

Research Brief: Enrollment

Philadelphia Public School Enrollment, 2020-21 and 2021-22

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Key Findings

- As of October 1, 2021, there were 114,902 students enrolled in District schools, 66,890 students enrolled in City Charter schools, 11,374 students enrolled in Cyber Charter schools, and 2,766 students enrolled in Alternative schools.
- Since the 2017-18 academic year, enrollment in District schools has decreased by 10%, while enrollment in City Charter schools has increased by 3%, and enrollment in Cyber Charter schools has increased by 110%.
- Despite an overall decrease in District enrollment, there was an increase in student enrollment in kindergarten, grade 9, and grade 11 from 2020-21 to 2021-22.
- Among students enrolled in District schools, the decrease in overall enrollment did not impact the District's demographic composition.

Introduction

This brief provides information about enrollment patterns for students in grades K-12 in Philadelphia's public schools.¹ The analyses in this brief focus on changes in numbers of enrolled students across sectors, admission types, and presence of CTE programs, considering differences in characteristics such as admission type (Neighborhood, Citywide, or Criteria-Based), governing institution/sector (District, City Charter, Cyber Charter, or Alternative), or specialty (Career/Technical Education), based on data from the October 1 enrollment snapshot² for each academic year indicated, unless otherwise noted.

Note that, on March 13, 2020, the School District of Philadelphia closed all facilities and pivoted to virtual instruction in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Schools continued with virtual and later hybrid instruction until the start of the 2021-22 academic year.³

¹ For more information on student enrollment at each school, please visit: https://schoolprofiles.philasd.org/

² For Open Data files on school-level enrollment, sorted by school and grade level, please visit:

https://www.philasd.org/performance/programsservices/open-data/school-information/#school enrollment

³ For more information on the School District of Philadelphia's response to the Covid-19 pandemic, visit https://www.philasd.org/schoolstart2020/.

Definitions

District School – Traditional schools governed and operated by the School District of Philadelphia.

Charter School – Schools that operate through a "charter," or a formal, written agreement, with the School District of Philadelphia and Philadelphia Board of Education.

City Charter School – Charter schools that operate from a physical space in the city and provide full-time, traditional, in-person instruction (when not affected by Covid-19 school closures).

Cyber Charter School – Charter schools that provide full-time web-based instruction.

Alternative School – Schools designed to address the needs of out-of-school youth, students who are significantly at risk for dropping out, and students who are subject to disciplinary transfer or expulsion.

Neighborhood School – District-schools that have a neighborhood attendance boundary and give admission priority to those students whose primary residence is located within their respective attendance zones.

Citywide School – Schools that admit Philadelphia students regardless of the location of their primary residence.

Criteria-Based Schools (formerly Special Admission Schools) – Schools that have competitive entrance requirements related to attendance, punctuality, behavior, course grades, and standardized test scores.

Career and Technical Education (CTE) – Programs providing a sequence of courses leading to an industry-recognized credential or certificate in addition to a student's high school diploma.

Research Questions

Questions guiding the analyses discussed in this brief include:

- 1. How did student enrollment change by sector (District, Alternative, City Charter and Cyber Charter) from the 2017-18 academic year to the 2021-22 academic year?
- 2. How did grade-level student enrollment change across sectors from 2020-21 to 2021-22?
- 3. How did student enrollment in 2020-21 and 2021-22 differ by high school admission type?
- 4. How did student enrollment change for schools specializing in career and technical education from 2020-21 to 2021-22?
- 5. How did District enrollment change among demographic subgroups of students (e.g., race/ethnicity, special education status, English Learner status, and economic disadvantage status) from 2020-21 to 2021-22?
- 6. How did enrollment in District schools at the kindergarten level change among demographic subgroups of students (e.g., race/ethnicity, special education status, English Learner status, and economic disadvantage status) from 2020-21 to 2021-22?

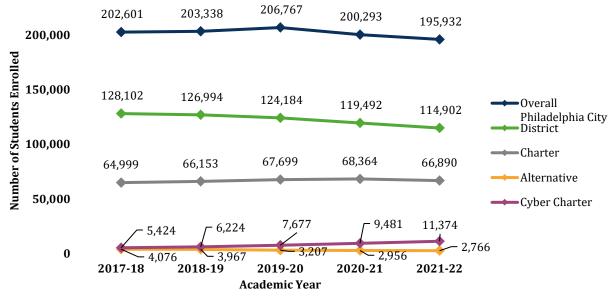
Findings

Five-Year Trends in Student Enrollment

Five-Year trends in student enrollment show a decrease in overall public education enrollment, as well as overall District and non-Cyber Charter enrollments.

