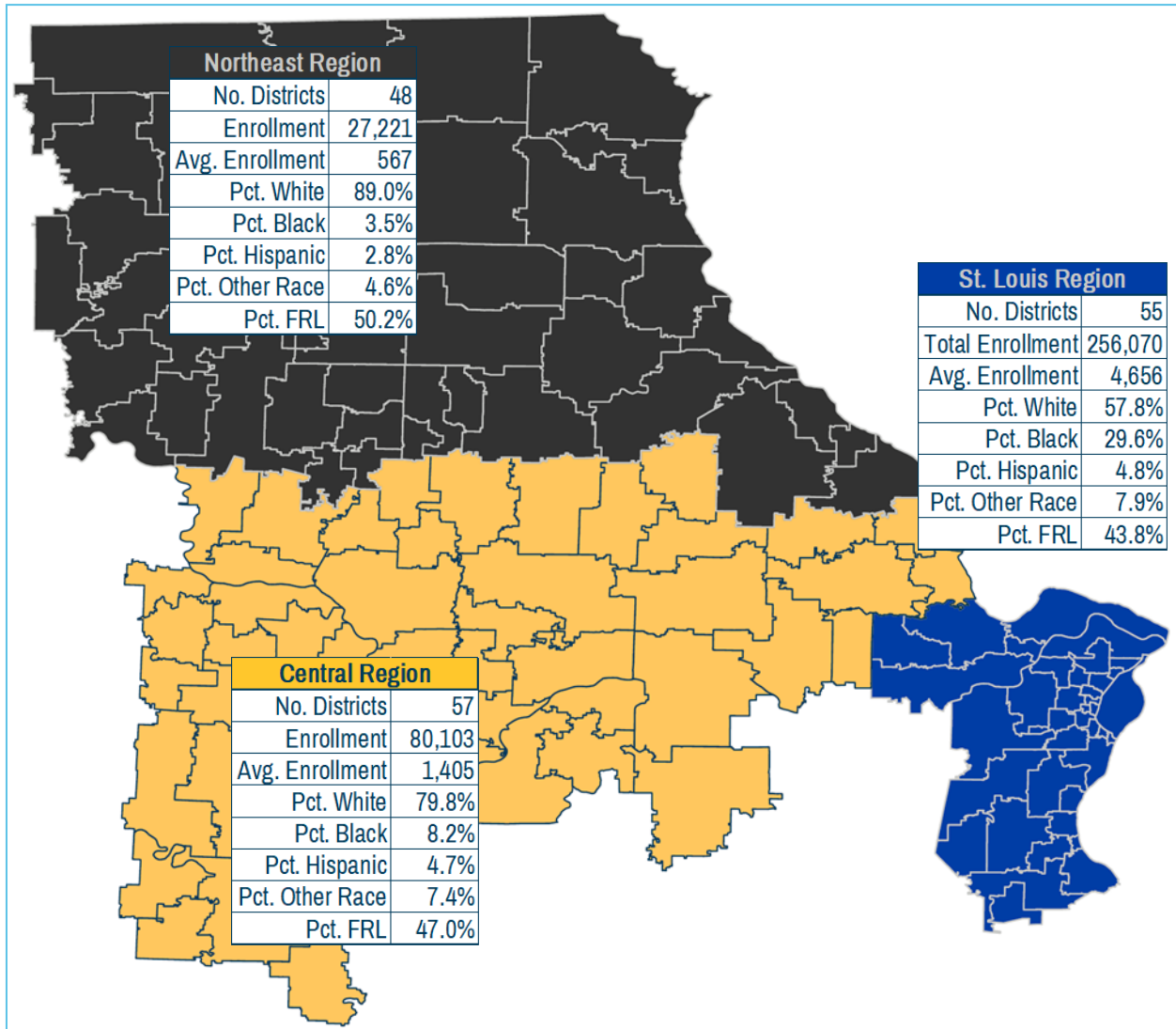
Missouri’s student body is majority White (71%), with Black (16%) and Hispanic (6%) students representing the two largest minority groups. Compared to the border states, Missouri has slightly larger White and Black student populations, but a smaller percentage of students who identify as Hispanic or other races. Missouri’s Hispanic population is substantially smaller than the national average, with a substantially larger White population. The percentage of students in Missouri who are eligible for the federal Free/Reduced-Price Lunch program is similar to that of national trends, but slightly smaller than the border states. There is considerable variation in the student body within the state of Missouri as well. While the St. Louis and Kansas City Regions are the most diverse, the school districts themselves are not necessarily diverse. Districts across the Bootheel, Ozarks, and Southwest Regions of the state serve the largest percentages of FRL-eligible students.

| Western Missouri Student Demographics, 2018-19 |



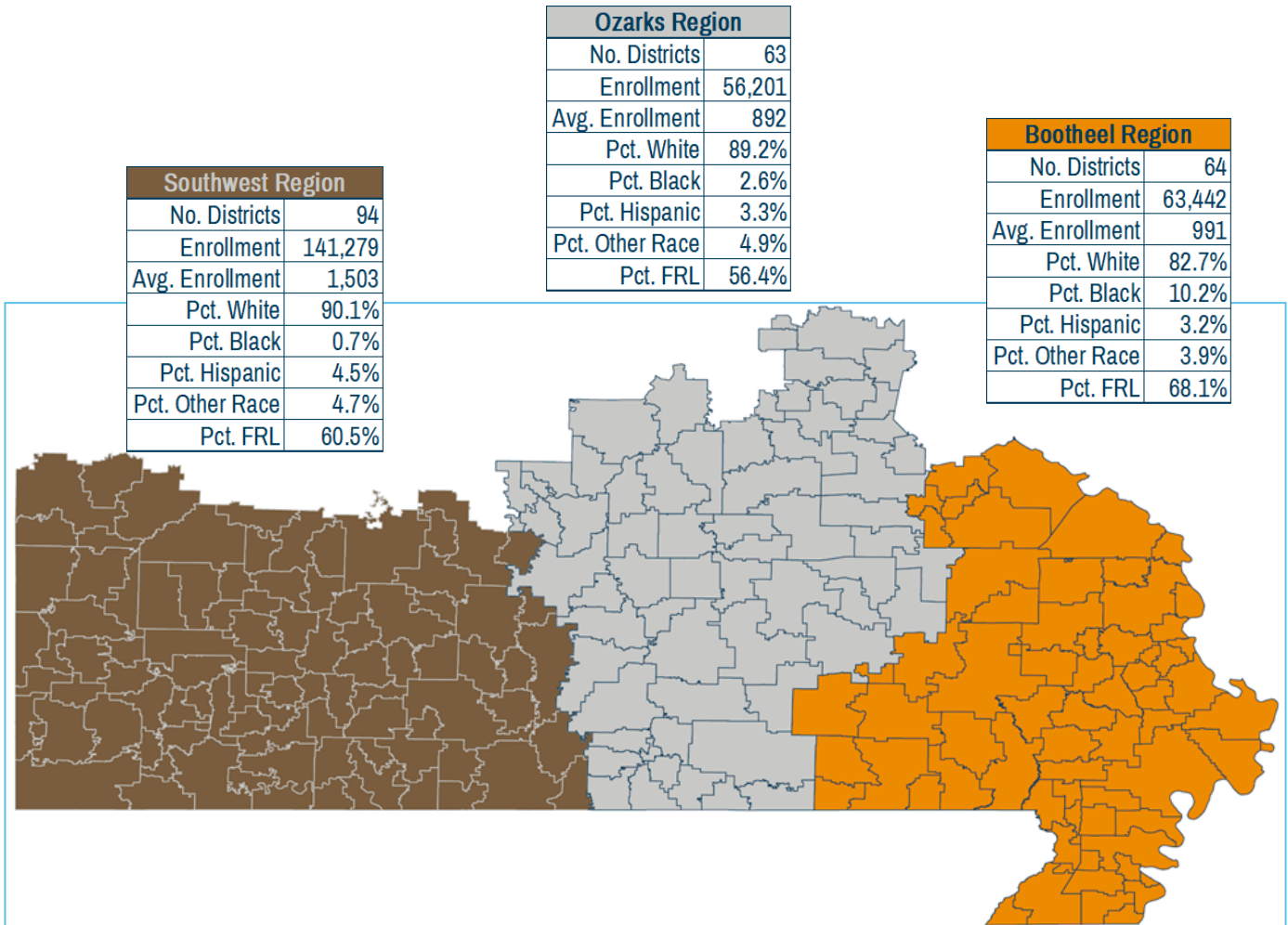
The three DESE supervisory regions in the western part of the state includes the Western Plains, Northwest, and the Kansas City Regions. Kansas City has the smallest number of school districts among these three regions, but serves the second largest number of students in the state (behind only the St. Louis Region), as the region includes the Kansas City-area public charter schools. Compared to the other regions across Missouri, districts in the Kansas City Region serve the highest percentage of students identifying as Hispanic. Districts in the Western Plains and Northwest Regions enroll fewer students, and are only larger than the Northeast Region. Additionally, students in these two regions are more likely to be White than Kansas City.

| Eastern Missouri Student Demographics, 2018-19 |



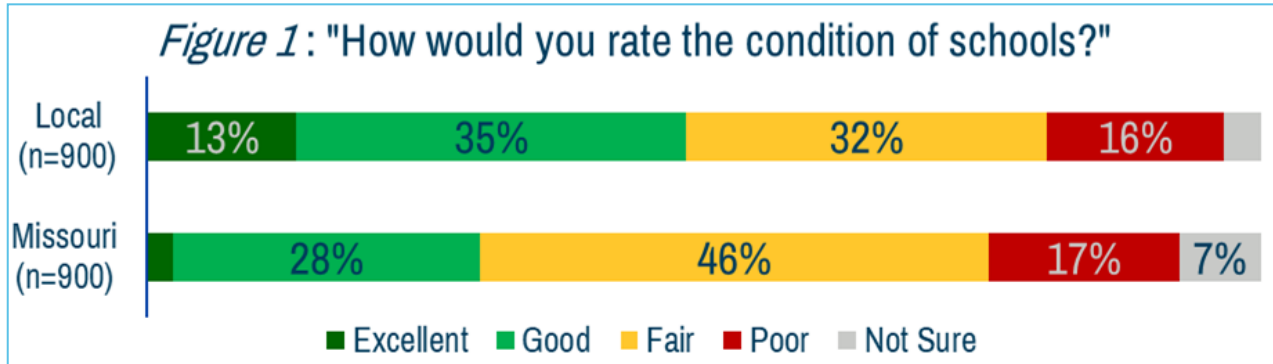
The eastern portion of the state consists of the St. Louis Region, Central Region, and Northeast Region. The St. Louis Region enrolls the largest number of students statewide, with over a quarter-million students in 55 districts, which includes the public charter schools in St. Louis City. By contrast, the Northeast region has the fewest number of districts and students of any region in the state. Compared to all other regions in the state, the St. Louis Region enrolls the largest percentage of students who identify as Black, with nearly 3 in 10 students identifying as Black.

