

Wilmington Education Improvement Commission

Status of Public Education for City of Wilmington Students

2015–16 School Year Data Report

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Introduction

Prepared by the University of Delaware’s Institute for Public Administration for the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission, this report provides an updated analysis of enrollment, student proficiency, graduation rates, and dropout rates for P–12 students residing within the limits of the City of Wilmington. This includes students attending traditional, vo-tech, and charter schools across the state during the 2015–16 school year. The report provides a snapshot of public education for students living in the City of Wilmington.

The Wilmington Education Improvement Commission (Commission), was created through legislation to advise the Governor and General Assembly on how to improve the quality and availability of education for children P–12 within the City of Wilmington, recommend actions to address the needs of all schools statewide that have high concentrations of students in poverty, English language learners (ELLs), and other students at risk, and carry out the action agenda developed by the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee as described in *Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda*.

Building on the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee’s recommendations, the Commission adopted a framework for change that streamlines three areas of critical importance for improving the education system and student outcomes: creating more responsive governance, funding student success, and meeting student needs. The agenda’s recommendations focused on City of Wilmington students but also addressed needs of the statewide education system.

The Commission is the only entity in Delaware monitoring the educational progress of Wilmington students as a whole and evaluating the needs and performance of low-income students across the state. Annual evaluations on indicators of student success should include disaggregation by geographic locations, with a specific focus on heavily-concentrated areas of poverty across the state. Disaggregating data in this way more clearly identifies trends in achievement and opportunity gaps that disproportionately impact low-income, ELLs, and other students at risk, in Wilmington and across Delaware.

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Executive Summary

All Delaware students should have access to high-quality education. Promoting the continuous improvement in public education for all students is a guiding principle of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission (Commission). The Commission seeks to remove the achievement and opportunity gaps for students in poverty, English language learners (ELLs), and other students at risk throughout the state with an initial focus within the City of Wilmington.

Following the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee's efforts, the Commission has reported annually on Wilmington student outcomes. This report analyzes updated data on enrollment, student proficiency, graduation rates, and dropout rates from the 2015–16 school year. The report provides a snapshot of education in Delaware, particularly as it pertains to children in the City of Wilmington. The findings are far from encouraging. In reporting them, the Commission in no way means to criticize the city's students, nor the school districts or schools that serve them. The Commission believes these outcomes are the result of multiple forces described in the report of the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee, *Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda (2015)*.

Key Findings

Despite statewide improvements in some areas of student performance, the overall trends remain the same as previously reported by the commission: **Wilmington students are behind their peers on virtually every indicator of student success**. While some schools may serve most students well, students from the city as a whole continue to lag behind their peers. The Commission believes that these trends, for the most part, are not the result of the performance of any school, but a result of the overall public education system's inability to effectively address the educational needs of the students living in severe poverty experienced by most Wilmington students. **The delivery of public education in Wilmington lacks coherent governance, struggles with inadequate school resources to meet student needs, and fails to provide and coordinate in- and out-of-school services and community resources needed to address the needs of students in poverty**. The commission has proposed actions to address each of these critical challenges.

Section I: Wilmington Student Demographics

During the 2015–16 school year, there were 11,527 City of Wilmington students enrolled in public education. Of those students,

- 68% were from low-income families
- 7% were English language learners (ELLs)
- 19% were students with disabilities
- 73% identified as Black or African American
- 18% identified as Hispanic/Latino
- 7% identified as White

Section II: Student Proficiency

Wilmington and Non-Wilmington Students

The performance gap noted in prior school years continues to hold: Wilmington students perform at a lower level than their non-Wilmington peers.

- Approximately 27% of Wilmington students compared to 57% of non-Wilmington students met or exceeded state standards on the 2016 English Language Arts (ELA) Smarter Balanced Assessment.
- Approximately 17% of Wilmington students compared to 46% of non-Wilmington students met or exceeded state standards on the 2016 Math Smarter Balanced Assessment.

Low-Income Students

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) test results for the past two years confirm that the majority, and in some cases the overwhelming majority, of low-income students living in the City of Wilmington are not proficient in ELA or math. In nearly every district and charter school, low-income students performed at lower levels than students as a whole. In most districts and charters, the performance for students from low-income families living in the City of Wilmington is significantly worse than the performance of students from low-income families in general.

English Language Learners

Approximately 84% of English language learners (ELLs) in Wilmington performed well below or below expectations on both the state ELA and Math SBAC tests in 2016.

Students with Disabilities

Nearly all Wilmington students with disabilities (96%) did not to meet state standards in ELA in 2016. Similarly, nearly all students in this population (98%) did not meet state standards in math.

County Comparisons

In 2016, student performance was relatively even among counties, with New Castle County students falling below the state averages for proficiency. These trends held on both math and ELA tests. Wilmington students, comparatively, performed at markedly lower levels than the counties, often resulting in rates that were half or one-third of those seen in county breakdowns.

Section III: Dropout Rates

From 2012 to 2016, there was a noticeable decline in the statewide high school dropout rate. While the dropout rate for Wilmington students also decreased, Wilmington students continue to drop out at a higher rate than students statewide, low-income students statewide, and non-Wilmington students. **The dropout rate for Wilmington students in 2016 was 3.5%, which is more than the rates for low-income students statewide, non-Wilmington students, and all Delaware students.**

Section IV: Graduation Rates

The graduation rates for all students increased slightly between 2012 and 2015, but there remains a considerable disparity between Wilmington students and their peers. **In 2015, the graduation rate for Wilmington students was 69%, lower than rates for non-Wilmington students and students from low-income families statewide.**

Data and Definitions

All data are from the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE). The main source of data is the DDOE Data Set that includes data from school year 2011–12 through 2015–16. A secondary source of data is the School Profiles published on the DDOE’s website. Each graphic indicates the appropriate data as the source.

The term, “Wilmington students,” is defined as P–12 students residing within the limits of the City of Wilmington who attend traditional, vocational-technical (vo-tech), and charter schools across the state. For the purposes of this report, the terms, “City of Wilmington” and “Wilmington,” are interchangeable.

The term, “Non-Wilmington students,” is defined as P–12 students not residing within the limits of the City of Wilmington who attend traditional, vo-tech, and charter schools across the state.

County data below are sorted by district, according to the Delaware DDOE of Education’s listing of districts by county.¹ This analysis includes **all** students attending schools in the districts considered.

It is important to note that all data points are rounded and therefore may not equate to 100 percent when added.

Student Performance

In the following analysis, proficiency categorization is determined by achievement levels: 1 being “Well below Expectations,” 2 being “Below Expectations,” 3 being “Meets Expectations,” and 4 being “Advanced.” A student is classified as meeting state standards if they receive a 3 (meets expectations) or a 4 (advanced) on the state assessment.

Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System, 2012–2014

The Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS), captured in this report from the 2011–12 school year through the 2013–14 school year, was administered to students from grades 3 through 10 in reading, mathematics, science, and social studies.² This report includes results only from English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics (Math).

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, 2014–15

The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC), also known as Smarter Balanced Assessment, were administered to students in grades 3–8 and 11 in ELA and math during the 2014–15 school year.

¹ Delaware Department of Education (2016). Delaware Public School Districts for K12 Education. Retrieved from: <https://pubapps.doe.k12.de.us/EducationalDirectoryPublic/pages/Districts/Default.aspx>

² Delaware Department of Education, DCAS State Summaries, 2012, 2013, and 2014 Administrations

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, 2015–16

The Smarter Balanced Assessment were administered to students in grades 3–8 in ELA and math during the 2015–16 school year.

Drop-Out Rates

For the purposes of this report, drop-out rates were calculated as the proportion of the total student population of a given group or demographic that opted to discontinue their formal education from grades 9 through 12.

Graduation Rates

This report defines and calculates cohort and graduation rates as per the definitions given in Section 1111 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), used by the U.S. Department of Education (US DOE). The ESEA and US DOE define graduation rate as being the “percentage of students who graduate from secondary school with a regular diploma in the standard number of years.”³ Cohort, for the purposes of this report, will be defined as the collective of students entering ninth grade expected to graduate after completing four years of academic coursework. Cohorts are referenced as being classes of a given year. Graduation data are adjusted to include students who transferred and moved into a cohort and to exclude students that leave a cohort.

³ Elementary and Secondary Education Act §1111(b) (2) (C) (vi)

Section I: Wilmington Student Demographics and Public Schools

There were 11,527 City of Wilmington students enrolled in public education during the 2015–16 school year. Of these students, 68% were low-income, 7% were English language learners (ELLs), and 19% were students with disabilities. Statewide, 36% of students were low-income, 6% were ELLs, and 14% were students with disabilities.

Table One: Profile of City of Wilmington and Delaware Students, School Year 2015–16

	Wilmington	Delaware
Gender		
Female	50%	49%
Male	50%	51%
Race and Ethnicity		
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.2%	0.4%
Asian	0.6%	4%
Black or African American	73%	31%
Hispanic/Latino	18%	16%
Two or more races	1%	3%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.1%
White	7%	46%
Low-Income⁴ Population	68% ⁵	36%
English Language Learners (ELL) Population	7%	6%
Students with Disabilities Population	19%	14%

Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2016.

Table Two: City of Wilmington Student Enrollment, 2014–16⁶

School Year	Enrollment
2014–15	11,595
2015–16	11,527

Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2016.

⁴ According to the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE), the current low-income measure represents the number of students who receive any one of the following benefits: TANF, SNAP (Direct Certification).

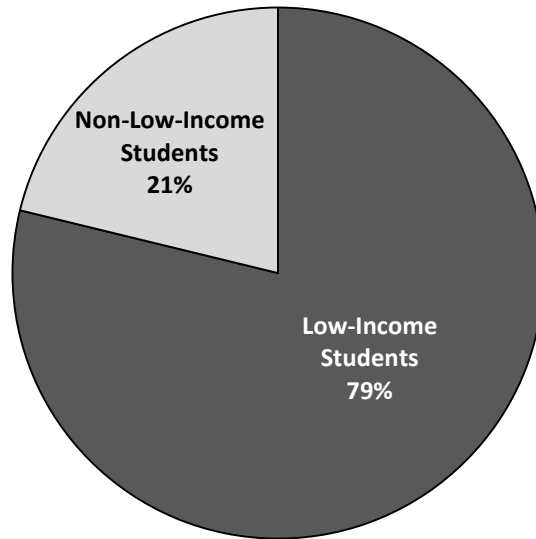
⁵ The Commission's Initial Annual Report indicated that 83% of Wilmington students were from low-income families as of 2015. This number represented the percentage of low-income students using the DDOE's 2011–2013 low-income measure, which was: students who receive any one of the following benefits: TANF, SNAP, Medicaid or free or reduced lunch. Subsequently acquired data allow for an updated depiction of Wilmington students from low-income families using the current low-income measure, which includes students who receive any one of the following: SNAP, TANF.

⁶ Enrollment numbers are determined by the September 30 count according to the DDOE

Low-Income Students in City of Wilmington

Figure One (a) and One (b) document the percent of low-income students who live in the City of Wilmington. Figure One (a) documents the percentage using the DDOE's 2011–2013 definition of low-income whereas Figure One (b) documents the percentage using the DDOE's current definition.

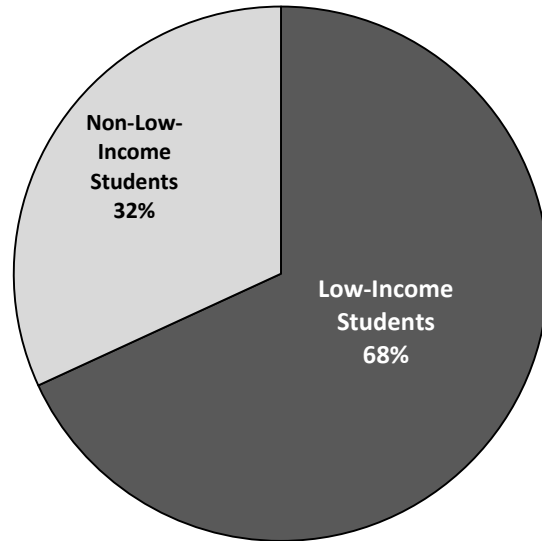
Figure One (a): Percent of Low-Income Students Living in the City of Wilmington*



Source: Delaware Department of Education, Data Set, 2016.