Overall public school enrollment in Philadelphia has decreased since the 2017-18 academic year (Figure 1). Between 2017-18 and 2021-22, there has been a 3 percent decrease in the number of students attending public schools in the city from 202,601 students in 2017-18 to 195,932 total students in 2021-22. Despite a drop in overall enrollment in Philadelphia's public schools, Cyber Charters have seen a marked increase in the number of enrolled students. Since 2017-18, the number of students enrolled in Cyber Charters has more than doubled (an increase of 5,950 students since the 2017-18 academic year).

Figure 1. Number of students enrolled in public schools in Philadelphia by sector, 2017-18 through 2021-22.



 $\textbf{Source} : \textbf{Qlik Enrollment App: } \textit{Enrollment: Multi-Year Trends Sheet, retrieved on December 3, 2021. \\$

Note: The vertical axis indicates total number of students enrolled in each of the five categories from the 2017-18 academic year to the 2021-22 academic year. This figure does not include students with a Philadelphia address who attend non-Philadelphia Charter schools, non-public schools, or IU26 schools (combined in a category called "Other" schools on the https://schoolprofiles.philasd.org/ webpage). On October 1, 2021, 2,713 students were enrolled across these three "Other" categories for a total of 198,645 students.

The enrollment of students attending District schools remains the largest across the sectors considered. However, across District schools, there were decreases in enrollment from 2017-18 to 2021-22 for all racial/ethnic groups except Hispanic/Latinx students and Asian students, where there has been a slight increase in enrollment (Table 1).

Table 1. Changes in student enrollment by race/ethnicity, District schools, 2017-18 to 2021-22.

Student Group ^a	Student Enrollment 2017-18	Student Enrollment 2021-22	Percent Change in Student Enrollment
Black/African American	62,976	53,596	-15%
Hispanic/Latinx	26,068	27,743	+6%
White	18,801	16,885	-10%
Asian	10,810	11,299	+5%
Multi-Racial/Other	9,054	4,966	-45%

^a Excludes racial/ethnic groups consisting of fewer than 300 students: *American Indian/Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander*, and students with missing race/ethnicity data (i.e., *unknown*).

Source: Olik Enrollment App: Enrollment: Subgroup Comparisons Sheet, retrieved on December 3, 2021.

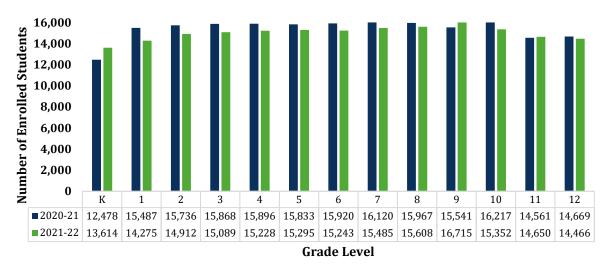
Student Enrollment by Sector

With few exceptions, enrollment in Philadelphia public schools declined in most grades between the 2020-21 and 2021-22 academic years.

According to the enrollment data for the 2021-22 academic year, the total enrollment for Philadelphia public schools was 195,932 students, a figure that is 2 percent lower than that of the previous year. Looking at grade level enrollment, we found a reversal of the previous year's analysis of student enrollment.⁴ Kindergarten enrollment in Philadelphia public schools increased by 9 percent between 2020-21 and 2021-22 (Figure 2 shows the increase in the number of enrolled students and Figure 3 displays the percent change in kindergarten enrollment from 2020-21 to 2021-22). A similar rise in enrollment was seen among students in grade 9. The largest share of the decrease in overall enrollment was found to be among students in grade 1 (1,212, or approximately 8 percent) (Figures 2 and 3).