| Southern Missouri Student Demographics, 2018-19 |

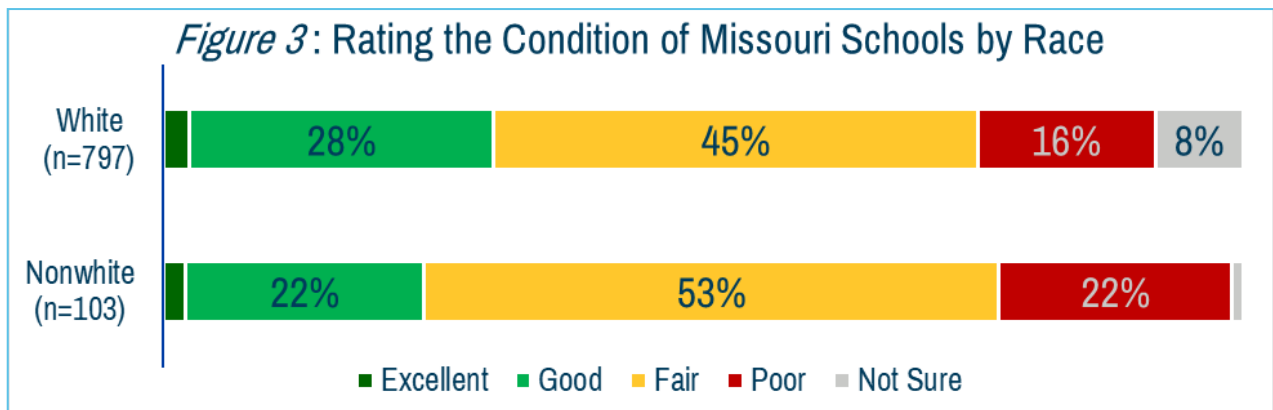
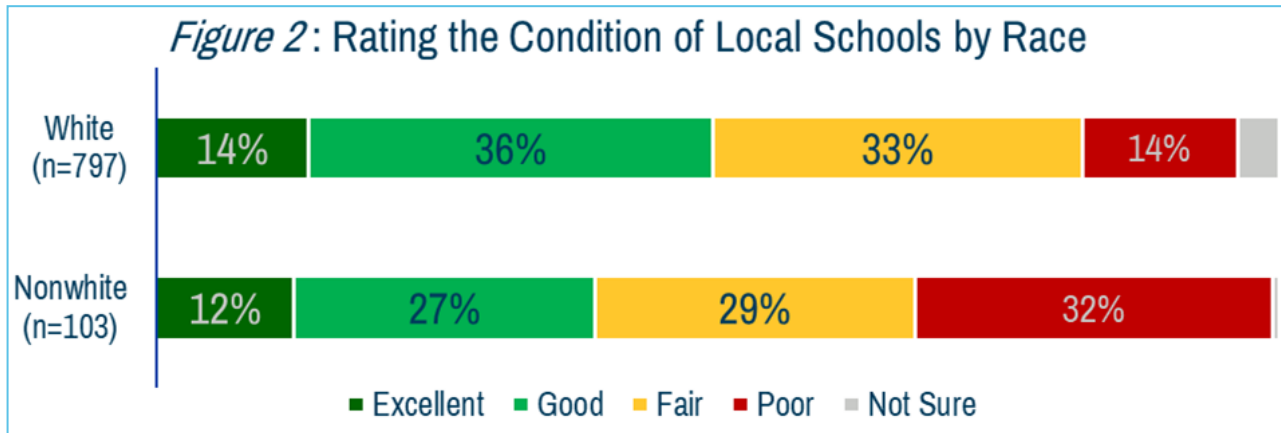


The three DESE supervisory regions in the southern portion of Missouri includes the Southwest, Ozarks, and Bootheel Regions. These three districts serve the highest percentages of impoverished students, with 60 percent of students in the Southwest and Ozarks regions qualifying Free/Reduced-Price Lunch. **The Bootheel serves the highest concentration of impoverished students, with nearly 70 percent of students qualifying for Free/Reduced-Price lunch.** Each of these three regions serve majority White students, with the Southwest Region serving the highest percentage of White students at 90 and the Ozarks Region trailing only slightly at 89 percent. The Bootheel serves the third largest percentage of students who identify as Black. The Southwest Region consists of 94 districts, the largest portion of districts in the state.

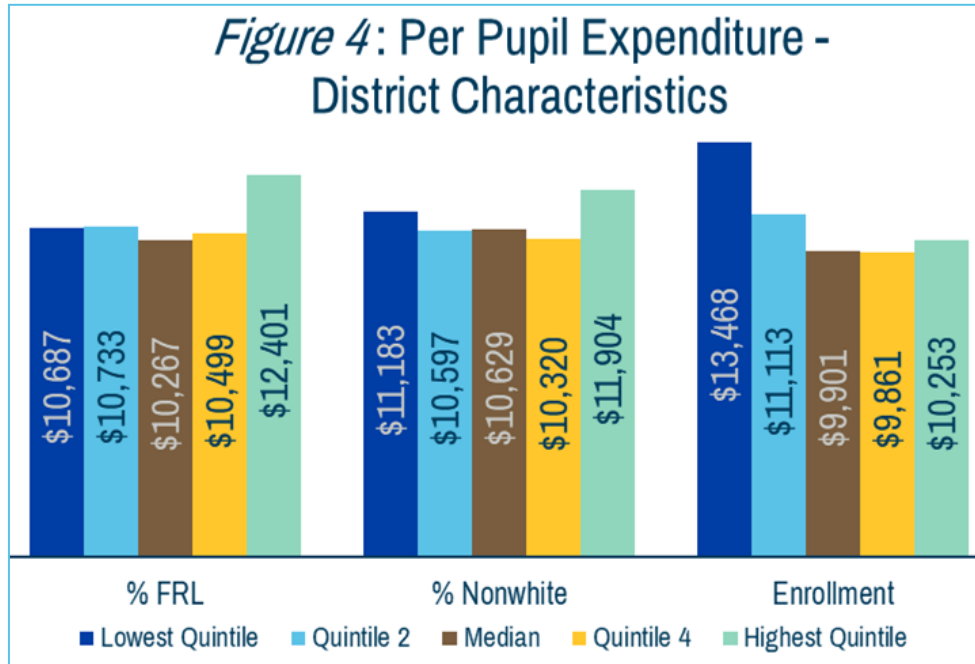
| Missourians' Opinions of Education, 2018-19 |



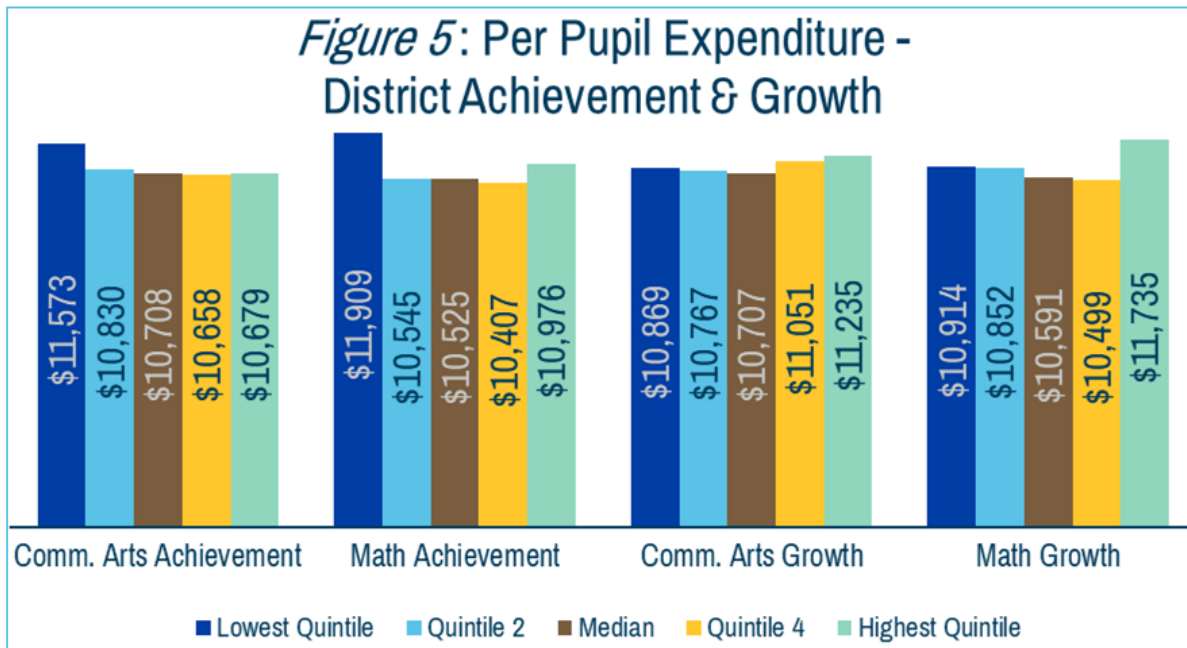
Between June 23 and July 1, 2020, SLU worked with YouGov to interview 900 likely voters from the state of Missouri. Along with a host of election and policy-related questions, we asked Missourians to rate schools in their communities and across the state. Like national trends, Missourians reported they believe their local schools are better than schools across the state. It is important to note that few Missourians rate their local schools or Missouri's schools as excellent, with most rating their schools as good or fair. Generally, Missourians rated schools in their own communities as better than the schools across the state. When we examine differences in Missouri voters' responses, white voters were generally more positive about both local schools and schools across the state. In fact, Nonwhite voters' most common response about their local schools was "Poor", as nearly a third of these respondents said their local schools are poor.



| Per Pupil Expenditure: Missouri, 2018-19 |



In 2018-19, the average school district in Missouri spent \$10,918 in current expenditures per pupil. Spending did not vary dramatically by student characteristics, but we do see that smaller schools typically spent more than larger schools. Per pupil spending was higher in school districts that had the lowest math achievement, with these districts often spending nearly \$1,000 more per pupil. This pattern was reversed, as districts with the highest math growth spent the most per pupil. Districts that experienced the lowest gains in English spent about \$400 less than the districts that made the greatest gains in English. Districts that experienced the largest gains in Math spent the most per student. Interestingly, districts in the second highest Math growth and academic achievement quintile spent the least of all districts in the state.



| Per Pupil Expenditure: National Data, 2016-17 |

Figure 6 : Average Per Pupil Expenditure and K-12 Enrollment

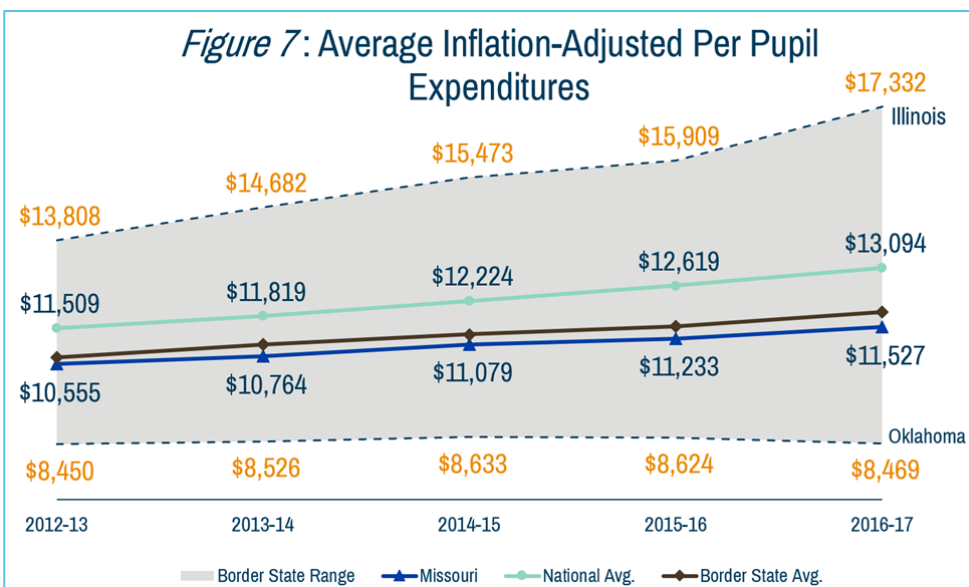
	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Missouri	\$10,764	\$11,079	\$11,233	\$11,527
National Avg.	\$11,819	\$12,224	\$12,619	\$13,094
Border Avg.	\$11,069	\$11,337	\$11,545	\$11,932
Illinois	\$14,682	\$15,473	\$15,909	\$17,332
Nebraska	\$12,502	\$12,825	\$13,700	\$14,062
Iowa	\$11,359	\$11,698	\$11,846	\$12,167
Kentucky	\$10,248	\$10,659	\$10,912	\$11,193
Kansas	\$11,180	\$11,106	\$10,815	\$11,159
Arkansas	\$10,622	\$10,756	\$10,837	\$10,968
Tennessee	\$9,431	\$9,549	\$9,719	\$10,106
Oklahoma	\$8,526	\$8,633	\$8,624	\$8,469

Note: Bubble size represents total K-12 enrollment in each state

According to the most recent year of national data, Missouri spends less than the national and border state average.