Note: *Based on the Delaware Department of Education's 2011-2013 definition of low-income, which is inclusive of students that receive any one of the following: SNAP, TANF, Medicaid, or free or reduced lunch.

Figure One (b): Low-Income Students Living in the City of Wilmington*



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2016.

Note: * Based on the Delaware Department of Education’s present definition of low-income, which is inclusive of students that receive any one of the following: SNAP, TANF.

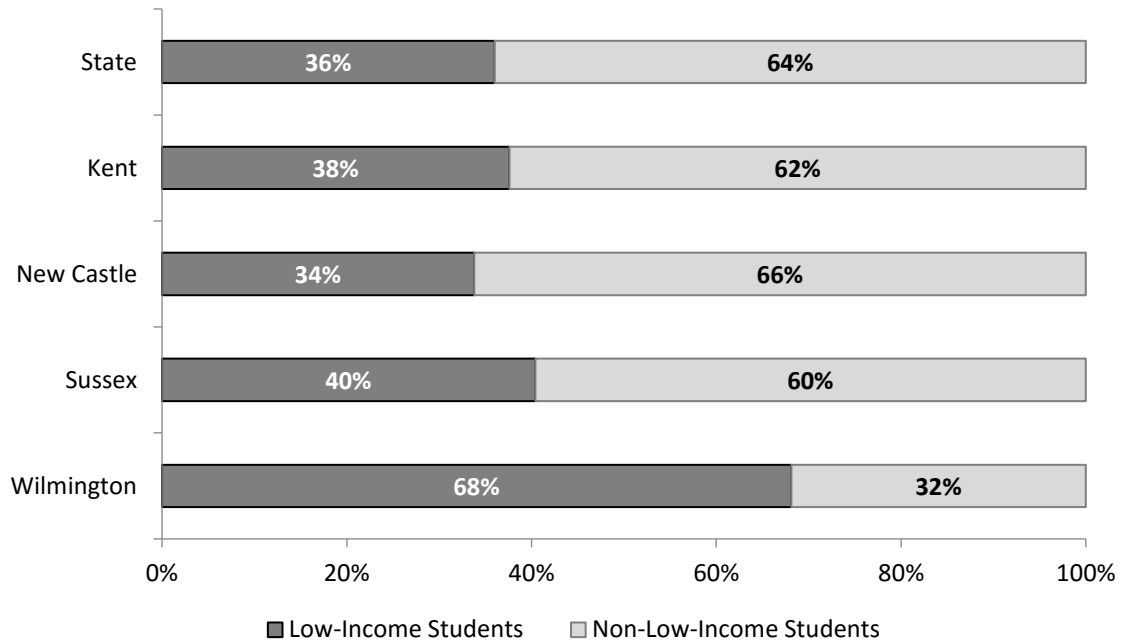
According to the enrollment data for the 2015–16 school year, 68% of students living in Wilmington are from low-income families. Previous reports have used a definition of low-income that the Delaware Department of Education adopted in 2011, which includes students who receive benefits such as SNAP, TANF, Medicaid, and free or reduced lunch.⁷ Figure One (b) reflects changes to this definition adopted by the DDOE in the 2013-14 school year.

Students from Low-Income Families, Wilmington and County Breakdown

Figure Two presents data that describes the percentage of students from low-income families in each county. Sussex County has the highest percent of students from low-income families out of all three counties. The proportion of students from low-income families in Sussex County, however, is smaller than the proportion of students from low-income families living in the City of Wilmington.

⁷ Delaware Department of Education, Low-Income Measure. Retrieved from: <http://www.doe.k12.de.us/Page/1890>

Figure Two: Low-Income as a Proportion of Total Student Population per County, 2015–16 School Year



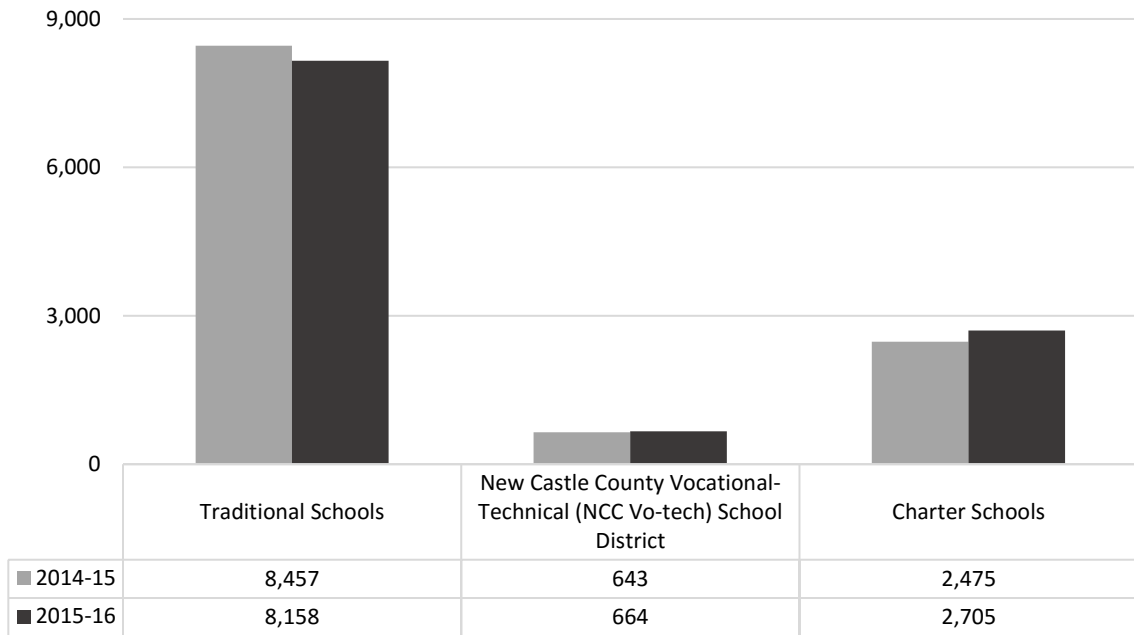
Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2016.

Note: New Castle County percentages include the City of Wilmington

Wilmington Student Enrollment

Figure Three and Table Three demonstrate the enrollment of City of Wilmington students in Delaware public schools. Figure Four and Table Four demonstrate the schools located in the City of Wilmington and the percentage of low-income students that attend those schools.

Figure Three: Wilmington Student Enrollment by Public School Type, 2014–2016



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2016.

Table Three: Wilmington Student Enrollment in Public Schools, 2015–16 School Year*

Red Clay Consolidated School District*	3,561
Christina School District	2,421
Brandywine School District	1,934
NCC Vo-tech School District	664
Edison (Thomas A.) Charter School	540
Kuumba Academy Charter School	399
East Side Charter School	327
Colonial School District	235
Family Foundations Academy	194
Academia Antonia Alonso	177
Odyssey Charter School	174
Prestige Academy	146
Delaware College Preparatory Academy**+	137
The Delaware Met+	131
Great Oaks Charter School	91
Charter School of Wilmington**	70
First State Montessori Academy	70
Freire Charter School	65
Las Américas ASPIRA Academy	48
Delaware Design-Lab High School	38
Delaware Academy of Public Safety and Security	31
Gateway Lab School	25
Delaware Military Academy**	22
Early College High School at Delaware State University	<15
Appoquinimink School District	<15
MOT Charter School	<15
First State Military Academy	<15
Smyrna School District	<15
Providence Creek Academy Charter School	<15
Newark Charter School	<15

Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2015–16 School Year.

Notes: *This is determined using the September 30 Count

**Red Clay-authorized charter schools are listed separately

+ Was open for all or part of the 2015–16 school year, but closed before 2016–17 school year

Table Four: Public Schools within the City of Wilmington, Fall 2015

District Schools Located within City of Wilmington Limits			
District	Elementary	Middle	High
Brandywine	Harlan Elementary School	P.S. duPont Middle School	N/A
Christina	Bancroft Elementary School Elbert-Palmer Elementary School Pulaski Elementary School Stubbs Elementary School	Bayard Middle School	N/A
Colonial	N/A	N/A	N/A
Red Clay Consolidated	Delaware College Preparatory Academy**+ Highlands Elementary School Lewis Dual Language Elementary School Shortlidge Academy Warner Elementary School	Cab Calloway School of the Arts*	Cab Calloway School of the Arts* Charter School of Wilmington**
New Castle County Vocational Technical (NCC Vo-tech)	N/A	N/A	Howard High School of Technology
State-Authorized Charter Schools (Grade Levels Vary) within City of Wilmington Limits			
EastSide Charter School Edison Charter School La Academia Antonia Alonso First State Montessori Academy Freire Charter School Great Oaks Charter School Kuumba Academy Prestige Academy			

Source: Delaware Department of Education. (2015) School Profiles.

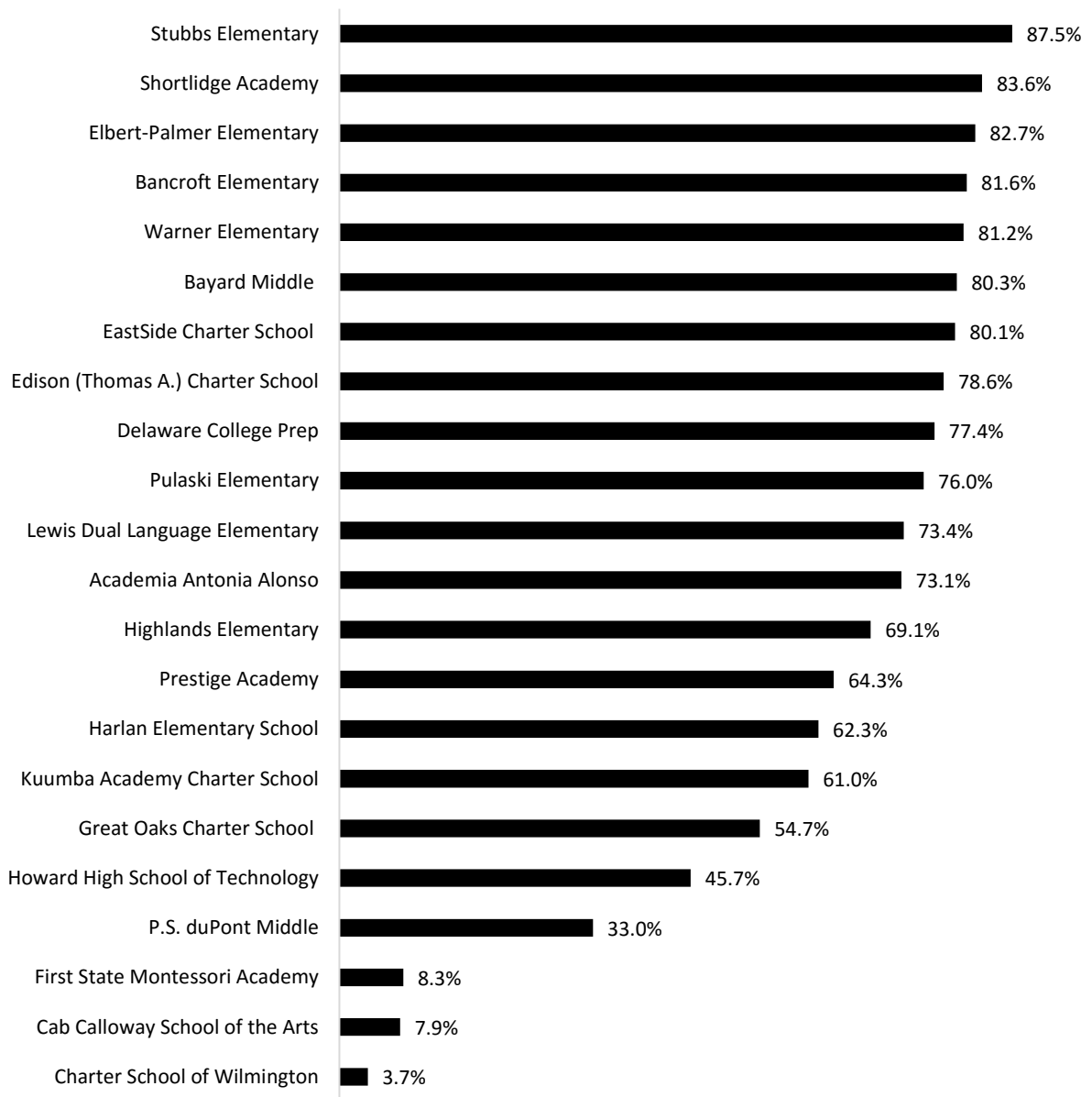
Notes: *Magnet school.