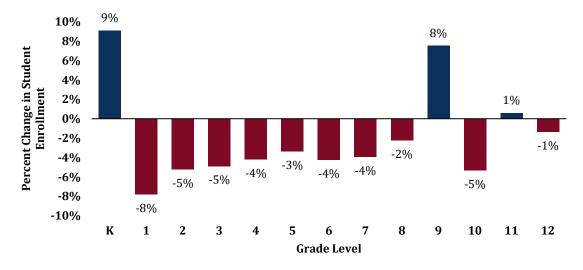
⁴ For more information and analyses on enrollment trends in the 2020-21 academic year, please visit https://www.philasd.org/research/2021/06/11/philadelphia-public-school-enrollment-2019-20-and-2020-21/.

Figure 2. Number of students enrolled in public schools in Philadelphia in 2020-21 and 2021-22, by grade level.



Source: Qlik Enrollment App: *Enrollment: Subgroup Comparisons* Sheet, retrieved on December 3, 2021. **How to Read this Table**: The vertical axis indicates total number of students enrolled at each grade level from the 2020-21 academic year to the 2021-22 academic year. For example, the number of first graders enrolled in 2020-21 (represented by the blue bar) was 15,487 and the number of first graders enrolled in 2021-22 (represented by the green bar) was 14,275.

Figure 3. Percent change in student enrollment by grade level in Philadelphia public schools from 2020-21 to 2021-22.



Source: Qlik Enrollment App: *Enrollment: Subgroup Comparisons* Sheet, retrieved on December 3, 2021. **How to Read this Table**: The vertical axis indicates the percent change in the number of students enrolled at each grade level from the 2020-21 SY to the 2021-22 SY. For example, the number of students enrolled in grade 1 in the 2021-22 school year was 8 percent lower than in the 2020-21 school year.

Overall enrollment in District schools declined between 2020-21 and 2021-22, though some grade levels experienced proportional increases in their population.

The School District of Philadelphia has 216 traditional K-12 schools—traditional schools governed and operated by the School District of Philadelphia. While overall enrollment in these schools decreased by 4 percent between 2020-21 and 2021-22 (a decrease of 4,590 students), a closer look at the grade level changes in District enrollment in 2020-21 and 2021-22 school years shows that some grade levels saw increases in student population in that time, specifically grades K, 9, and 12 (Figures 4 and 5).

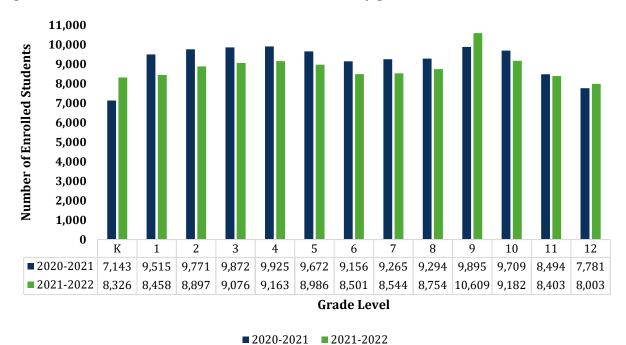


Figure 4. Number of students enrolled in District schools by grade level, 2020-21 and 2021-22.

Source: Qlik Enrollment App: Enrollment: Subgroup Comparisons Sheet, retrieved on December 3, 2021. **Note**: The vertical axis indicates total number of students enrolled at each grade level from the 2020-21 academic year to the 2021-22 academic year.

⁵ Alternative schools were not included in the number of, or analyses on, District schools. These programs are considered later in the brief.

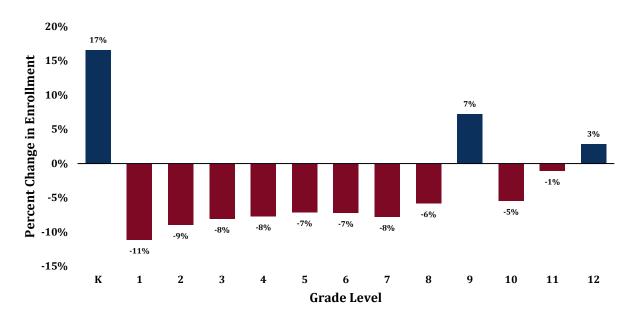


Figure 5. Percent change in the number of students enrolled in District schools by grade level from 2020-21 to 2021-22.

Source: Qlik Enrollment App: *Enrollment: Subgroup Comparisons* Sheet, retrieved on December 3, 2021. **Note:** The vertical axis indicates the percent change in the number of students enrolled at each grade level from the 2020-21 SY to the 2021-22 SY.