Using the most recent year of national data from the National Center for Education Statistics, Missouri spent less than both the border state and national averages. However, the border state average is heavily driven by per pupil expenditures in the state of Illinois, which outspent the next highest spending border state (Nebraska) by over \$3,000 in 2016-17. As the figure below shows, Missouri’s per pupil expenditures have increased by about \$1,000 since 2013. The highest spending border state has increased by \$3,000 over the same time, while the lowest spending state has stayed stagnant over the same period.

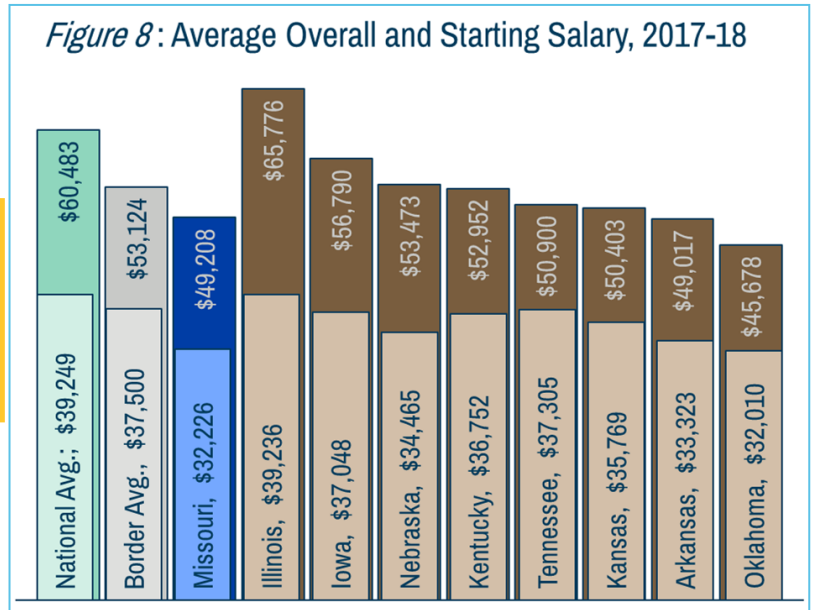
Figure 7: Average Inflation-Adjusted Per Pupil Expenditures



Teacher Pay: National Data, 2017-18

The average Missouri teacher earns less in their first year and overall than our border states and the national average.

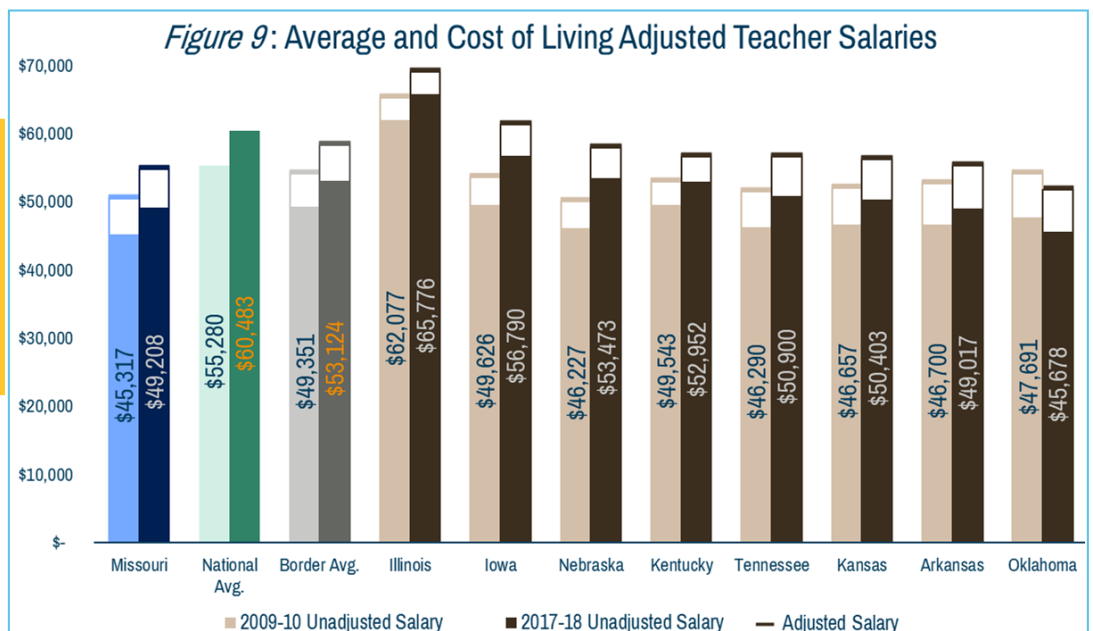
Figure 8: Average Overall and Starting Salary, 2017-18



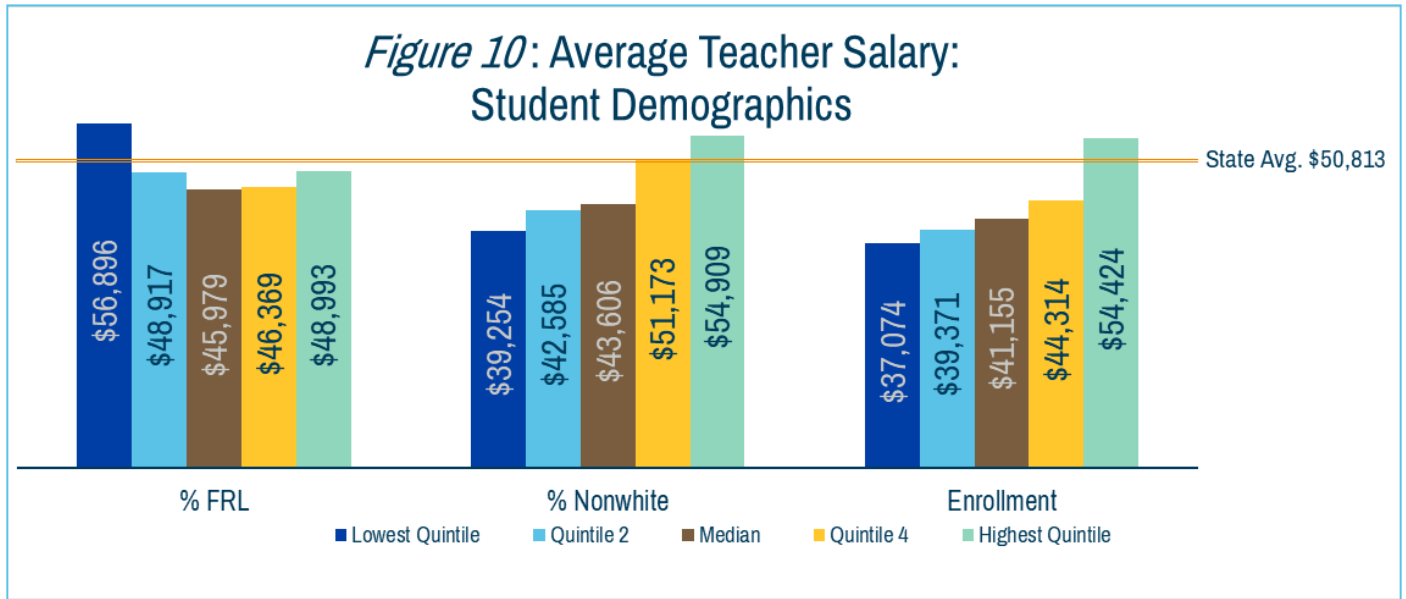
Using data from the National Center for Education Statistics, we find that Missouri’s average teacher salary has increased in recent years but still lags behind its neighbors and the national average. Missouri also pays its newest teachers less than all but one of its border states. Missouri’s starting salary is about \$7,000 less than the national trend, while the average salary is about \$11,000 less. While higher pay is an effective way to retain teachers, increasing starting salaries is an effective way to attract new, talented individuals into teaching. Missouri’s teachers do fare slightly better when adjusting salaries for cost of living but still lag behind most of our neighboring states.

When adjusted for cost of living, Missouri teachers continue to earn less than the national average.

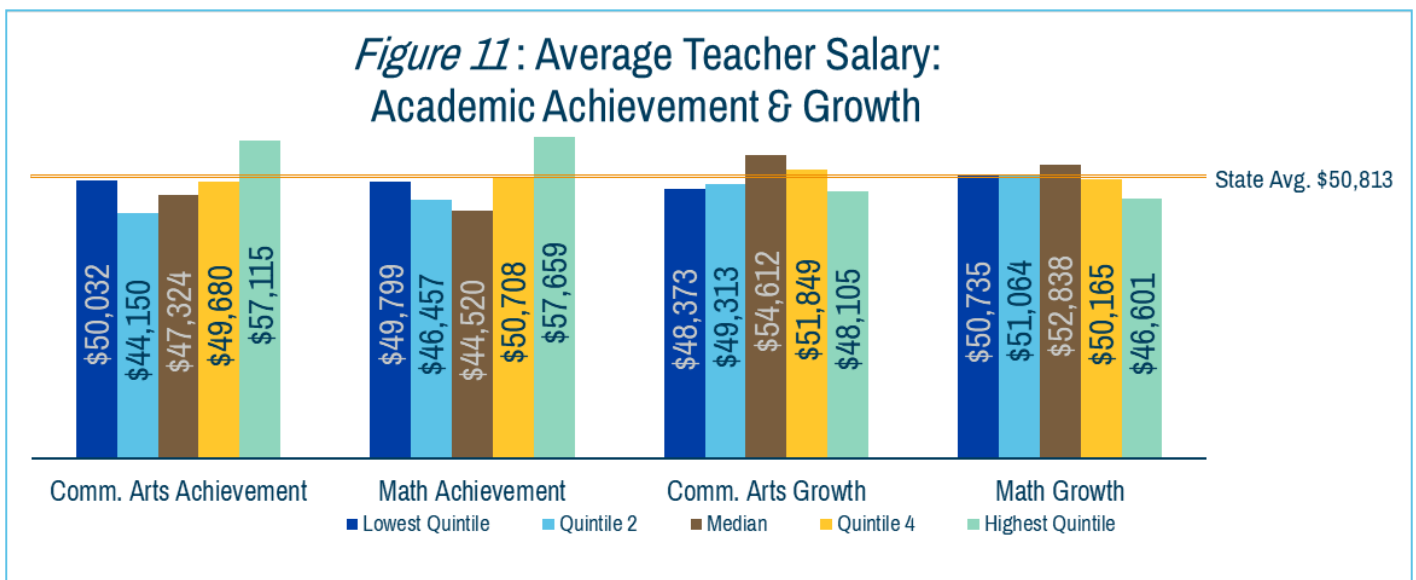
Figure 9: Average and Cost of Living Adjusted Teacher Salaries