** Charter schools authorized by Red Clay Consolidated School District.

+ Was open for all or part of the 2015–16 school year, but closed before the 2016–17 school year.

This is a profile of schools within the City of Wilmington. The list of schools includes all schools that were open during 2015–16 and served at least 15 Wilmington students. The Delaware MET closed in January 2016, and the Delaware College Preparatory Academy closed prior to the 2016–17 school year.

Figure Four: Percentage of Low-Income Enrollment in Schools Located in the City of Wilmington, 2015–16 School Year



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2016 and Delaware Department of Education (2016) School Profiles.

Section II: City of Wilmington Student Proficiency

The most widely used measure of academic, teaching, and learning success is student performance on state standardized tests. The State of Delaware changed its standardized testing protocol in 2015 from the Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS) for all subjects to the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC, or Smarter Balanced Assessment) for English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics (math) tests. The 2015–16 school year was the second year for the use of the Smarter Balanced for ELA and math. The 2015 SBAC assessed students in grades 3–8 and 11. The 2016 SBAC assessed students in grades 3–8. Students in grade 11 did not take the SBAC in 2016.

In the following analysis, proficiency categorization is determined by performance levels (1 being “Well Below Expectations,” 2 being “Below Expectations,” 3 being “Meets Expectations,” and 4 being “Advanced”) received by students as a result of their performance on state tests. The percentages reflect the proportion of students receiving a given performance level designation relative to the larger test-taking population.

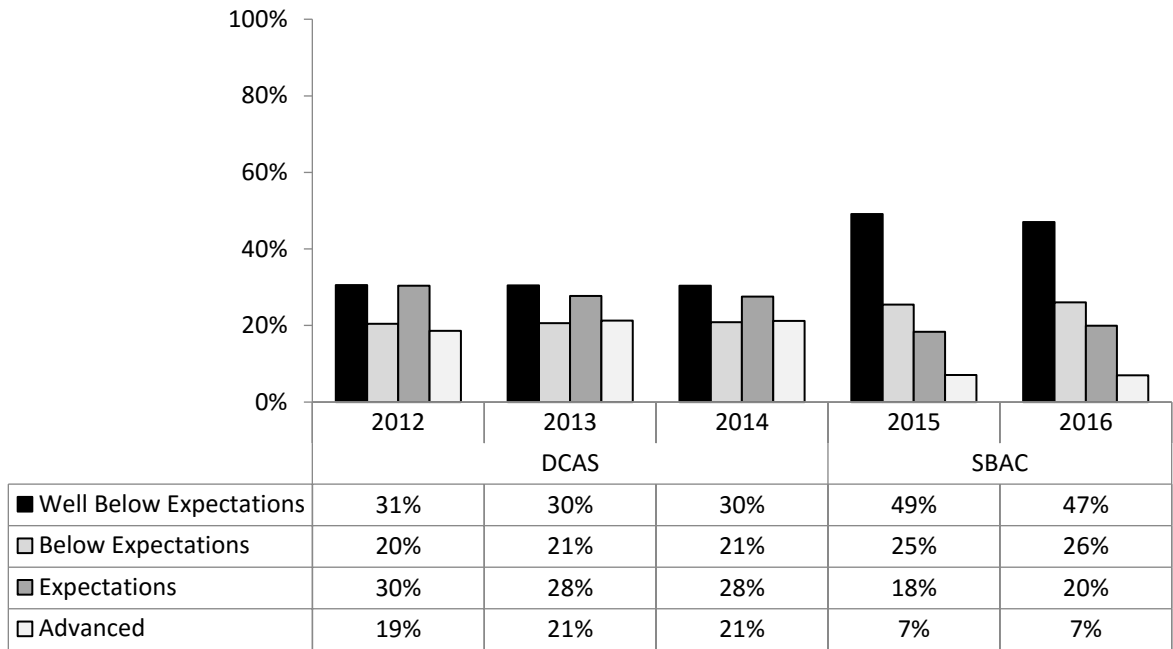
The following defines “Wilmington students” as P–12 students residing within the limits of the City of Wilmington who attend traditional, vo-tech, and charter schools across the state. Additionally, “Non-Wilmington students” are defined as P–12 students not residing within the limits of the City of Wilmington who attend traditional, vo-tech, and charter schools across the state. All data is from Delaware Department of Education school year 2015–16 data.

The following subsections seek to provide comparative analysis of student performance data between students living in the City of Wilmington and those not living in Wilmington. It includes performance data on City of Wilmington students, non-Wilmington students, English language learners (ELLs), students with special needs, and students from low-income families.

Student Proficiency in English Language Arts

In this section, Figures Five, Six, and Seven examine student proficiency in ELA for Wilmington students, non-Wilmington students, and a comparison of Wilmington and non-Wilmington students.

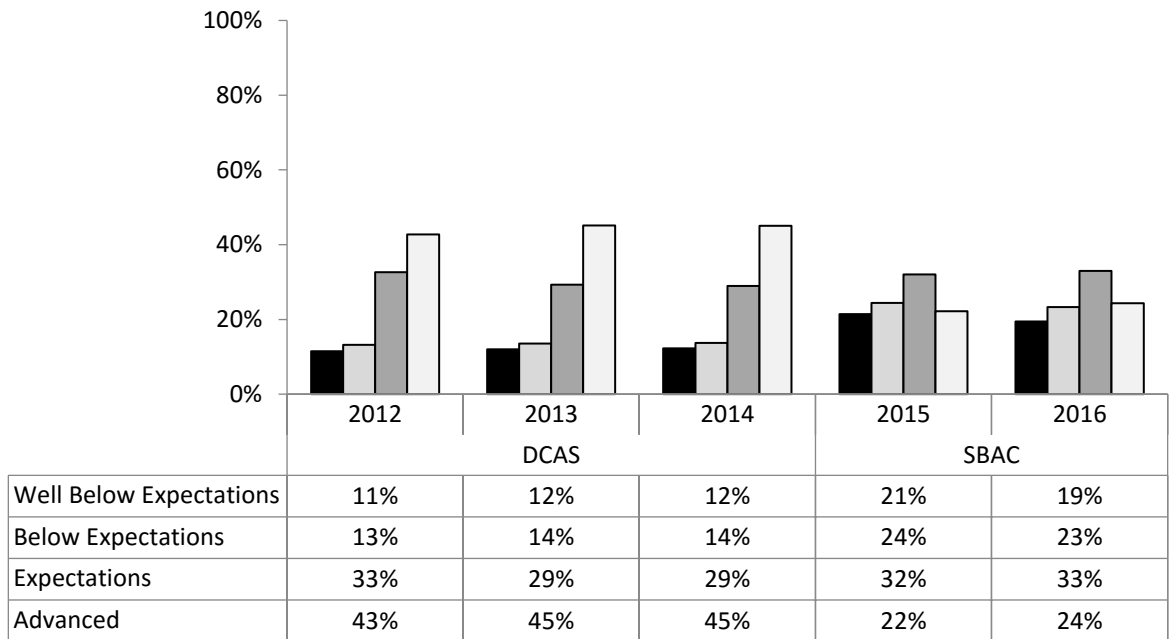
Figure Five: Student Proficiency in ELA, Wilmington Students, 2012–16 (Grade Level Aggregated)



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2016.

Note: The 2015 ELA SBAC assessed students in grades 3–8 and 11. The 2016 ELA SBAC assessed students in grades 3–8. Students in grade 11 did not take the ELA SBAC in 2016.

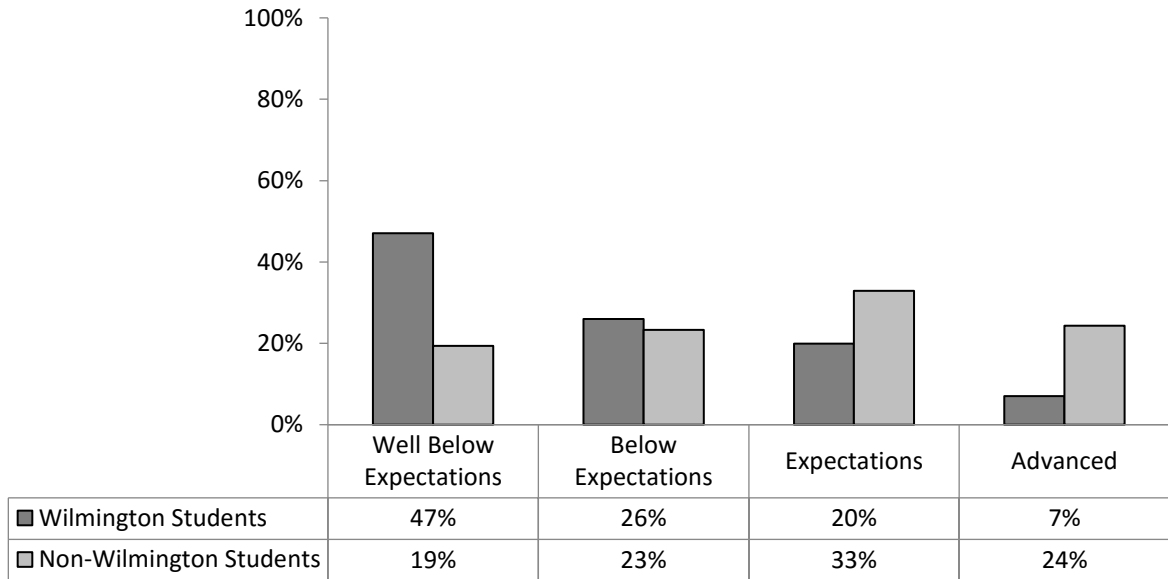
Figure Six: Student Proficiency in ELA, Non-Wilmington Students, 2012–16 (Grade Level Aggregated)



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2016.

Note: The 2015 ELA SBAC, assessed students in grades 3–8 and 11. The 2016 ELA SBAC assessed students in grades 3–8. Students in grade 11 did not take the ELA SBAC in 2016.

Figure Seven: Student Proficiency in ELA, Wilmington and Non-Wilmington Students, SBAC 2016 (Grade Level Aggregated)



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2016.

Note: The 2016 ELA SBAC assessed students in grades 3–8. Students in grade 11 did not take the ELA SBAC in 2016.