Overall enrollment in Alternative schools decreased between the 2020-21 and 2021-22 academic years, with one grade level experiencing an increase in the number of enrolled students during that time.

There were 26 Alternative schools in 2020-21 and 25 Alternative schools in 2021-22. Alternative schools are designed to address the needs of out-of-school youth, students who are significantly at risk for dropping out, and students who are subject to disciplinary transfer or expulsion.⁶ Overall, using the October 1 snapshot, Alternative schools experienced a 6 percent decline in enrollment (a decrease of 190 students) (Figures 6 and 7). It is possible that at least some of this decline is attributable to the closure of one school. When considering proportional changes in student enrollment among Alternative schools, it should be noted that drastic changes, both positive and negative, are likely attributable to smaller counts of enrolled students.⁷

A comparison of Alternative school enrollments in the 2020-21 and 2021-22 academic years by grade level shows that, of the grade levels included in the analysis, grade 9 was the only grade level with increased enrollment between the 2020-21 and 2021-22 academic years (Figures 6 and 7).

⁶ Adapted from the definition provided by the School District of Philadelphia's Opportunity Network, retrieved from https://www.philasd.org/opportunitynetwork/ on December 17, 2021.

⁷ For example, there were 93 fewer students enrolled in Alternative schools at the Grade 11 level in the 2021-22 than in the year prior, which translates into a decrease of 11 percent. Comparatively, a decrease of 35 students enrolled in these schools at the Grade 8 level in the years examined shows up as a 54 percent decrease. The smaller student population in Grade 8 (65 students in 2020-21; 30 students in 2021-22) makes smaller changes in the number of students seem more radical when represented in percentages.

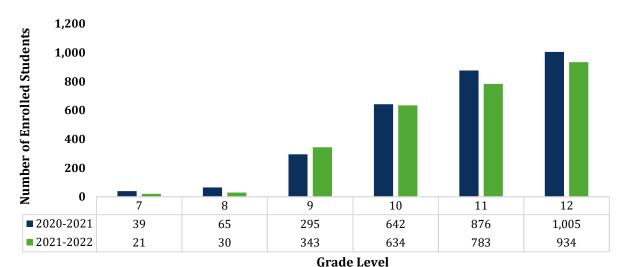


Figure 6. Number of students enrolled in Alternative schools by grade level, 2020-21 and 2021-22.

Source: Qlik Enrollment App: *Enrollment: Subgroup Comparisons* Sheet, retrieved on December 3, 2021. **Note:** The vertical axis indicates total number of students enrolled at each grade level from the 2020-21 academic year to

the 2021-22 academic year. Analyses of Alternative school enrollment excludes students in grades 3-6, as fewer than 20 students were enrolled in the Alternative sector in the academic years considered.

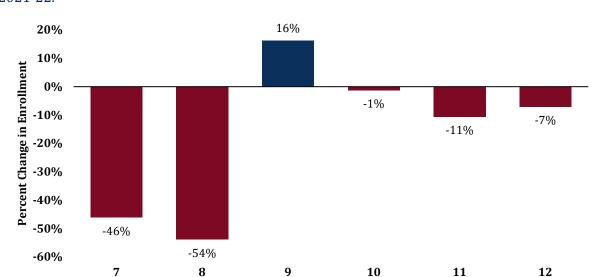


Figure 7. Percent change in student enrollment by grade level, Alternative schools, 2020-21 to 2021-22.

Source: Qlik Enrollment App: *Enrollment: Subgroup Comparisons* Sheet, retrieved on December 3, 2021.

Note: The vertical axis indicates the percent change in the number of students enrolled at each grade level from the 2020-21 SY to the 2021-22 SY Analyses of Alternative school enrollment excludes students in grades 3-6, as fewer than 20 students were enrolled in the Alternative sector in the academic years considered.

Grade Level

Enrollment in City Charter schools decreased between 2020-21 and 2021-22.

As of the start of the 2021-22 academic year, Philadelphia had 85 City Charter schools that operate from a physical space in the city and provide full-time, traditional, in-person instruction (when not affected by Covid-19 school closures). A total of 66,890 students were enrolled in these schools in the 2021-22 academic year, which is a 2 percent decrease from the previous year's enrollment figure (1,474 students) (Figures 8 and 9).