| Teacher Pay: Missouri, 2018-19 |

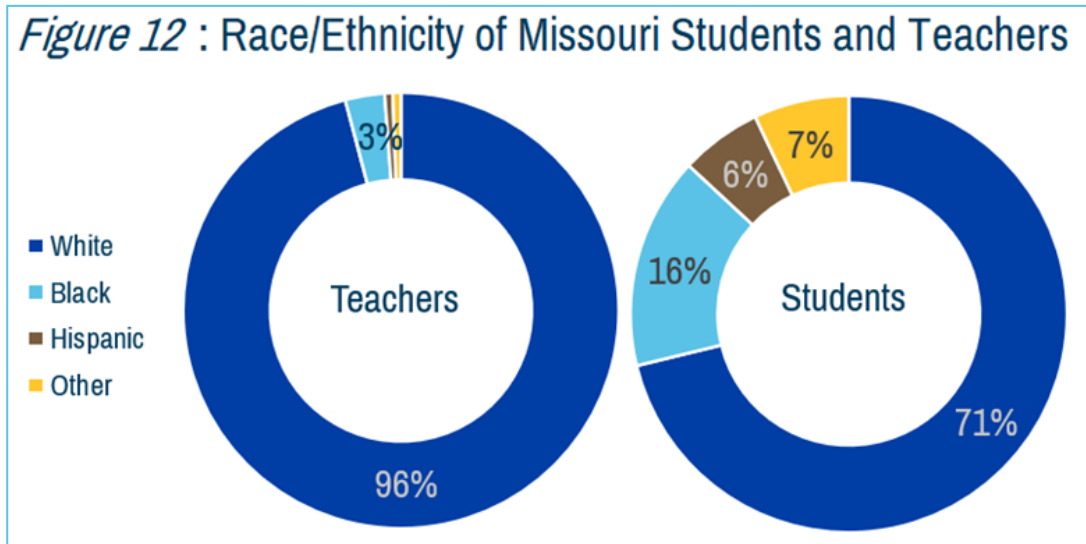


Missouri’s average teacher salary was \$50,813 during the 2018-19 school year. Teacher salaries are generally highest in districts with the lowest percentage of students who qualify for the federal Free- or Reduced-Price Lunch program (\$56,896), districts serving the largest percentages of Nonwhite students (\$54,909), and in the largest school districts in the state (\$54,424). This is likely a function of location, as the districts serving the most students and the most Nonwhite are located in urban areas that often have a higher cost of living. Along with student characteristics, we see that districts serving the highest achieving students typically pay their teachers more as well. When we examine growth, we see a different story. Typically, highest growing districts in both Math and English pay less than the districts exhibiting the least amounts of growth. In fact, the districts that helped their students improve their Math scores the most paid an average of \$4,000 less than the districts exhibiting the least amount of growth.



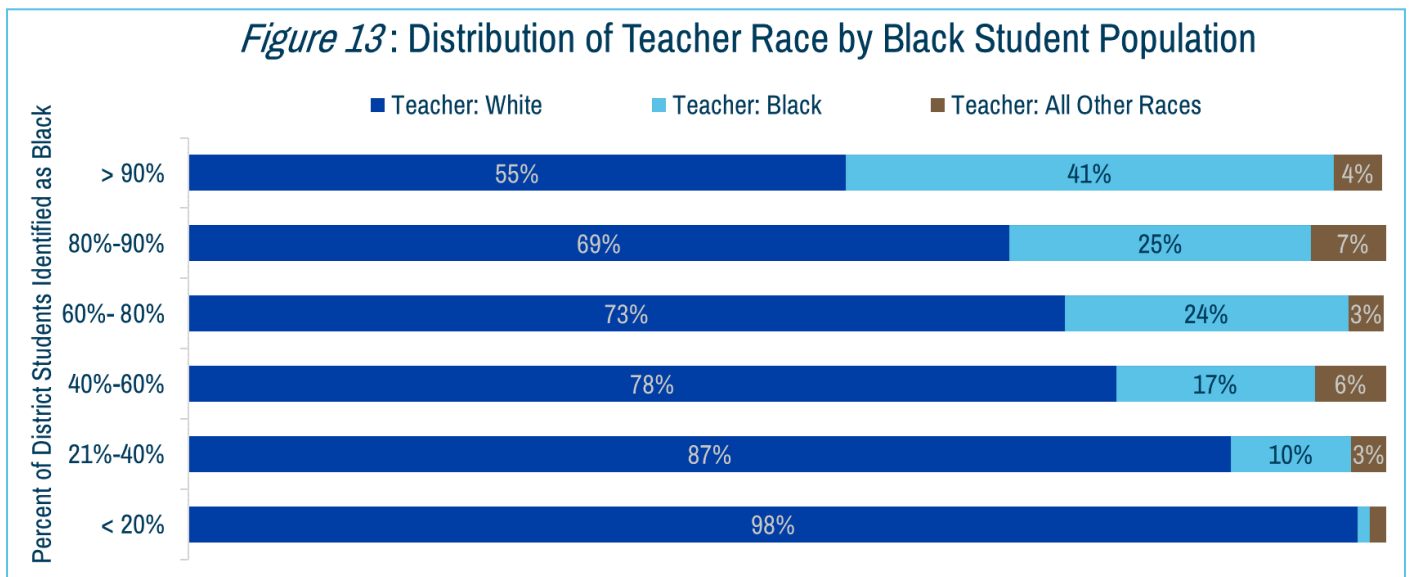
| Teacher Demographics, 2018-19 |

Figure 12 : Race/Ethnicity of Missouri Students and Teachers

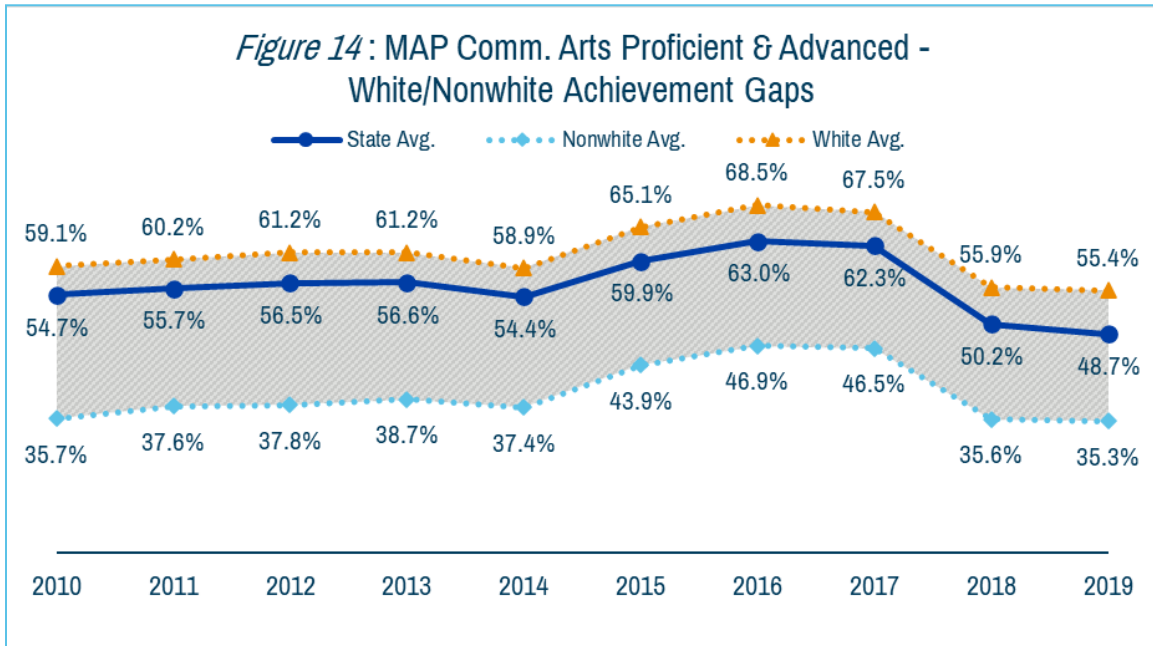


Missouri’s student population is majority White, with Black and Hispanic students comprising the two largest minority groups. However, teachers in Missouri are overwhelmingly White, with 96% of teachers identified as such. When we examine the differences in race between teachers and students, we find that **students of color are disproportionately served by White teachers**. Schools with over 90% of students identifying as Black have the most diverse teaching staff but remain majority White. When schools have a student body that is less than 20% black, the teaching staff is almost majority White.

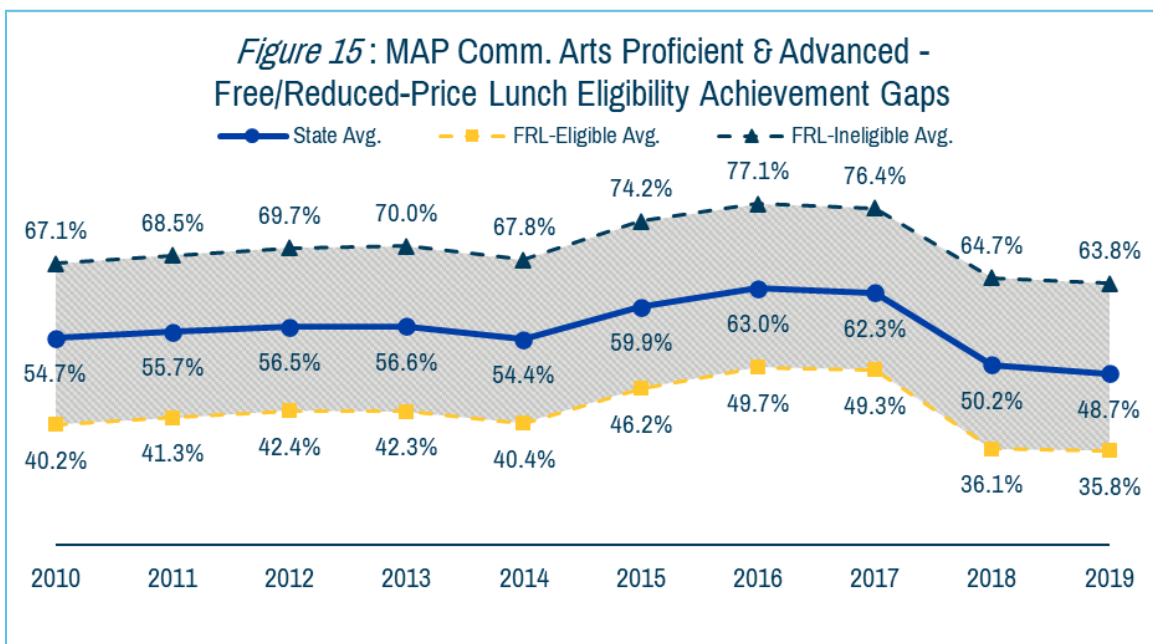
Figure 13: Distribution of Teacher Race by Black Student Population