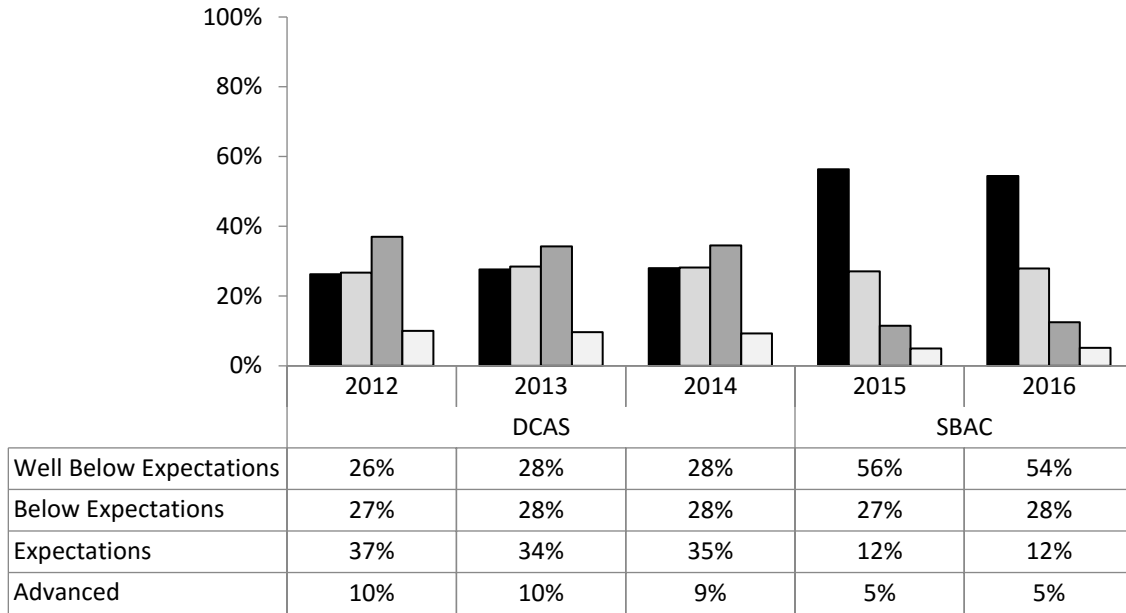
From 2012 to 2014, just under half of Wilmington students met or exceeded the state standards on the annual state assessment of ELA. When compared to their non-Wilmington counterparts, Wilmington students fell behind in DCAS performance. In 2012, a majority of non-Wilmington students (76%) were categorized as meets or exceeds the standard in ELA. This was also true in 2013 (74%) and in 2014 (74%).

On the Smarter Balanced Assessments in 2015, only 25% of Wilmington students met or exceeded state standards. In contrast, 54% of non-Wilmington students met or exceeded state standards. This trend continued in 2016, when only 27% of Wilmington students met or exceeded state standards while 57% of non-Wilmington students met or exceeded state standards. Wilmington students were more than twice as likely to fall well below expectations than non-Wilmington students; non-Wilmington students were three times more likely than Wilmington students to score in Advanced.

Student Proficiency in Mathematics

Figures Eight, Nine, and Ten display student proficiency in math for Wilmington students, non-Wilmington students, and a comparison of Wilmington and non-Wilmington students.

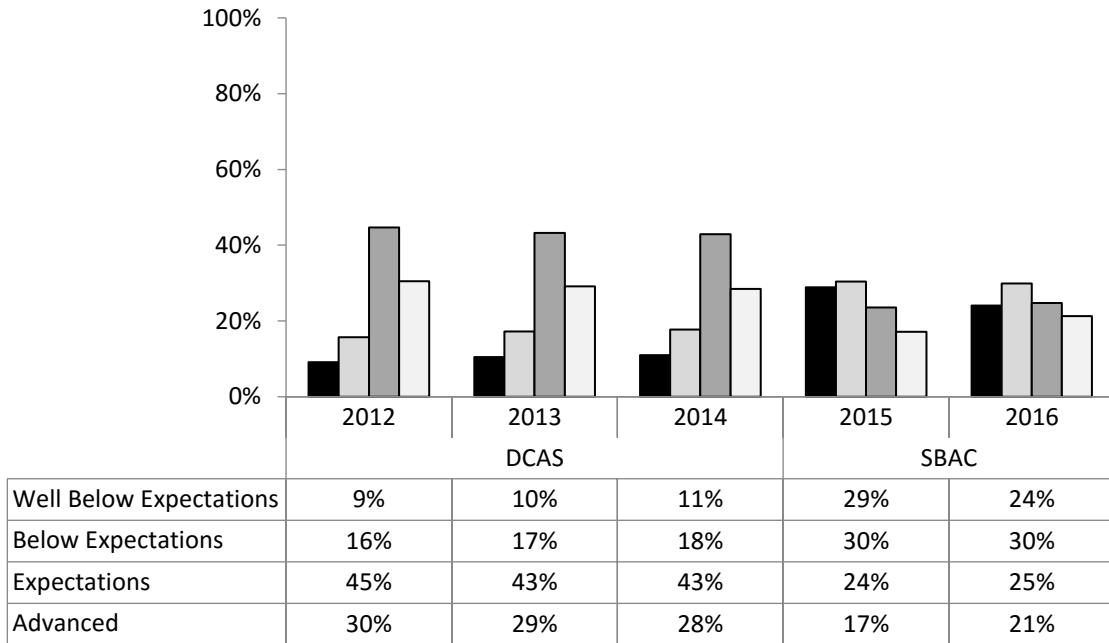
Figure Eight: Student Proficiency in Math, Wilmington Students, 2012–16 (Grade Level Aggregated)



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2016.

Note: The 2015 Math SBAC assessed students in grades 3–8 and 11. The 2016 Math SBAC assessed students in grades 3–8. Students in grade 11 did not take the Math SBAC in 2016.

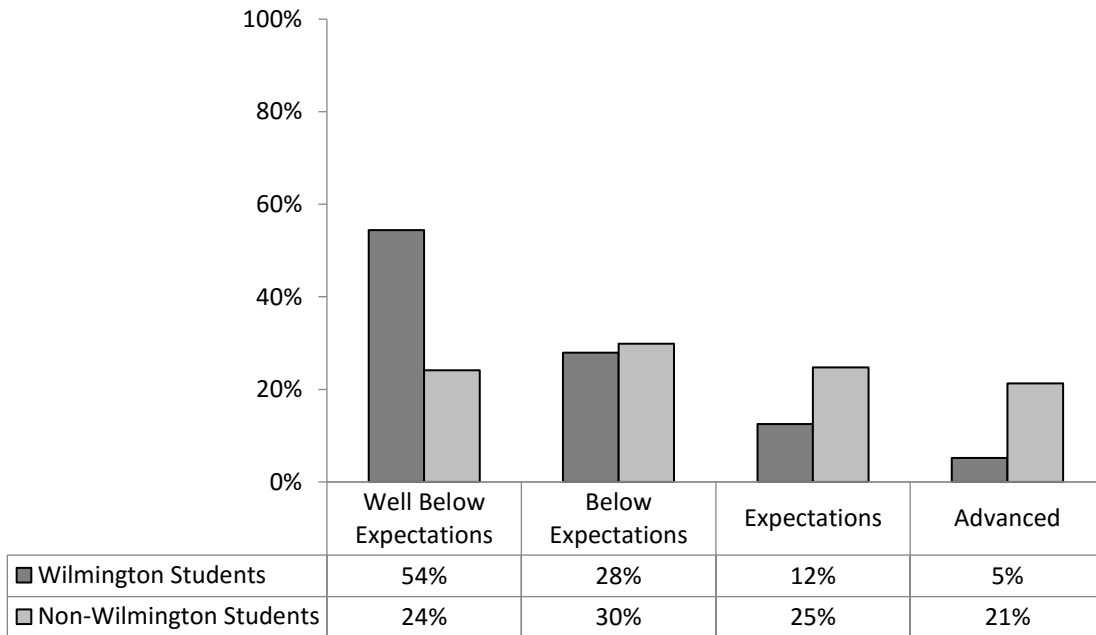
Figure Nine: Student Proficiency in Math, Non-Wilmington Students, 2012–16 (Grade Level Aggregated)



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2016.

Note: The 2015 Math SBAC, assessed students in grades 3–8 and 11. The 2016 Math SBAC assessed students in grades 3–8. Students in grade 11 did not take the Math SBAC in 2016.

Figure Ten: Student Proficiency in Math, Wilmington and Non-Wilmington Students, SBAC 2016



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2016.

Note: The 2016 ELA SBAC assessed students in grades 3–8. Students in grade 11 did not take the ELA SBAC in 2016.

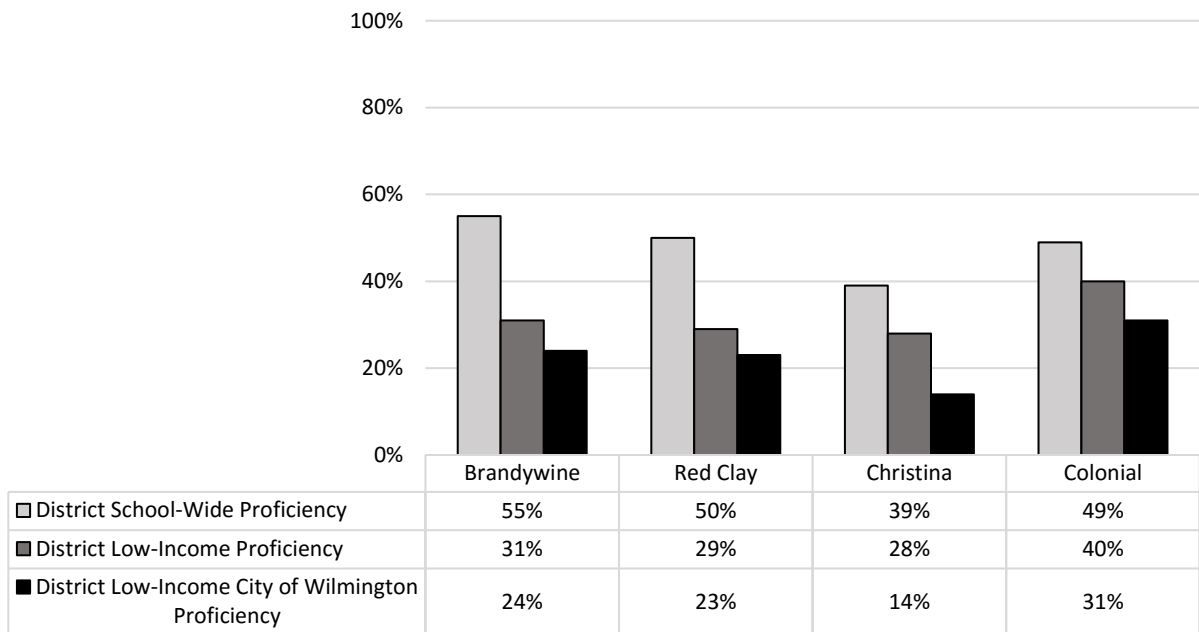
From 2012 to 2014, a majority of Wilmington students did not meet state standards, with slightly less than half of the students meeting or exceeding state standards on the math assessment each year. When compared to their non-Wilmington counterparts, the performance of Wilmington students again falls short on DCAS performance. In 2012, a majority of non-Wilmington students (75%) met or exceeded expectations in math. The same is true in 2013 (72%) and 2014 (71%) of non-Wilmington students who met or exceeded expectations.

Upon the introduction of the Smarter Balanced Assessment in 2015, 17% of Wilmington students met or exceeded expectations compared to 41% of non-Wilmington students. In 2016, the percentage of Wilmington students not meeting state standards was 28 percentage points greater than that of non-Wilmington students. Wilmington students were more than twice as likely to score well below expectations than non-Wilmington students; non-Wilmington students were four times more likely to score in advanced than Wilmington students.

Students from Low-Income Families

Figures Eleven and Twelve and Tables Five through Eight compare the proficiency of all students to students categorized as low-income and City of Wilmington low-income students on the math and ELA 2016 SBAC for both charter and district schools attended by more than 15 Wilmington students.

Figure Eleven: Inter-District Student Proficiency Comparison, 2016, SBAC, ELA



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2016.

Note: The 2016 ELA SBAC assessed students in grades 3–8. Students in grade 11 did not take the ELA SBAC in 2016.