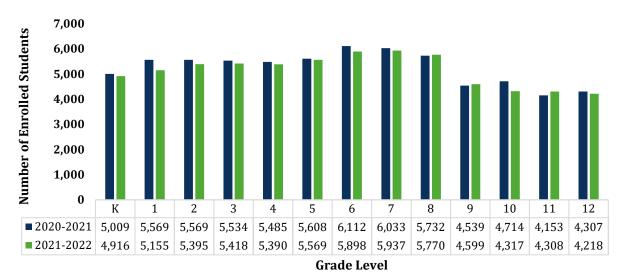


Figure 8. Number of students enrolled in City Charter schools by grade level, 2020-21 and 2021-22.

Source: Qlik Enrollment App: *Enrollment: Subgroup Comparisons* Sheet, retrieved on December 3, 2021. **Note:** The vertical axis indicates total number of students enrolled at each grade level from the 2020-21 academic year to the 2021-22 academic year.

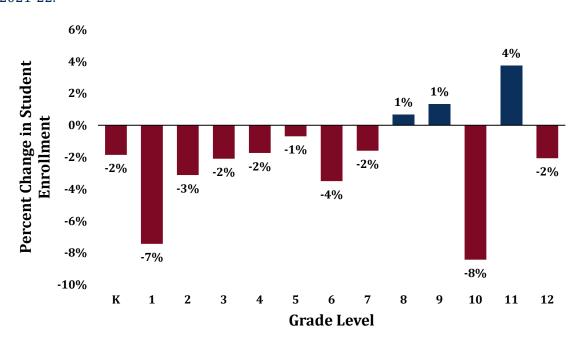


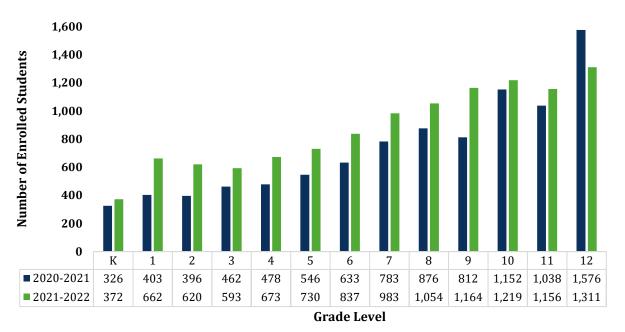
Figure 9. Percent change in student enrollment by grade level, City Charter schools from 2020-21 to 2021-22.

Source: Qlik Enrollment App: *Enrollment: Subgroup Comparisons* Sheet, retrieved on December 3, 2021. **Note:** The vertical axis indicates the percent change in the number of students enrolled at each grade level from the 2020-21 SY to the 2021-22 SY.

Despite decreases in enrollment in other sectors, and in overall enrollment in Philadelphia public schools, enrollment in Cyber Charter schools has increased steadily.

Cyber Charter schools, charter schools that provide full-time web-based instruction, have shown continuous growth in enrollment since 2017-18, which is a departure from patterns seen in the other sectors. As mentioned above, the Cyber Charter student population has increased from 5,424 students in 2017-18 to 11,374 students in 2021-22 (Figure 1), more than doubling during that time. Overall enrollment in Cyber Charter schools increased by 1,893 students from 2020-21 to 2021-22 (Figure 10).

Figure 10. Number of students enrolled in Cyber Charter schools by grade level, 2020-21 and 2021-22.



Source: Qlik Enrollment App: *Enrollment: Subgroup Comparisons* Sheet, retrieved on December 3, 2021. **Note:** The vertical axis indicates total number of students enrolled at each grade level from the 2020-21 academic year to the 2021-22 academic year.

The divergence from the enrollment trends observed in the other sectors is also apparent at the grade level: Cyber Charter enrollment grew at all grade levels except for 12th grade. The largest growth in student enrollment between the 2020-21 and 2021-22 academic years were seen in Grade 1 (64 percent) and Grade 2 (57 percent). The student population in Grade 12 was the only group that experienced a decline in enrollment at a rate of 17 percent in the time span examined (Figure 11).