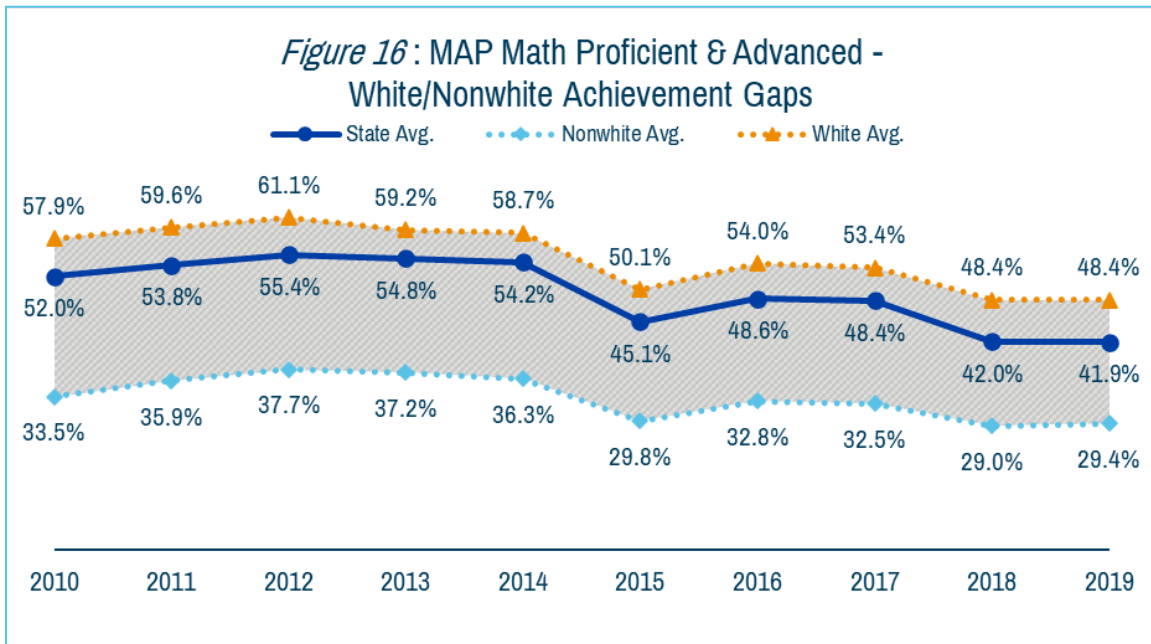
| MAP Testing: Communication Arts, 2018-19 |



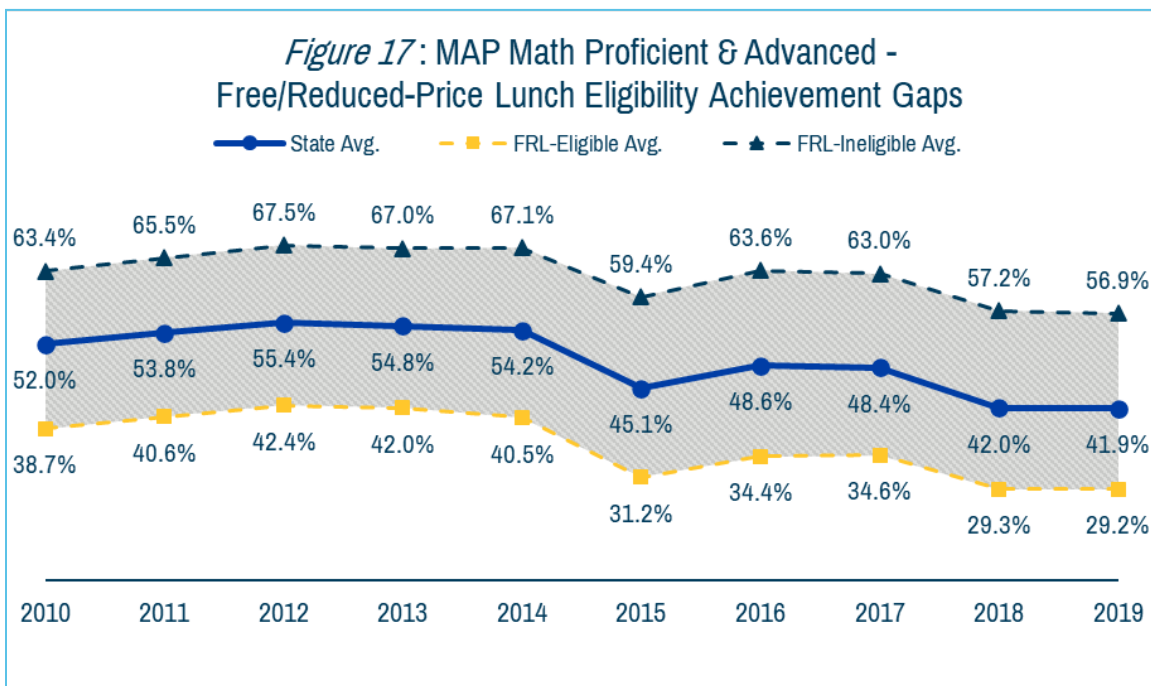
The 2018-19 school year marked the second year of the new MAP assessments, after years of standard and assessment changes. This year, nearly 50% of tested students scored Proficient or Advanced in the state’s Communication Arts assessment. Rather than describing the differences in district characteristics, we are showing how different student groups performed. Specifically, we see that 55% of White students scored Proficient and Advanced, while only 35% of their nonwhite classmates achieved at these levels. Nearly two-thirds (64%) of Missouri’s students who were ineligible for Free- or Reduced-Price Lunch met the readiness benchmark, compared to just 35% of their FRL-eligible classmates.



| MAP Testing: Math, 2018-19 |

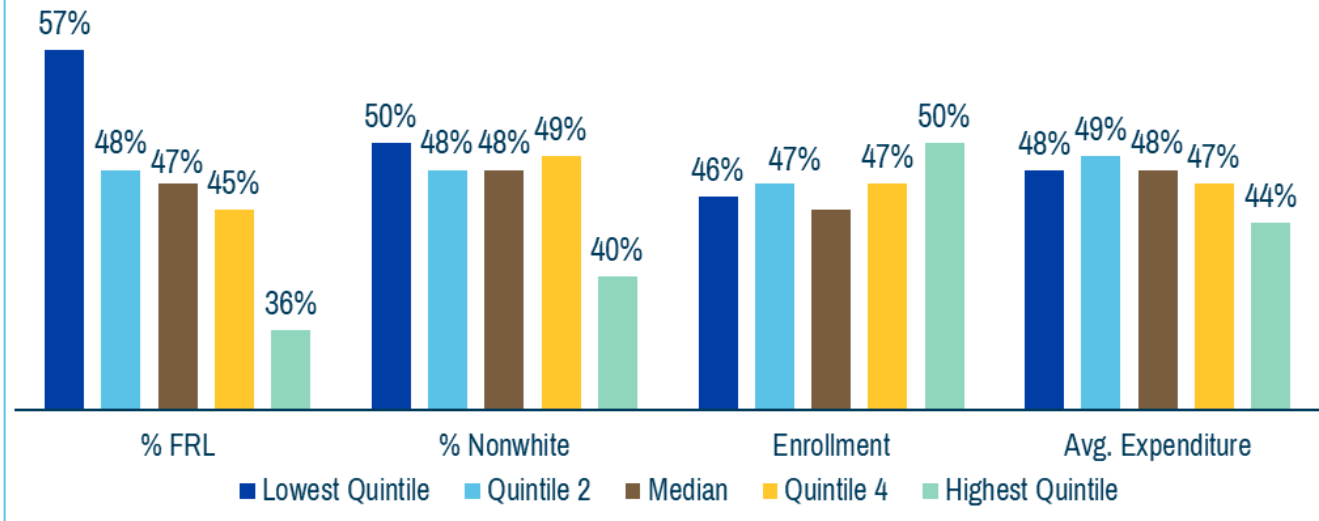


Similar to the Communication Arts results, Missouri’s Math assessment results show similar dips and jumps in the percent Proficient and Advanced. While only 42% of students statewide met the readiness benchmark in Math, we again see differences in performance for students from different backgrounds. Nearly half of the White students in Missouri met the readiness benchmark (48%), compared to less than one-third of Nonwhite students (29%). The differences in achievement based on students’ socioeconomic status is similarly stark, with only 3 in 10 (57%) FRL-eligible students meeting the Math readiness benchmark, compared to 6 in 10 (57%) students who are more affluent achieving at similar levels.