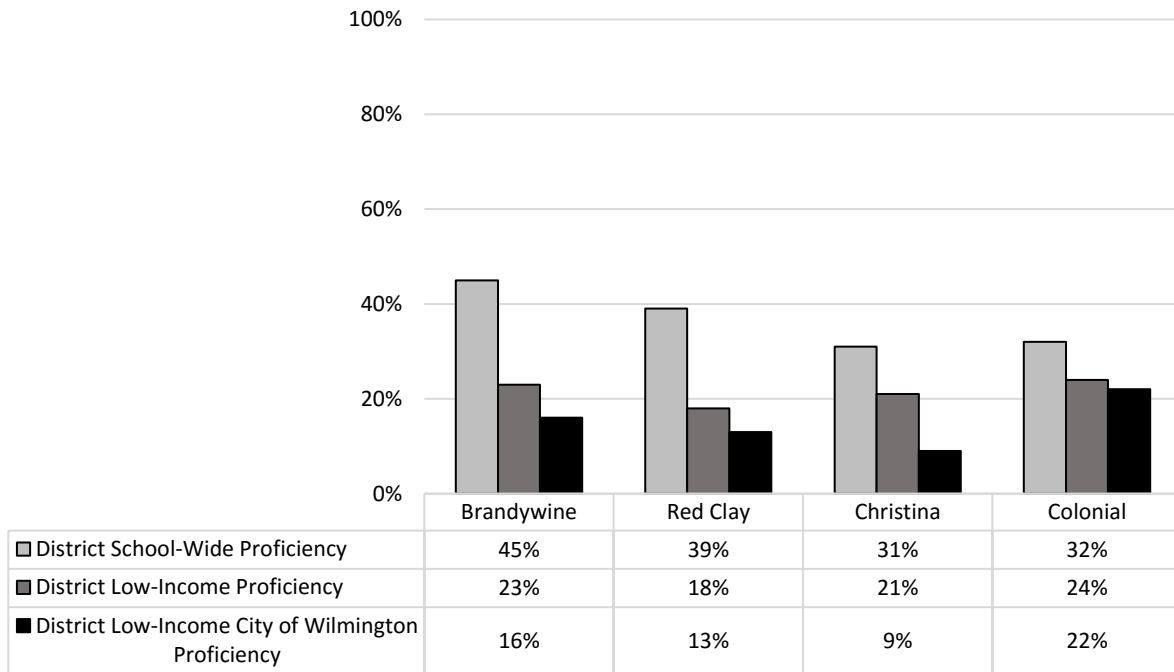
Table Five: Inter-District Student Proficiency Comparison, 2016, SBAC, ELA

District	Grade Level	Total Population		Low-Income Population		Difference*	Low-Income Wilmington		Difference*
		Students	Proficiency	Students	Proficiency		Students	Proficiency	
Brandywine	K-12	4715	55%	1506	31%	-23%	534	24%	-30%
Red Clay	K-12	7912	50%	2875	29%	-21%	1111	23%	-27%
Christina	K-12	7199	39%	3194	28%	-11%	836	14%	-25%
Colonial	K-12	4927	49%	2020	40%	-8%	107	31%	-18%

Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2016.

Note: The 2016 ELA SBAC assessed students in grades 3–8. Students in grade 11 did not take the ELA SBAC in 2016. Some of the calculations are approximate due to rounding. *Difference in both cases is calculated against the school-wide percent proficient.

Figure Twelve: Inter-District Student Proficiency Comparison, 2016, SBAC, Math



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2016.

Note: The 2016 Math SBAC assessed students in grades 3–8. Students in grade 11 did not take the Math SBAC in 2016.

Table Six: Inter-District Student Proficiency Comparison, 2016, SBAC, Math

District	Grade Level	Total Population		Low-Income Population		Difference*	Low-Income Wilmington		Difference*
		Students	Proficiency	Students	Proficiency		Students	Proficiency	
Brandywine	K-12	4735	45%	1516	23%	-22%	539	16%	-29%
Red Clay	K-12	7967	39%	2885	18%	-20%	1116	13%	-25%
Christina	K-12	7239	31%	3197	21%	-10%	838	9%	-23%
Colonial	K-12	4962	32%	2020	24%	-8%	106	22%	-10%

Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2016.

Note: The 2016 Math SBAC assessed students in grades 3–8. Students in grade 11 did not take the Math SBAC in 2016. Some of the calculations are approximate due to rounding. *Difference in both cases is calculated against the school-wide percent proficient.

When comparing performance of low-income students on the SBAC exam in ELA, the proficiency of City of Wilmington students from low-income families was lower than that of students from low-income families district-wide. These differences were much more pronounced when comparing Wilmington students from low-income families and the whole district. Proficiency rates among low-income Wilmington students are lower than those of the district’s total population in most districts serving a sizable number of Wilmington students. Without exception, the performance of Wilmington students from low-income families was lower than that of students from low-income families residing outside the City of Wilmington.

Similar disparities were found in comparisons of performance of students from low-income families to district populations on the math SBAC in 2016. In the school districts that serve a sizable number of Wilmington students, the rates of proficiency among students of low-income families were considerably lower than rates district-wide. While the differences in proficiency rates were not as pronounced when compared to ELA results, rates of math proficiency between Wilmington students from low-income families and district rates were relatively low. Without exception, the performance of Wilmington students from low-income families was lower than that of students from low-income families residing outside Wilmington.

Table Seven: 2016 ELA SBAC Proficiency, Charter Schools Serving Wilmington Students

School	Grade Level	Total Population		Low-Income Population		Difference*	Low-Income Wilmington		Difference*
		Students	Proficiency	Students	Proficiency		Students	Proficiency	
Prestige Academy	5–8	198	11%	123	8%	-3%	90	6%	-6%
Gateway Lab School	3–8	181	8%	59	3%	-5%	13	0%	-8%
EastSide Charter School	K–8	254	22%	202	19%	-4%	147	15%	-7%
Edison Charter School	K–8	449	31%	334	25%	-6%	241	27%	-4%
Family Foundations Academy	K–8	441	38%	219	28%	-10%	68	28%	-10%
Las Américas ASPIRA Academy	K–8	338	51%	86	41%	-11%	19	37%	-15%
Kuumba Academy	K–7	348	46%	192	41%	-5%	132	39%	-7%
Odyssey	K–7	741	79%	132	62%	-17%	37	59%	-20%
Delaware College Prep	K–5	72	11%	52	10%	-1%	41	7%	-4%

Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2016.

Note: The 2016 ELA SBAC assessed students in grades 3–8. Students in grade 11 did not take the ELA SBAC in 2016. Some of the calculations are approximate due to rounding. *Difference in both cases is calculated against the district or school-wide percent proficient

Table Eight: 2016 Math SBAC Proficiency, Charter Schools Serving Wilmington Students

School	Grade Level	Total Population		Low-Income Population		Difference *	Low-Income Wilmington		Difference*
		Students	Proficiency	Students	Proficiency		Students	Proficiency	
Prestige Academy	5–8	200	7%	123	7%	0%	91	4%	-3%
Gateway Lab School	3–8	183	5%	60	0%	-5%	14	0%	-5%
EastSide Charter School	K–8	253	18%	201	18%	0%	146	13%	-5%
Edison Charter School	K–8	451	24%	336	22%	-2%	243	24%	0%
Family Foundations Academy	K–8	457	27%	227	20%	-7%	70	14%	-13%
Las Américas ASPIRA Academy	K–8	338	43%	86	31%	-12%	19	16%	-27%
Kuumba Academy	K–7	346	28%	190	24%	-4%	130	22%	-6%
Odyssey	K–7	739	69%	132	47%	-22%	37	38%	-31%
Delaware College Prep	K–5	71	7%	51	6%	-1%	40	5%	-2%

Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2016.

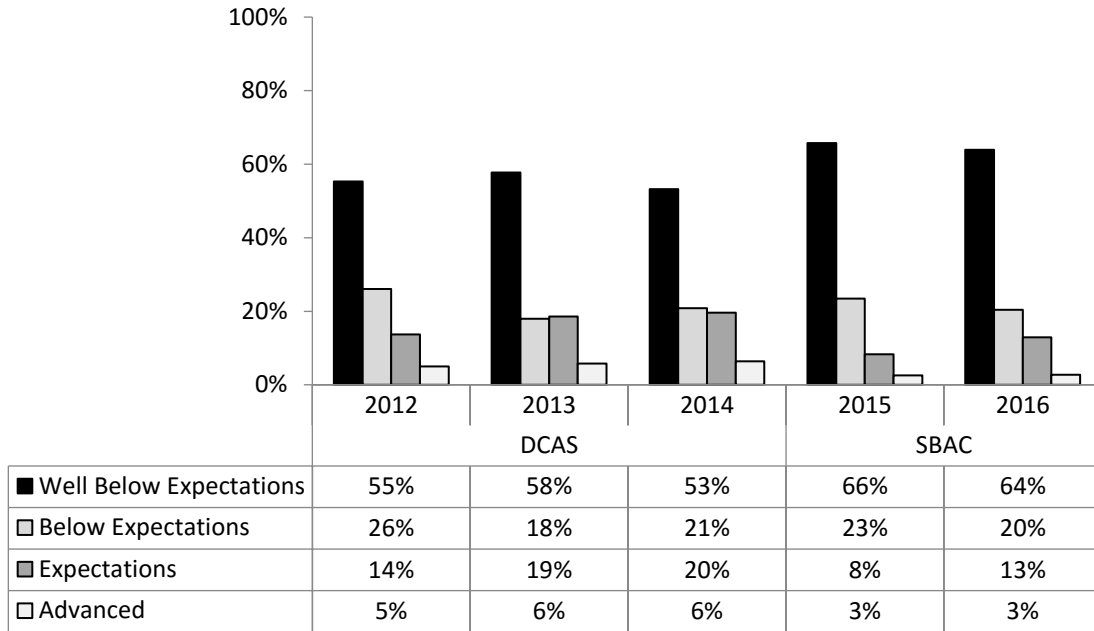
Note: The 2016 Math SBAC assessed students in grades 3–8. Students in grade 11 did not take the Math SBAC in 2016. Some of the calculations are approximate due to rounding. *Difference in both cases is calculated against the district or school-wide percent proficient

For most charter schools serving Wilmington students, rates of proficiency among students from low-income families were lower than those of the total student population in both math and ELA. Similarly, for the majority of charter schools, the rates of proficiency for Wilmington students from low-income families were lower than those of the total population. This was true for state math and ELA SBAC exams. Wilmington students were also found to have lower rates of proficiency than the low-income student population with Edison Charter School being the lone exception.

English Language Learners

Figures Thirteen and Fourteen describe the proficiency of English language learners (ELLs) in English Language Arts and Math that live in City of Wilmington.

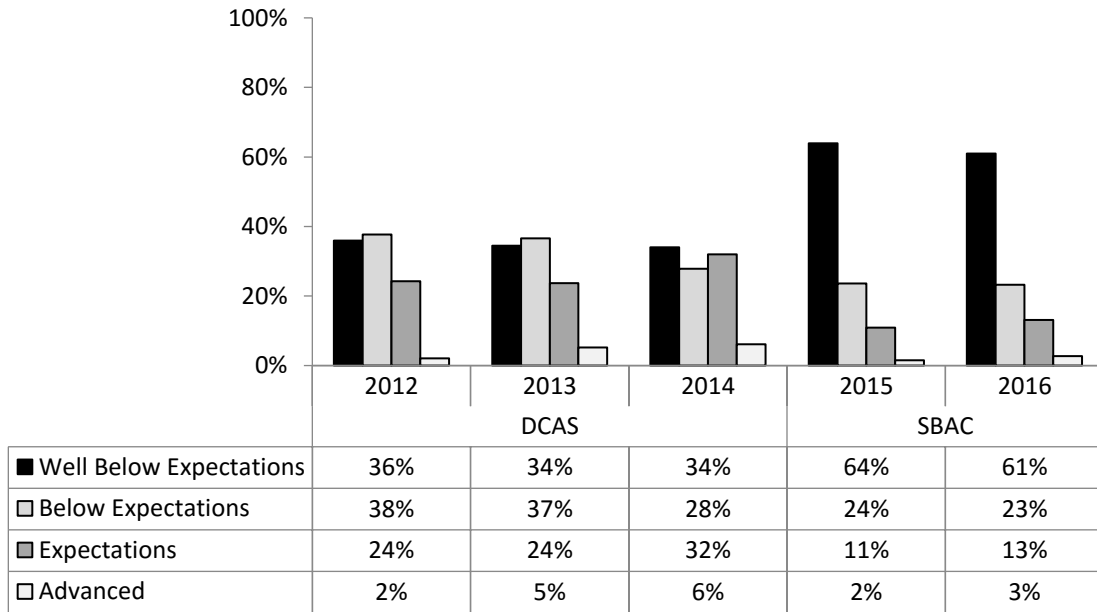
Figure Thirteen: Student Proficiency in ELA, Wilmington English Language Learners, 2012–16 (Grade Level Aggregated)



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2016.