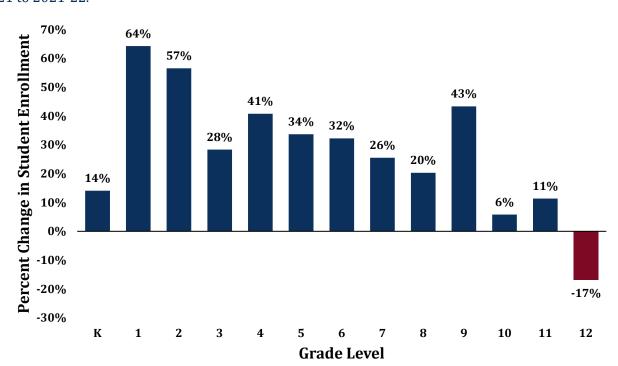


Figure 11. Percent change in student enrollment by grade level, Cyber Charter schools from 2020-21 to 2021-22.

Source: Qlik Enrollment App: *Enrollment: Subgroup Comparisons* Sheet, retrieved on December 3, 2021. **Note:** The vertical axis indicates the percent change in the number of students enrolled at each grade level from the 2020-21 SY to the 2021-22 SY.

High School Enrollment by Admission Type

There has been little change in District high school enrollment when considering schools by admission type.

District high schools serving grades 9-12 vary by admission type and fall into three main categories: Neighborhood, Citywide, and Criteria-Based. These schools are distinct in their processes for admitting new students. Neighborhood Admission schools (*Neighborhood schools*) have a neighborhood attendance boundary and give admission priority to students whose primary residence is located within their respective attendance zones. Citywide Admission schools (*Citywide schools*) do not have neighborhood attendance boundaries and admit Philadelphia students regardless of their residence location. Criteria-Based schools have competitive entrance requirements related to attendance, behavior, course grades, and standardized test scores.⁸ The District currently has 21 Neighborhood, 13 Citywide, and 21 Criteria-Based schools/programs.

⁸ Adapted from definitions provided by the School District of Philadelphia's Office of Student Enrollment & Placement, retrieved from https://www.philasd.org/studentplacement/faqs/ on December 17, 2021.

There has been little proportional change in high school enrollment between 2020-21 and 2021-22 across high school admission types. The number of students attending Neighborhood high schools was found to have increased by 300 students (approximately 2 percent), between the 2020-21 and 2021-22 academic years. Enrollment in Citywide schools decreased by less than 1 percent during that time (a decrease of 11 students). Enrollment in Criteria-Based schools also decreased in that timespan, but by approximately 1 percent (a decrease of 102 students) (Figure 12).

18,000 Number of Eurolled Students
14,000
12,000
8,000
6,000
4,000
2,000 16,000 2,000 0 Neighborhood Admission Citywide Admission Criteria-Based **2020-21** 16,859 5,943 12,513 **2021-22** 17,159 5,932 12,411

Figure 12. Number of students enrolled in District schools by admission type, Grades 9-12, 2020-21 and 2021-22.

Source: Qlik Enrollment App: *Enrollment: Subgroup Comparisons* Sheet, retrieved on December 3, 2021. **Note:** The vertical axis indicates total number of students enrolled in the given school in the 2020-21 and 2021-22 academic years. Excludes students not enrolled in grades 9, 10, 11, or 12.

Career and Technical Education

There was a slight decline in student enrollment in Career and Technical Education programs between 2020-21 and 2021-22.

District high schools serving grades 9-12 also vary by the presence of Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs that provide a sequence of courses leading to an industry-recognized credential or certificate, in addition to the student's high school diploma. The District has CTE programs in 36 schools, some of which have comprehensive CTE curricula and some of which host CTE programs alongside the regular curriculum.⁹

⁹ Adapted from a definition provided by the School District of Philadelphia's Office of Career and Technical Education retrieved on January 20, 2022. For more information on the District's CTE programs, visit https://www.philasd.org/cte/about/what-is-cte/.

Enrollment in CTE decreased by approximately 2 percent between the 2020-21 and 2021-22 academic years. In the 6 CTE comprehensive schools, enrollment decreased by 42 students (approximately 1 percent) while enrollment in the 25 CTE programs decreased by approximately 2 percent (340 students; Figure 13).