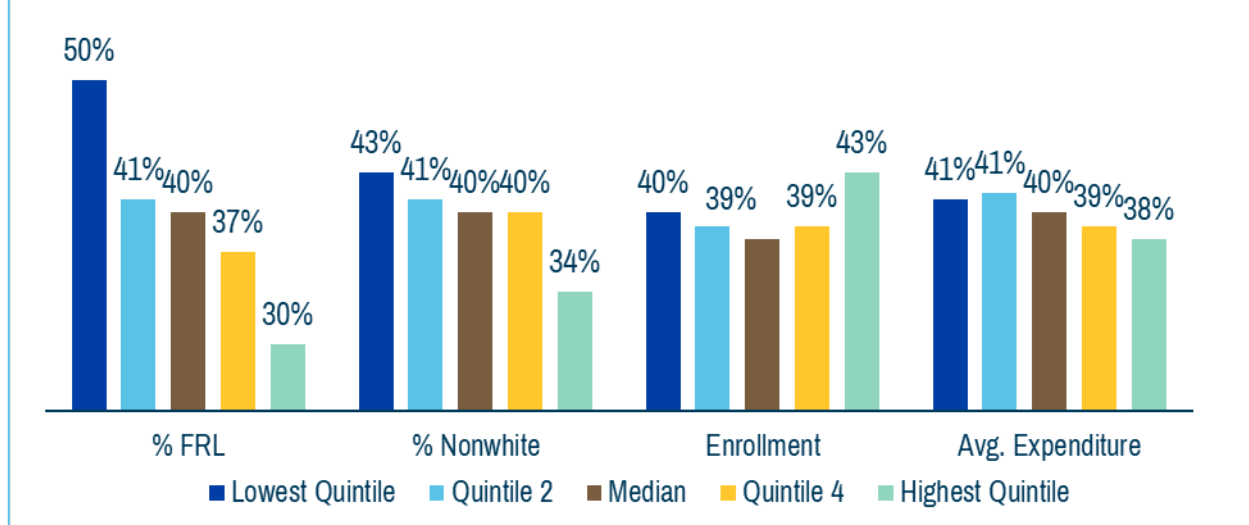
| Academic Achievement: MAP, 2018-19 |

Figure 18: Pct. Proficient & Advanced: Communication Arts



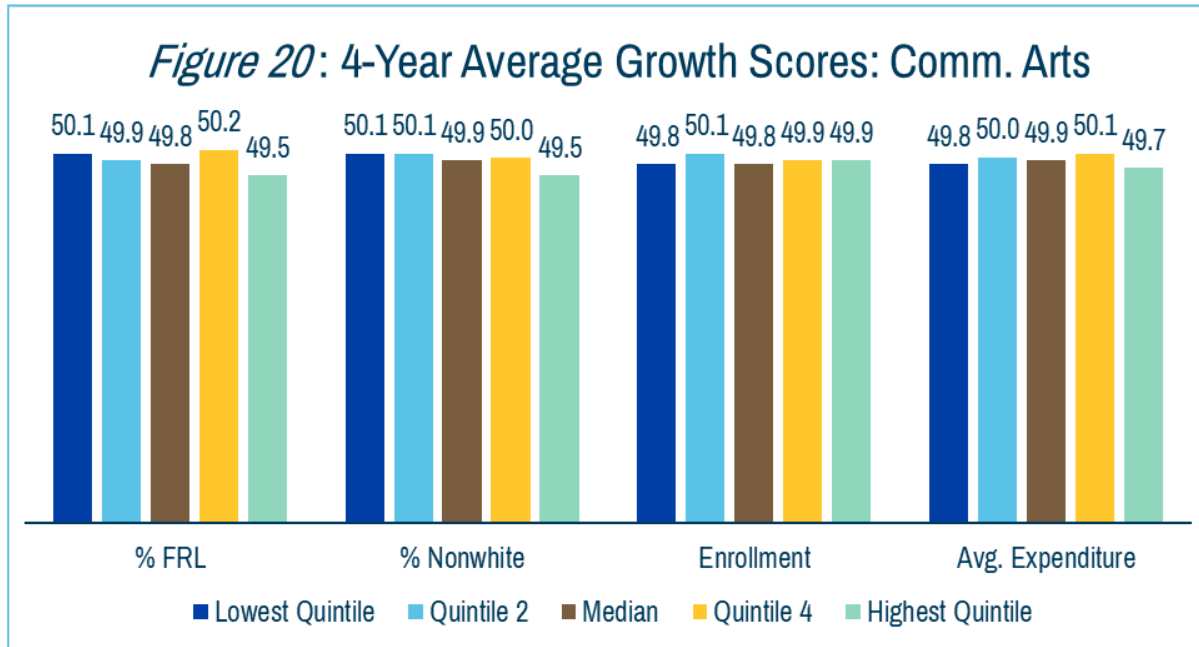
The 2018-19 school year was the second year of the redesigned MAP test. During the 2018-19 school year, fewer than 50 percent of students were Proficient or better in Communication Arts and Math. Achievement scores, serving as a measure of whether students met a standard, show that districts serving the lowest percentage of FRL-eligible (the most affluent) students have the highest achievement scores in both subjects. In fact, half of the most affluent students in these schools were Proficient or better in Math and nearly 60% of students in these districts serving more affluent were Proficient or better in Communication Arts. Districts serving the largest populations of FRL-eligible students had the lowest number of students who scored Proficient or above.

Figure 19: Pct. Proficient & Advanced: Math



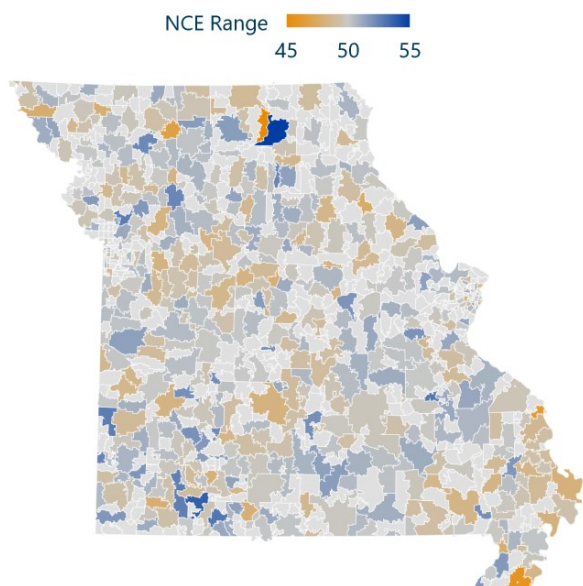
Note: For academic achievement, we exclude districts using alternative assessments (MAP-A) and schools serving as alternative learning environments (i.e. juvenile justice system). Due to data suppression rules, some achievement categories are unavailable, leading to differences in our reported achievement levels and those reported by the state.

| Academic Growth: Communication Arts, 2018-19 |



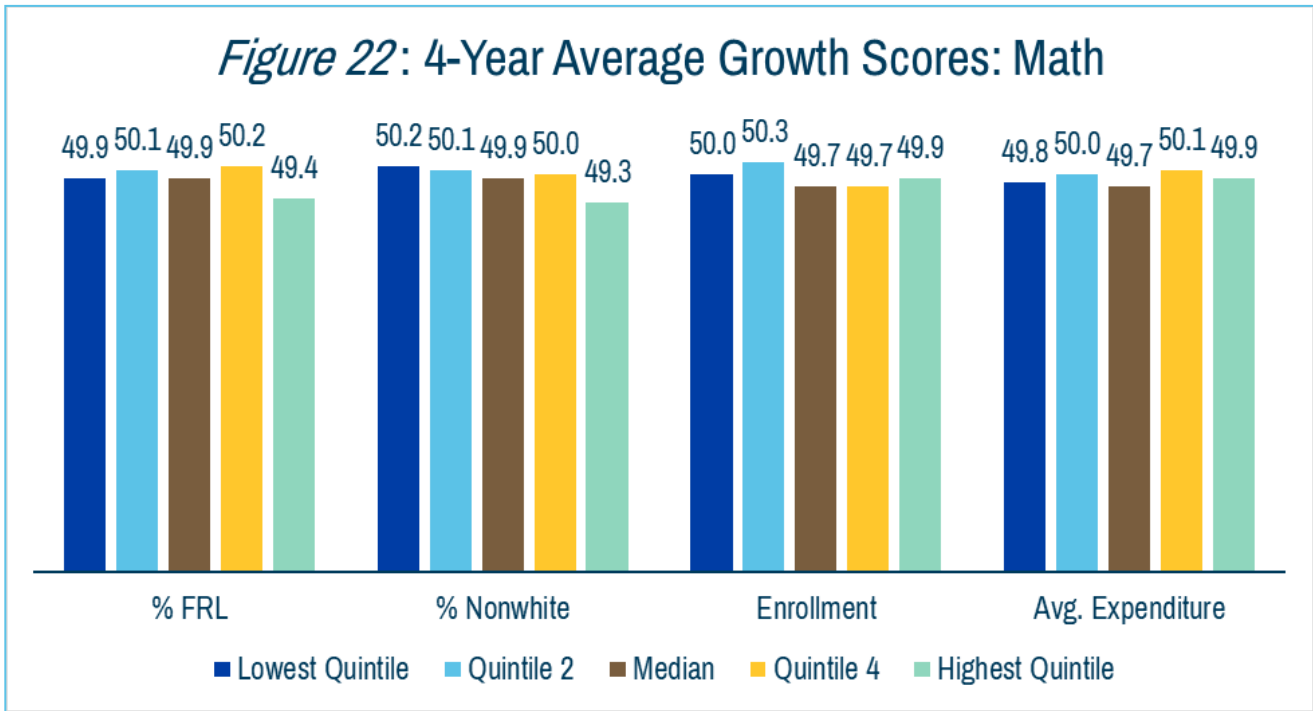
Unlike last year, the 2018-19 school year allowed us to observe year-to-year academic growth in Communication Arts and Math. The state’s expected growth score in Communication Arts is 50 Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE) units. Districts exceeding that level exhibit more learning than expected, whereas those with scores less than 50 exhibit lower than expected learning. As we see, most districts, regardless of student characteristics, experience similar levels of growth in Communication Arts. Districts in the second highest quintile of FRL-eligible students exhibited the greatest average growth over the last four years. This means that these students have experienced slightly greater gains in academic skills than their more affluent peers.

Figure 21: District Academic Growth Scores, Communication Arts



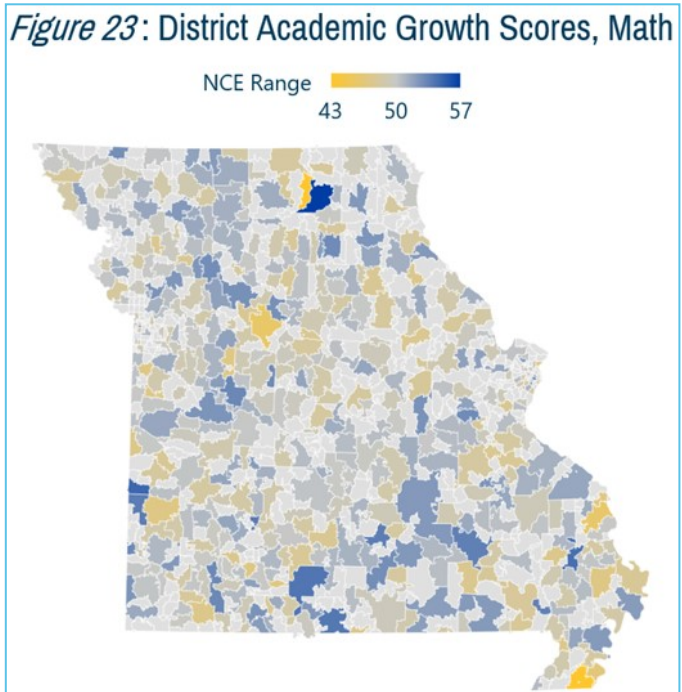
Most districts statewide earn growth scores right around the expected level, with few scoring far above or below the state average.

| Academic Growth: Math, 2018-19 |

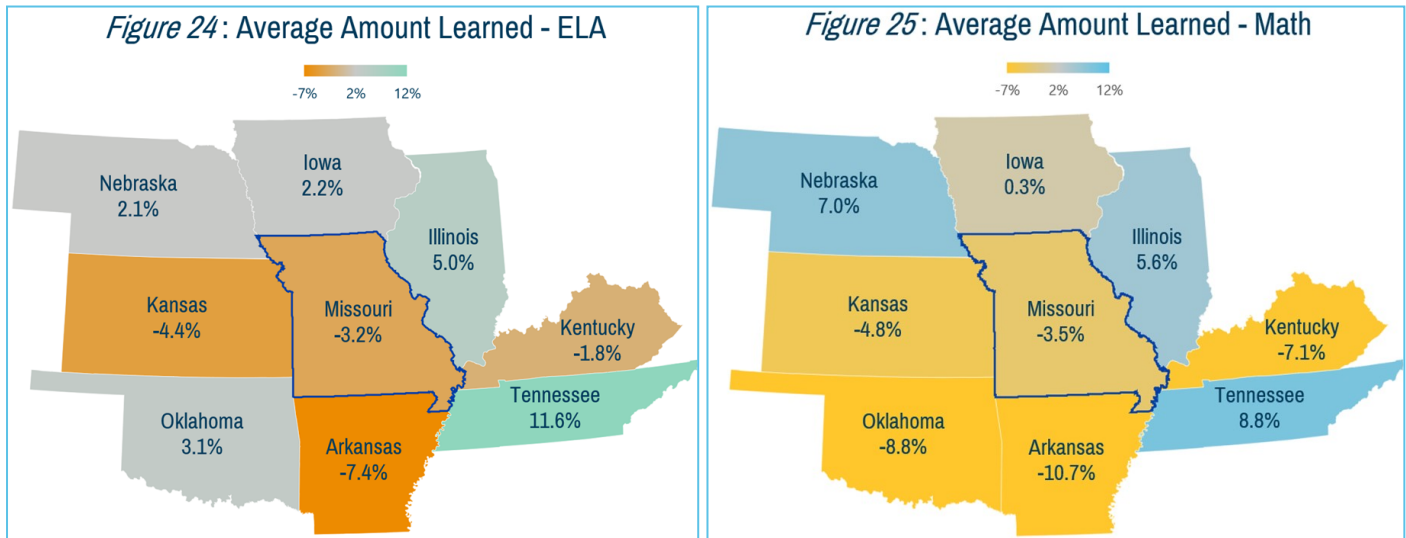


Similar to the results in Communication Arts, the expected growth score in Math is 50 Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE) units. As we see, most districts, regardless of student characteristics, experience similar levels of growth in Communication Arts. Districts in the second highest quintile of FRL-eligible students exhibited the greatest average growth over the last four years. This means that these students have experienced slightly greater gains in academic skills than their more affluent peers. Additionally, districts typically experience similar levels of growth in both subjects.