Note: The 2015 ELA SBAC, assessed students in grades 3–8 and 11. The 2016 ELA SBAC assessed students in grades 3–8. Students in grade 11 did not take the ELA SBAC in 2016.

Figure Fourteen: Student Proficiency in Math, Wilmington English Language Learners, 2012–16 (Grade Level Aggregated)



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2016.

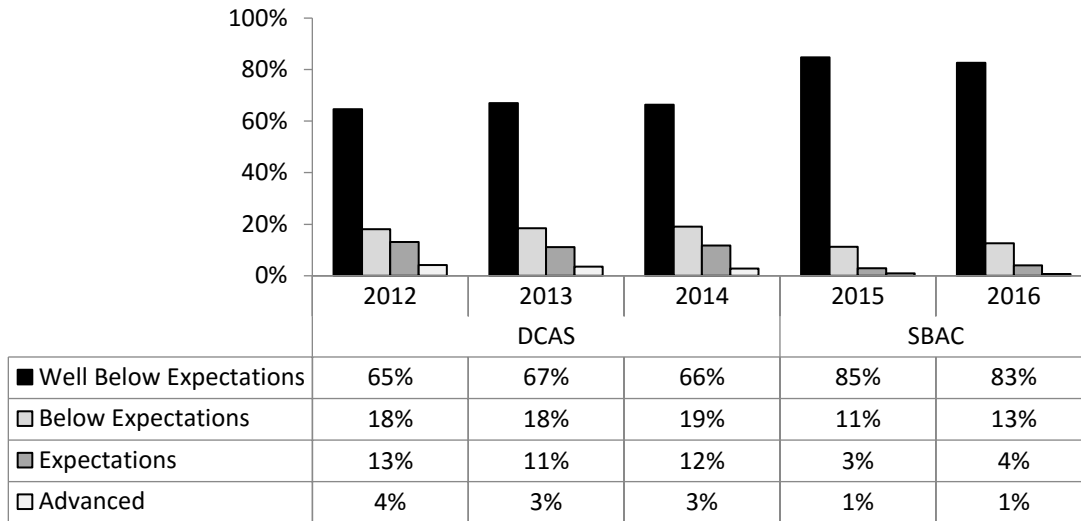
Note: The 2015 Math SBAC, assessed students in grades 3–8 and 11. The 2016 Math SBAC assessed students in grades 3–8. Students in grade 11 did not take the Math SBAC in 2016.

Examining the performance of Wilmington ELLs on the ELA assessment between 2012 and 2014, almost three-quarters did not meet the standard. While there was a slight improvement between SBAC ELA results between 2015 and 2016, 84% of Wilmington ELLs did not meet state standards in ELA in 2016. Again, while there was some improvement on the percentage of students meeting the standard on the 2016 SBAC math exam, 84% of Wilmington ELLs still do not meet the standard compared to 88% the previous year.

Students with Special Needs

Figures Fifteen and Sixteen describe the performance of Wilmington students with special needs on ELA and Math standardized assessments.

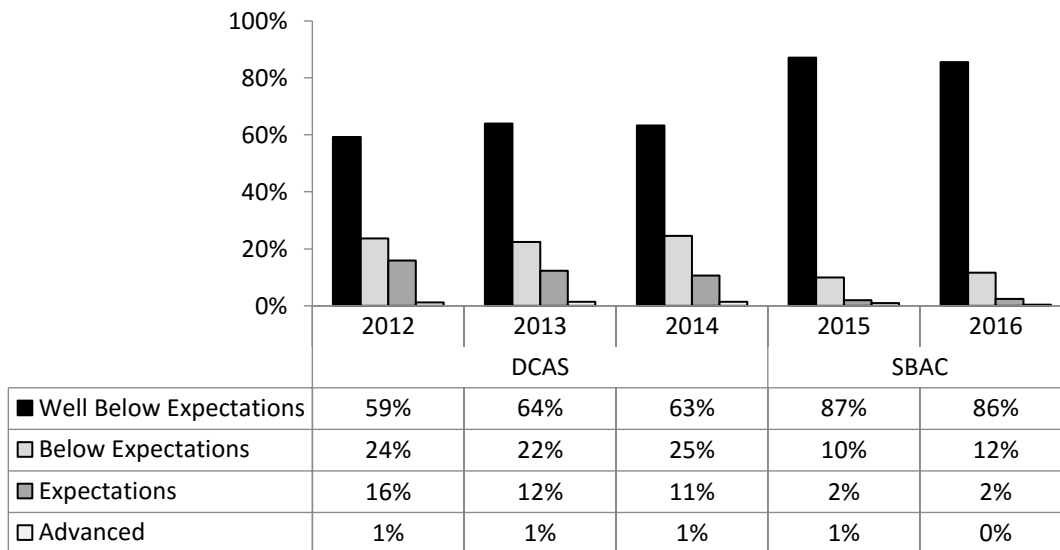
Figure Fifteen: Student Proficiency in ELA, Wilmington Students with Special Needs, 2012–16 (Grade Level Aggregated)



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2016.

Note: The 2015 ELA SBAC, assessed students in grades 3–8 and 11. The 2016 ELA SBAC assessed students in grades 3–8. Students in grade 11 did not take the ELA SBAC in 2016.

Figure Sixteen: Student Proficiency in Math, Wilmington Students with Special Needs, 2012–16 (Grade Level Aggregated)



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2016.

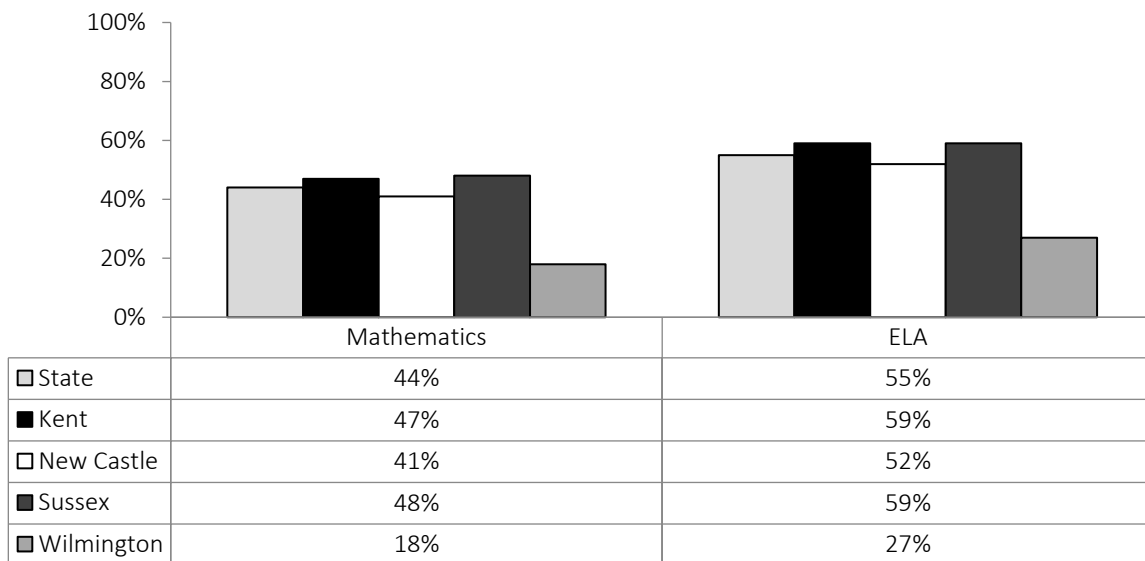
Note: The 2015 Math SBAC, assessed students in grades 3–8 and 11. The 2016 Math SBAC assessed students in grades 3–8. Students in grade 11 did not take the Math SBAC in 2016.

When examining performance on state tests of Wilmington students with special needs between 2012 and 2014, 83% or more of Wilmington students with special needs did not meet state standards in ELA. In 2016, nearly the entire population (96%) did not meet state standards in ELA. Results on state math assessments were similar, with 83% or more of Wilmington students with special needs testing below proficiency from 2012 through 2014. Much like the population’s performance in ELA, nearly all students in this population (98%) did not meet state math standards in 2016.

County Comparisons

Figures Seventeen through Twenty demonstrate student proficiency on ELA and Math assessments for all students, students from low-income families, ELLs, and students with disabilities among New Castle, Kent, and Sussex Counties and the City of Wilmington.

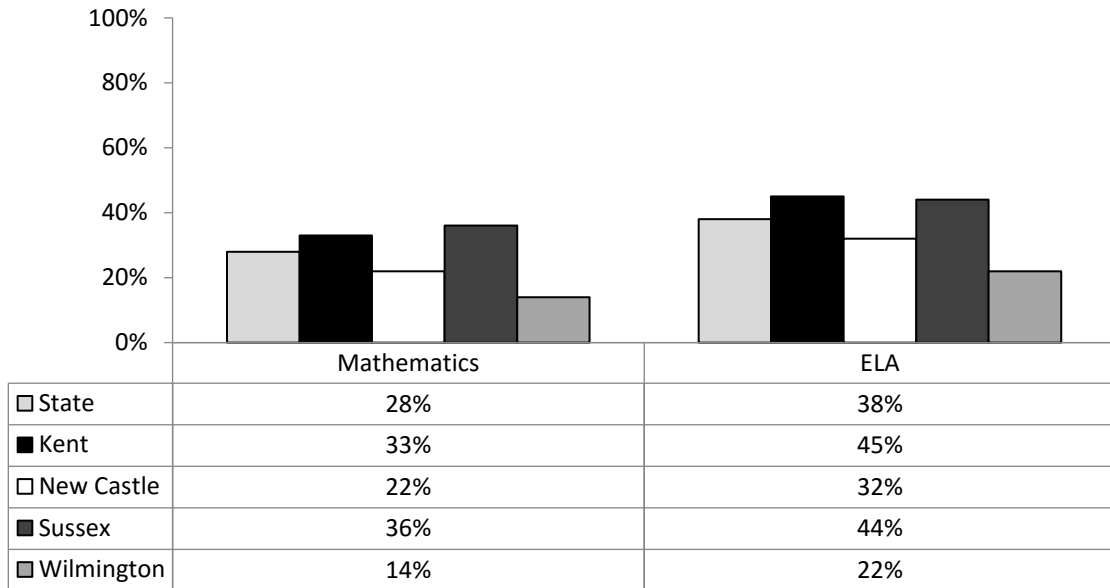
Figure Seventeen: County Comparisons, All Student Proficiency, SBAC, 2015–16 School Year



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2016.

When examining student performance for all students by county and the City of Wilmington, there are marked differences. Performance across counties on the ELA assessment in 2016 was fairly similar with 52–59% meeting the standard. City of Wilmington students performed considerably lower than those in each county with only about one-quarter (27%) of students meeting state standards. There is a similar trend across counties on the math assessment in 2016 with 41–48% of the students meeting the standard per county. Again, City of Wilmington student performed lower with only 18% meeting the standard.

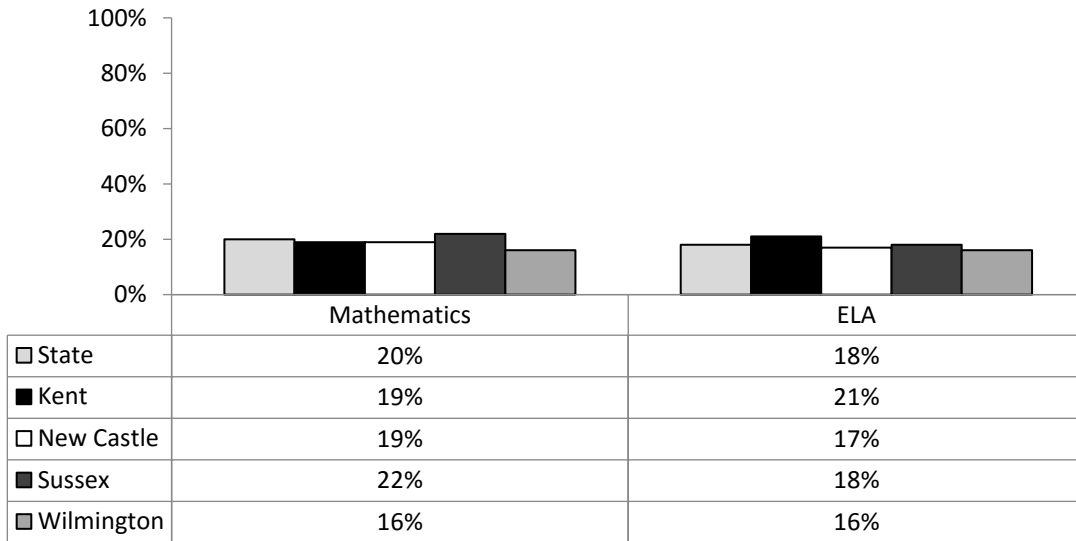
Figure Eighteen: County Comparisons, Student Proficiency, Students from Low-Income Families, SBAC, 2015–16 School Year



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2016.

When examining student performance for students from low-income families by county and the City of Wilmington, there is some difference in performance. The proficiency level for students from low-income families is low among all counties, the state, and the City of Wilmington. Performance for students from low-income families across counties on the ELA assessment during 2015-16 was fairly similar with 32–45% meeting the standard. City of Wilmington students from low-income families performed lower than those in each county with only 22% meeting the standard. There is a similar trend across counties for students from low-income families on the math assessment during 2015-16 with 22–36% of the students meeting the standard per county. Again, City of Wilmington students from low-income families performed lower with only 14% meeting the standard.

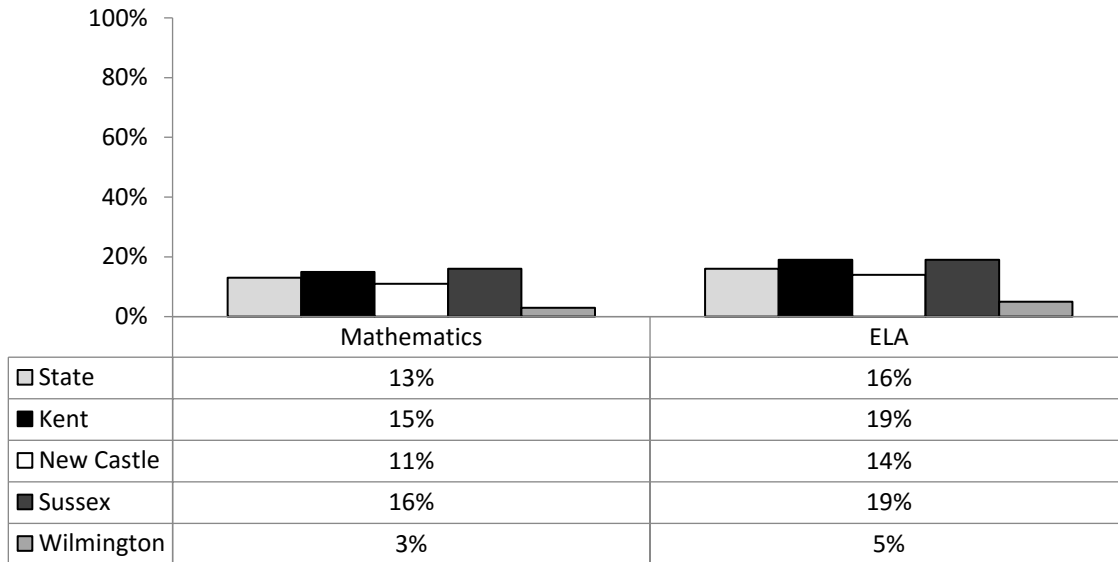
Figure Nineteen: County Comparisons, Student Proficiency, English Language Learners, SBAC, 2015–16 School Year



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2016.

When examining performance for ELLs by county and the City of Wilmington, there is minimal difference in performance. The proficiency level of all ELLs is low across all counties, the state, and within Wilmington. Performance for ELLs across counties on the ELA assessment in 2016 was fairly similar with 17–21% meeting the standard. City of Wilmington ELLs performed similarly to those in each county with only 16% meeting the standard. There is a similar trend across counties for ELLs on the math assessment during 2015-16 with 19–22% of the students meeting the standard per county. Again, City of Wilmington ELLs performed slightly lower with only 16% meeting the standard.

Figure Twenty: County Comparisons, Student Proficiency, Students with Special Needs, SBAC, 2015–16 School Year



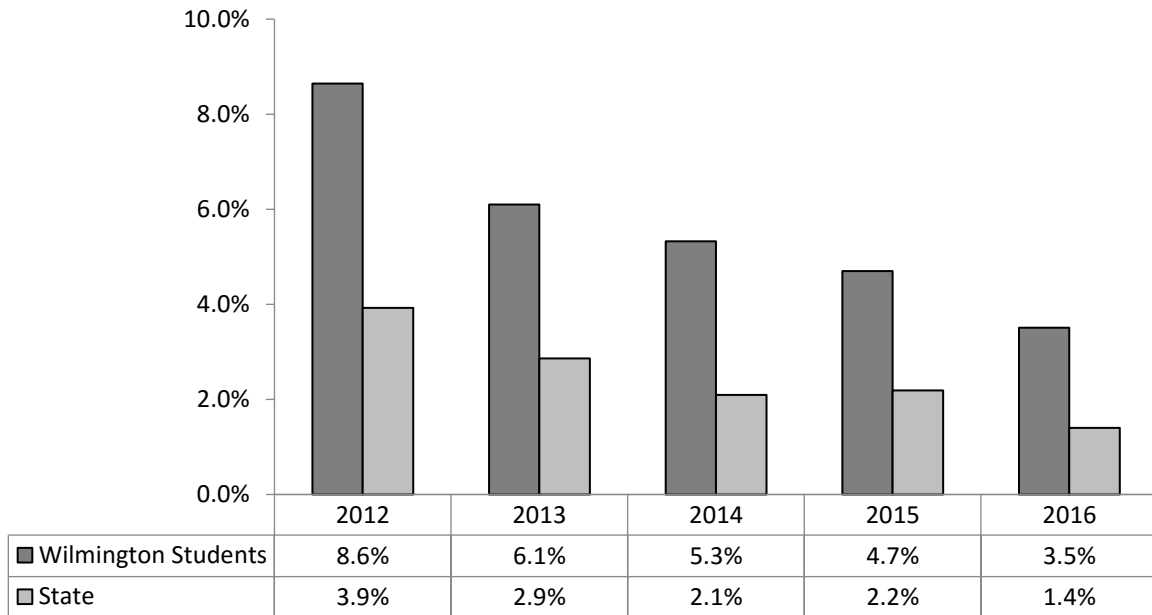
Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2016.

When examining student performance for students with special needs by county and the City of Wilmington, while all students are not performing well, Wilmington students were much lower. Performance for students with special needs across counties on the ELA assessment in 2016 was fairly similar with 14–19% meeting the standard. City of Wilmington students with special needs performed lower than those in each county with only 5% meeting the standard. There is a similar trend across counties for students with special needs on the math assessment in 2016 with 11–16% of the students meeting the standard per county. Again, City of Wilmington students with special needs performed lower with only 3% meeting the standard.

Section III: Dropout Rates

Test scores are not the only indicator of student academic success; dropout rates are another indicator. This rate is measured by calculating the proportion of students of a given cohort that opt to discontinue their formal education. In Delaware, students can decide to drop out of school at the age of 16 with permission from their parents, or at the age of majority should parental permission not be provided. In the following analysis dropout rates were calculated as the proportion of students of a given group or demographic that has opted to discontinue their formal education in a single school year, which is in accordance with the Delaware Department of Education.⁸ The following section examines dropout rates of Wilmington students compared to state, state low-income, and non-Wilmington students.

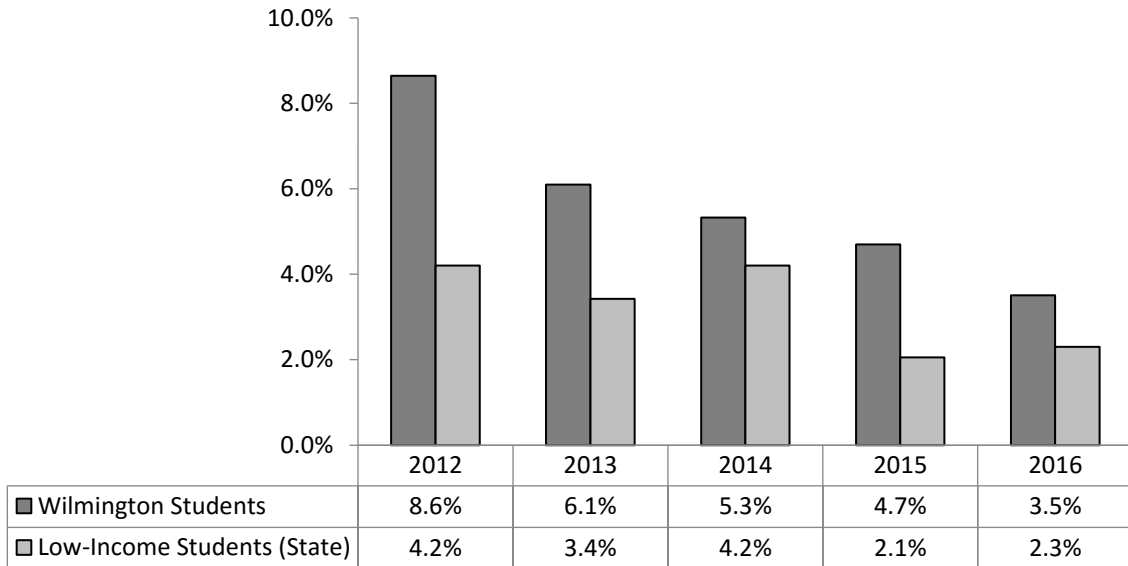
Figure Twenty-One: High-School Dropout Rates, Delaware Students and Wilmington Students, 2012–16 (Grade Level Aggregated)



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2016.

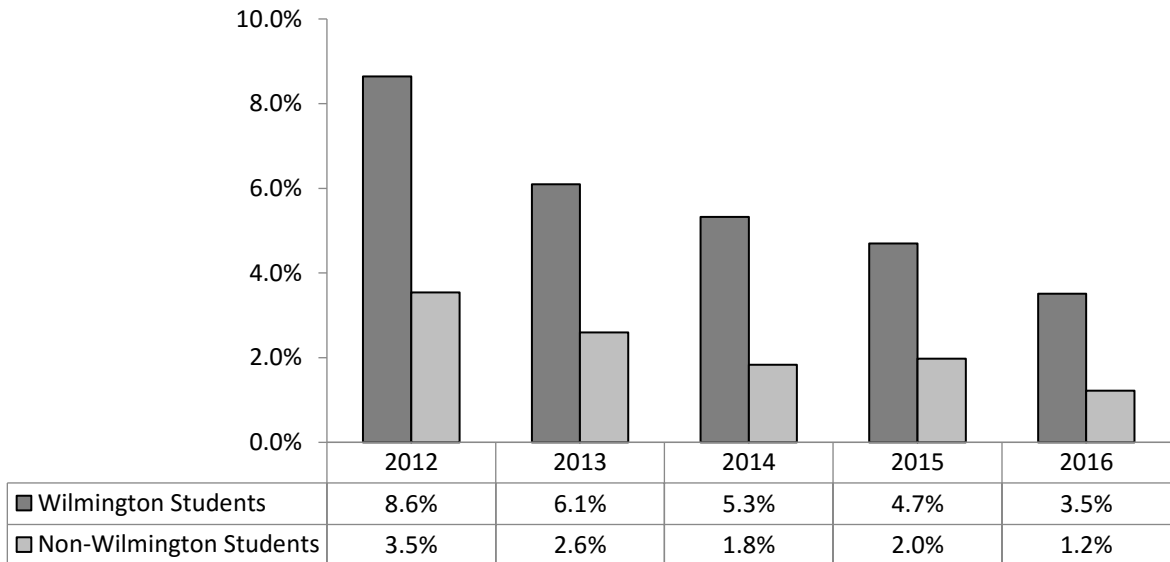
⁸ Delaware Department of Education (2017), 2015–2016 Delaware Dropout Summary Statistics.