Growth in Math varies more than Communication Arts, with a range of 14 NCE units between the highest growth and lowest growth districts.



| Academic Growth: SEDA, 2009-2016 |

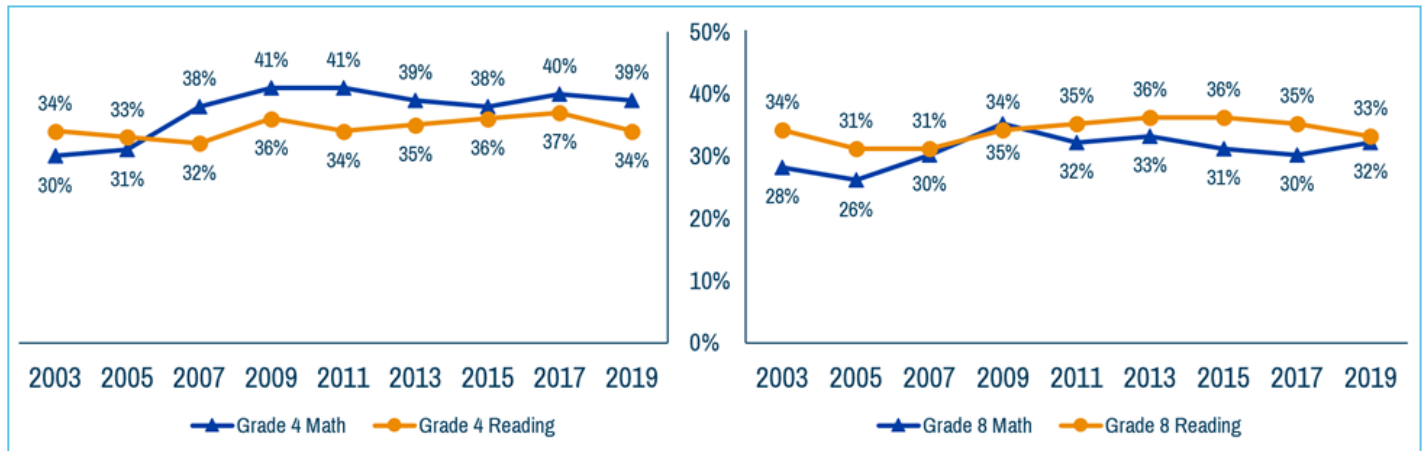


The Center for Education Policy Analysis at Stanford University has created the Stanford Education Data Archive (SEDA) to allow parents, practitioners and researchers to use data to improve education. In doing so, researchers have used publicly -available school-level test results since 2009 to create a set of results that are comparable across state lines. Typically, we must rely on the results of the biannual National Assessment for Educational Progress (NAEP) results to make cross-state comparisons. However, SEDA's research has created a series of metrics that allows comparisons of average achievement, average amount learned, and average change in test score trends. Each district in the United States with reported data is included in the SEDA analysis, allowing us to compare how much students in each state learned in English Language Arts and Math between 2009 and 2016. By examining the average amount learned (learning rate), we are able to see how much more or less students learn each year, reported as the percentage helped students improve.

As shown here, Missouri lagged behind the national trends in both Math and English Language Arts. **On average, Missouri students learned three percent less each year in both subjects between 2009 and 2016.** While we fared better than some of our neighbors in both subjects, this shows that Missouri has some work to do in order to ensure that our students are keeping pace with students across the country.

| NAEP Results & Rankings, 2003-2019 |

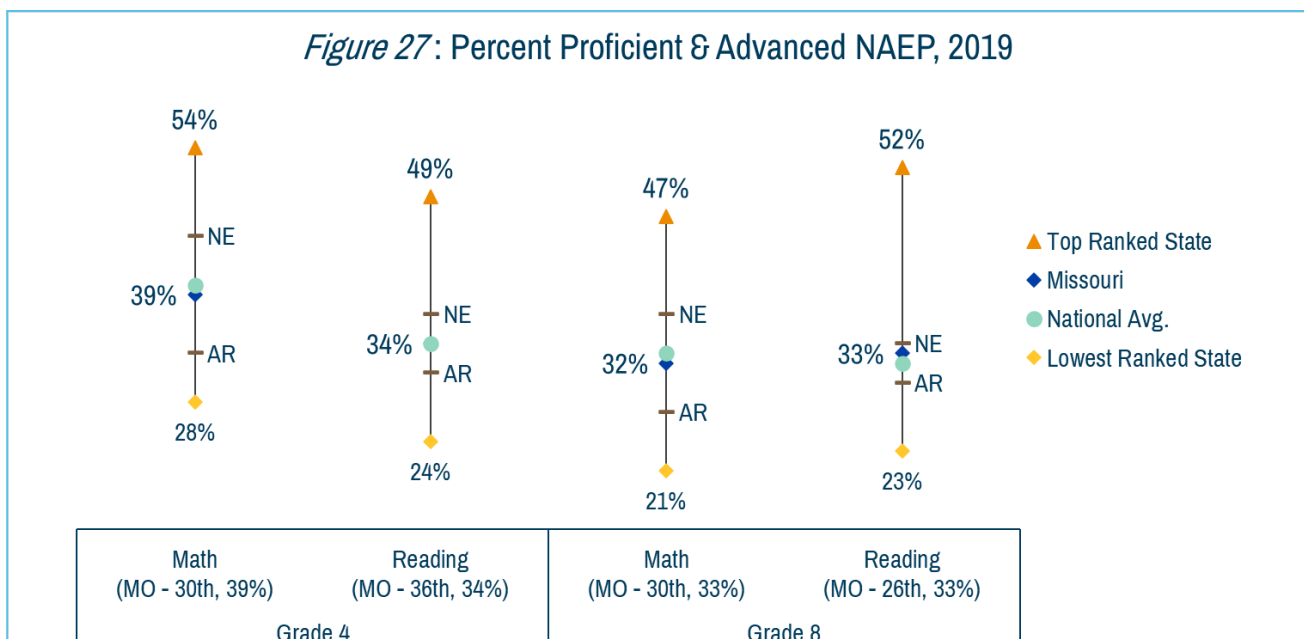
Figure 26: Missouri Percent Proficient & Advanced NAEP, 2003—2019



Unlike state standardized assessments, the NAEP serves as a metric to compare student performance across states and the nation through rankings. Along with Missouri’s overall scale scores declining in 3 of the 4 tested subjects, Missouri’s national standing decreased. While Missouri routinely ranks near the middle of the pack, the decreased scores in 2019 saw Missouri fall into the bottom half of national performance rankings in 3 of the 4 subjects. The largest drop occurred in 4th grade reading, where Missouri fell to 36th place.

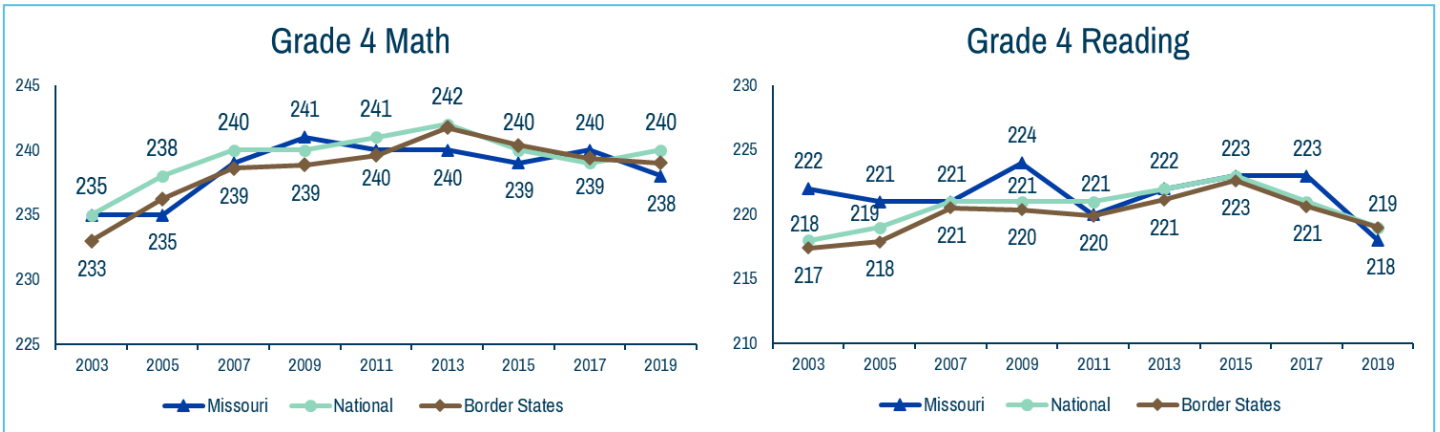
Along with scale score points, NAEP results are also reported performance categories of Below Basic, Basic, Proficient, and Advanced. Students scoring Proficient and above are considered to be performing on grade level. Typically about 30 to 40 percent of Missouri 4th and 8th graders will perform on grade level in a given NAEP cycle. Missouri’s performance has been fairly stagnant over the last few years, with a noticeable drop in Grade 4 Reading. Given these drops in rankings and generally stagnant performance, it appears that Missouri is struggling to keep pace with national trends.

Figure 27: Percent Proficient & Advanced NAEP, 2019



| Academic Achievement: NAEP , 2003-2019 |

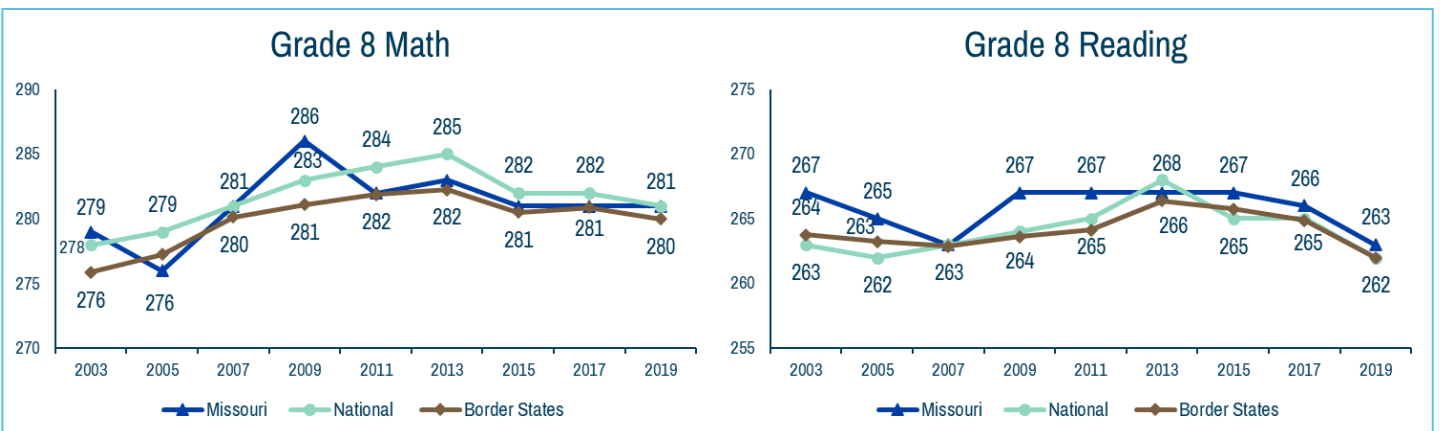
Figure 28: NAEP Results



The National Center for Education Statistics conducted its biannual administration of the National Assessment for Educational Progress (NAEP) in both Math and reading during the 2018-19 school year. While each state participates in the NAEP assessments, not every student takes the test. Rather, a representative sample of students in grades four and eight from each state participates to provide a common metric of academic achievement across the nation. This has led to the NAEP exam being referred to as the “Nation’s Report Card” and allows us to track the performance of Missouri’s students in comparison to students from across the nation.