Figure Twenty-Two: High-School Dropout Rates, Delaware Low-Income Students and Wilmington students, 2012–16 (Grade Level Aggregated)



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2016.

Figure Twenty-Three: High-School Dropout Rates, Wilmington Students and Non-Wilmington Students, 2012–16 (Grade Level Aggregated)



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2016.

From 2012 to 2016, there has been a noticeable decline in the statewide high-school dropout rate. Trends in high-school dropout rates among Wilmington high-school students were consistent with statewide trends for such rates, showing noticeable declines during that period. The dropout rate for Wilmington students has been consistently higher than that of the state in that timeframe.

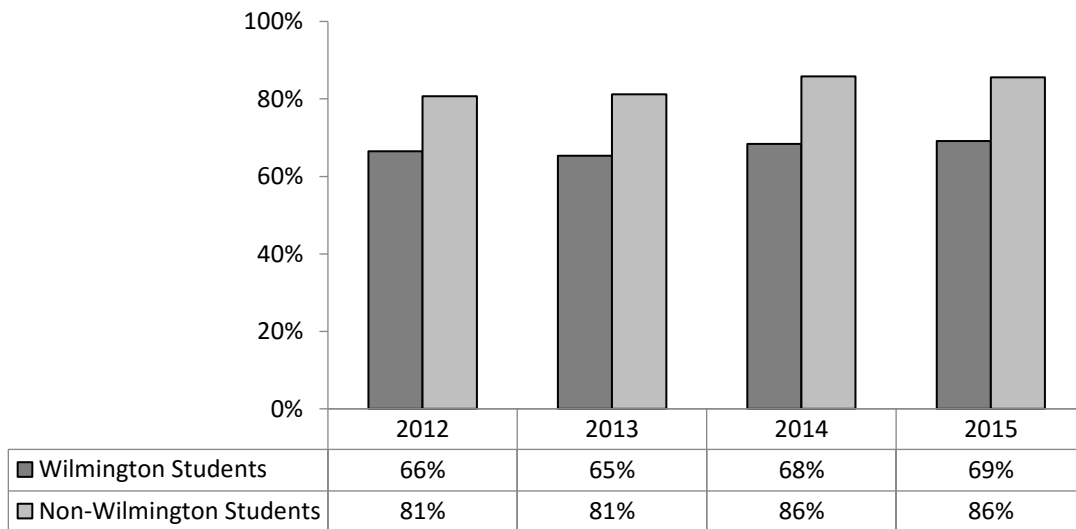
When comparing the high-school dropout rates of Wilmington high-school students to those of low-income high-school students across the state of Delaware from 2012 through 2016, Wilmington students experienced noticeably higher dropout rates. Delaware's low-income high-school student population left school at rates that fluctuated between 2.1% and 4.2% from 2012–2015, with a rate of 2.3% in 2016. Dropout rates among Wilmington students declined steadily during that time. The same trend holds true when comparing Wilmington Students to their non-Wilmington peers, with the non-Wilmington rate being 1.2% compared to the Wilmington student rate at 3.5%.

Section IV: Graduation Rates

Another indicator of student success is the rate of school completion among students within classes, or cohorts. The ESEA and US DOE define graduation rate as being the “percentage of students who graduate from secondary school with a regular diploma in the standard number of years.” Cohort, for the purposes of this report, is defined as the collective of students entering ninth grade expected to graduate after completing four years of academic coursework. Cohorts are referenced as being classes of a given year. Graduation data are adjusted to include students who transferred and moved into a cohort and to exclude students that leave a cohort.

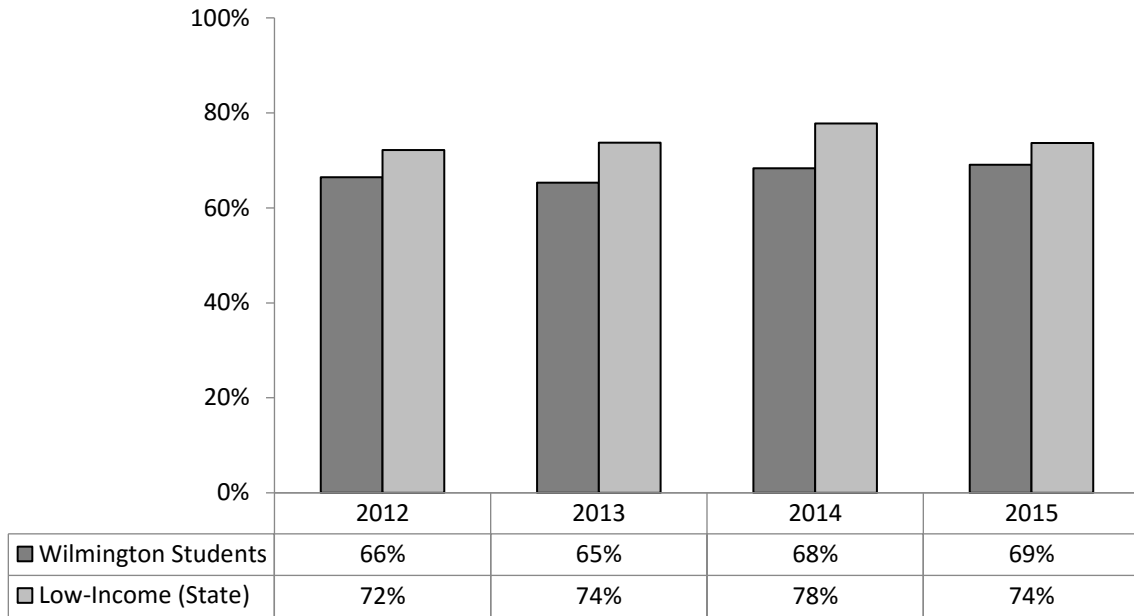
This section examines the graduation rates for Wilmington students, non-Wilmington students, and students from low-income families statewide.

Figure Twenty-Four: High-School Graduation Rates, Wilmington Students and Non-Wilmington Students Comparison, 2012–15



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2016.

Figure Twenty-Five: High-School Graduation Rates, Delaware Low-Income Students and Wilmington Students Comparison, 2012–15



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2016.

The graduation rates for all Delaware students have increased slightly between 2012 and 2015, but there is still a considerable disparity between Wilmington students and their peers. When examining the non-Wilmington rates from 2012 through 2015 compared to those of Wilmington high-school students, the differences remained relatively consistent over the four-year period. Graduation rate comparisons between Wilmington and non-Wilmington students found that rates for students of the City of Wilmington were lower than those of non-Wilmington students, as shown in Figure Twenty-Four. When comparing Wilmington students to students from low-income families across the state, the rates of Wilmington students graduating are lower than students from low-income families statewide.

Section V: Conclusion and Key Findings

Despite statewide improvements in some areas, the overall trends remain the same as previously reported by the Commission: Wilmington students are behind their peers on virtually every indicator of student success, including academic performance, drop-out rates, and graduation rates. While some schools may serve most students well, students from the city as a whole continue to lag behind their peers.

- Approximately 27% of Wilmington students compared to 57% of non-Wilmington students met or exceeded state standards on the 2016 English Language Arts (ELA) Smarter Balanced Assessment.
- Approximately 17% of Wilmington students compared to 46% of non-Wilmington students met or exceeded state standards on the 2016 Math Smarter Balanced Assessment.
- The dropout rate for Wilmington students in 2016 was 3.5%, which is more than rates for low-income students statewide, non-Wilmington students, and all Delaware students.
- In 2015, the graduation rate for Wilmington students was 69%, lower than rates for non-Wilmington students and students from low-income families statewide.

The Commission believes that these trends, for the most part, are not the result of the performance of any school, but a result of the overall public education system's inability to effectively address the educational needs of the students living in severe poverty experienced by most Wilmington students. The delivery of public education in Wilmington lacks coherent governance, struggles with inadequate school resources to meet student needs, and fails to provide and coordinate in- and out-of-school services and community resources needed to address the needs of students in poverty. The Commission has proposed actions to address each of these critical challenges and will continue to report annually on Wilmington student outcomes.

Appendix A

District	City	County
Kent County		
Traditional Public Districts		
Caesar Rodney School District	Wyoming	Kent
Capital School District	Dover	Kent
Lake Forest School District	Felton	Kent
Milford School District	Milford	Kent
Smyrna School District	Smyrna	Kent
Polytech School District	Woodside	Kent
Charter Schools		
Positive Outcomes Charter School	Camden	Kent
Campus Community Charter School	Dover	Kent
Academy of Dover Charter School	Dover	Kent
Providence Creek Academy Charter School	Clayton	Kent
Early College High School at Delaware State University	Clayton	Kent
First State Military Academy	Dover	Kent
New Castle County		
Traditional Public Districts		
Appoquinimink School District	Odessa	New Castle
Brandywine School District	Claymont	New Castle
Red Clay Consolidated School District	Wilmington	New Castle
Christina School District	Wilmington	New Castle
Colonial School District	New Castle	New Castle
New Castle County Vo-Tech School District	Wilmington	New Castle
Charter Schools		
Delaware College Preparatory Academy	Wilmington	New Castle
Prestige Academy	Wilmington	New Castle
Delaware Academy of Public Safety and Security	Newark	New Castle
Las Américas ASPIRA Academy	Wilmington	New Castle
Charter School of Wilmington	Wilmington	New Castle
East Side Charter School	Wilmington	New Castle
Reach Academy for Girls	Claymont	New Castle
Moyer (Maurice J.) Academy	Wilmington	New Castle
Edison (Thomas A.) Charter School	Wilmington	New Castle
Delaware Military Academy	Wilmington	New Castle
Family Foundations Academy	New Castle	New Castle
Kuumba Academy Charter School	Wilmington	New Castle
Odyssey Charter School	Wilmington	New Castle
MOT Charter School	Middletown	New Castle

District	City	County
Charter Schools, cont.		
Newark Charter School	Newark	New Castle
Gateway Lab School	Wilmington	New Castle
Academia Antonia Alonso	Wilmington	New Castle
First State Montessori Academy	Wilmington	New Castle
Delaware Design-Lab High School	Newark	New Castle
Great Oaks Charter	Wilmington	New Castle
Freire Charter School	Wilmington	New Castle
Sussex County		
Traditional Public Districts		
Laurel School District	Laurel	Sussex
Cape Henlopen School District	Lewes	Sussex
Seaford School District	Seaford	Sussex
Woodbridge School District	Bridgeville	Sussex
Indian River School District	Selbyville	Sussex
Delmar School District	Delmar	Sussex
Sussex Technical School District	Georgetown	Sussex
Charter Schools		
Sussex Academy of Arts & Sciences	Georgetown	Sussex

Source: Delaware Department of Education (n.d.). Delaware public school districts for K12 education. Retrieved from <https://pubapps.doe.k12.de.us/EducationalDirectoryPublic/pages/Districts/Default.aspx>.