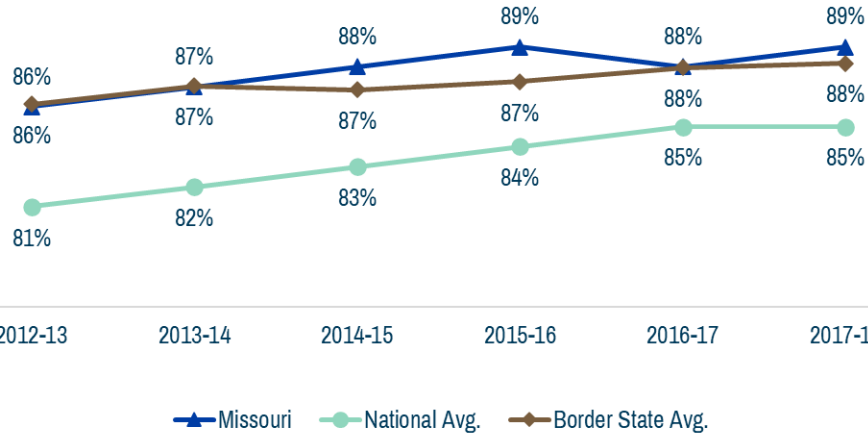
The most recent iteration of the NAEP saw students nationwide struggle, with pronounced score decreases in both grade four and grade eight reading compared to prior years. Missouri students, especially fourth graders, saw a marked decline in reading scores, dropping five scale score points compared to 2017 results. Grade 4 Math also saw a decrease of two scale score points, resulting in Missouri falling behind the border states in both subjects. Missouri’s eighth graders stayed at the same level in Math, while dropping three points in reading.

Figure 29: NAEP Results



| High School Graduation Rates, 2012-2018 |

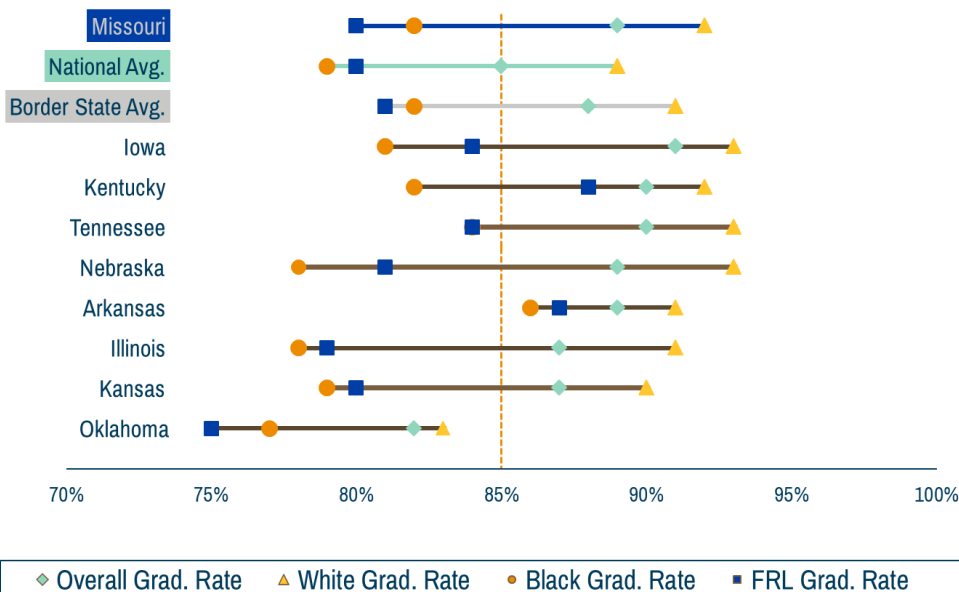
Figure 30: 4-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rates



Missouri has a higher graduation rate than the border states and national averages.

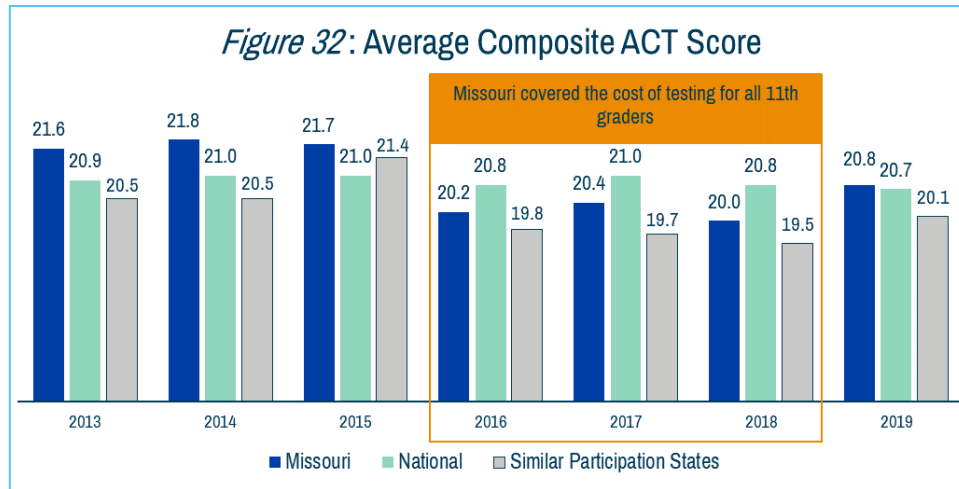
Missouri’s four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate for high school students once again exceeded national averages, though the gap between Missouri’s high school graduation rate and the national trends has shrunk slightly. In 2017-18, 89% of Missouri students who started ninth grade successfully completed their high school diploma in four years. Many of Missouri’s neighbors have similar overall high graduation rates. However, as the figure below shows, not all high school students experience similar levels of success. In Missouri and most of its neighboring states, White students have the highest observed graduation rate of any students. The gap between Missouri’s White and Black graduation rates is 12 percentage points. Unfortunately, this is a common result across states in our region, as White students typically experience much higher levels of high school completion than their Black peers.

Figure 31: High School Graduation Rate by Student Characteristics



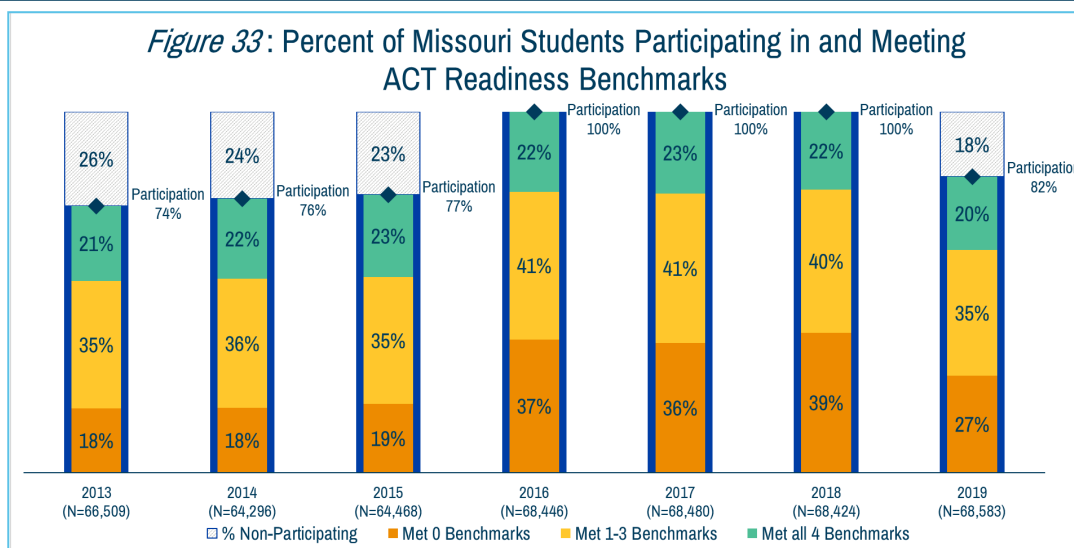
Graduation rates vary by student characteristics, as White students typically experience higher graduation rates than their Black peers.

| ACT Results, 2013-2019 |



The ACT serves as the most popular college entrance exam among high schoolers in the United States. ACT scores are reported as Composite scores, serving as the average overall performance for students on the four tested subjects and range from 0 to 36 points. Students also receive individual subject scores in English, Reading, Math, and Science. The ACT establishes college readiness benchmarks to communicate the likelihood students will earn a credit bearing grade in their first college-level course. For the most recent year, Missouri saw increases in its average Composite score and the percentage of students meeting the readiness benchmark in each subject. This is likely related to a change in who was taking the test in the state, as Missouri no longer paid for all students to participate and test-takers became less representative of the entire student population.

In order to make meaningful comparisons of ACT performance, it is important to compare states with similar participation rates. Between 2016 and 2018—when Missouri paid for all students to participate—we compare to other “full participation states”. In these years, Missouri not only saw its average Composite score decrease, but the state also fell behind national trends. Interestingly, Missouri saw the percentage of students meeting all 4 ACT readiness benchmarks increase alongside the percentage of students who failed to meet any benchmarks. In 2019, when Missouri state no longer covered the cost of ACT participation., participation fell to 82% and the average score increased by nearly a full point and resulted in Missouri outperforming national averages. This is not necessarily all positive, as certain students were unable to access the exam that would help gain access to postsecondary education.



| Resources |

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- All Missouri-related data pulled from the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Data available at <https://apps.dese.mo.gov/MCDS/home.aspx>.
- Polling data courtesy of the SLU/YouGov Poll. Retrieved from: <https://www.slu.edu/research/research-institute/big-ideas/slu-poll/june-2020-results.php>

About the SLU/YouGov Poll

YouGov interviewed 900 Missouri likely voters between June 23, 2020 and July 1, 2020. The YouGov panel, a proprietary opt-in survey panel, is comprised of 1.2 million U.S. residents who have agreed to participate in YouGov Web surveys and regularly used by CBS News and The Economist. Using their gender, age, race, and education, YouGov weighted the set of survey respondents to known characteristics of registered voters of Missouri voters from the 2018 Current Population survey. The margin of error for the weighted data is 3.95%.

| Staff & Contact |

SLU PRiME Center

3500 Lindell Boulevard
033 Fitzgerald Hall
St. Louis, MO 63103
Phone: (314) 977-5381
Fax: (314) 977-3290

E-mail: prime@slu.edu
www.sluprime.org
Twitter: @SLU_PRIME
Facebook: SLU_PRIME

Staff

Director of Research & Evaluation
Evan Rhinesmith, Ph.D.

Managing Director
Emily Cupito

PRiME Faculty Director
Gary W. Ritter, Ph.D.
SLU School of Education Dean; Professor

Research Associates
Kristi Donaldson, Ph.D.
Habiba Ibrahim, Ph.D.
Molly I. Beck, Ph.D.

Research Staff
Ashley N. Donaldson
Amy Shelton
Aaron Park
Andrew Diemer
Theresa Thiel
Tory Christian



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2020 MISSOURI EDUCATION PROFILE



Sources

We would like to reference the following sources for data used in this Education Profile. All graphs and tables used in this publication come from publicly-available data. If you have any questions, please contact our office. Images are available under creative commons licenses.

ACT.org, Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Missouri Department of Higher Education, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Census.gov, U.S. Department of Education Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. News & World Report, College Board