25,000 **Number of Enrolled Students** 20,000 15,000 10,000 5,000 0 CTE Overall CTE Comprehensive CTE Program 2020-21: 6 Schools 2020-21: 31 Schools 2020-21: 25 Schools 2021-22: 31 Schools 2021-22: 25 Schools 2021-22: 6 Schools **2020-21** 23,363 4,515 18,848 **2021-22** 22,981 4,473 18,508

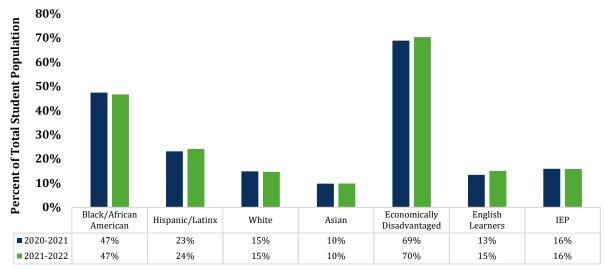
Figure 13. Number of students enrolled in Career and Technical Education programs, grades 9-12, 2020-21 and 2021-22.

Student Demographics

There were decreases in the number of students in most demographic groups, yet changes in representation of the selected subgroups in the overall student population were modest.

As discussed above, the trend in overall student enrollment in District schools decreased by 4,590 students from 2020-21 to 2021-2022 (a 4 percent decline). Despite the changes in District enrollment, there has been marginal change in representation among racial/ethnic groups in the District's overall student population (Figure 14).

Figure 14. Share of students in District schools by selected demographic subgroups, 2020-21 and 2021-22.



Demographic Subgroup

Source: Qlik Enrollment App: *Enrollment: Subgroup Comparisons* Sheet, retrieved on December 3, 2021. **Note:** The vertical axis indicates total number of students in the given group enrolled in District schools in the 2020-21 and 2021-22 academic years. Analyses excludes racial/ethnic groups constituting less than 5 percent of the District's total student population: *Multi-Racial/Other, American Indian/Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Students whose race/ethnic identities are unknown or unreported.*

In the 2021-22 academic year, the number of economically disadvantaged students decreased by 1,455 students (approximately 2 percent) from the previous year. However, the share of this group in the overall student population increased by 1 percentage point (Figure 14 and Table 2).

The number of English Learners increased by 8 percent between the 2020-21 and 2021-22 academic years. The share of EL students in the overall District school enrollment also increased by 2 percentage points in that time span.

The number of students with an IEP decreased by 744 students from the 2021-22 academic year to the 2020-21 academic year. While there was a decrease in the number of students in this group, there was no change in their overall representation among students enrolled in District schools during that span (Figure 14 and Table 2).

Table 2. Changes in student enrollment by selected demographic student groups, District schools, 2020-21 to 2021-22.

	Student	Student	% Change in			
Student Group	Enrollment	Enrollment	Student			
_	2020-21	2021-22	Enrollment			
Race/Ethnicity ^a						
Asian	11,663	11,299	-3%			
Black/African American	56,597	53,596	-5%			
Hispanic/Latinx	27,593	27,743	1%			
White	17,746	16,885	-5%			
Economic Disadvantage Status						
Economically Disadvantaged	82,234	80,779	-2%			
Non-Economically Disadvantaged	37,258	34,123	-9%			
English Learner Status						
Non-EL	103,478	97,596	-6%			
EL	16,014	17,306	8%			
Special Education Status						
Non-Special Education	100,491	96,645	-4%			
Special Education	19,001	18,257	-4%			
Overall						
All District Students	119,492	114,902	-4%			

Source: Qlik Enrollment App: Enrollment: Subgroup Comparisons Sheet, retrieved on December 3, 2021.

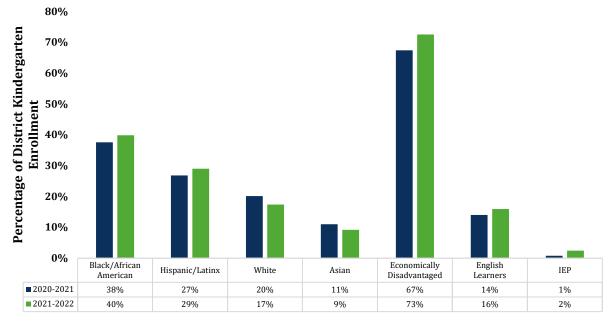
Kindergarten Enrollment by Demographic Subgroups

Similar to trends observed in overall enrollment by the selected demographic subgroups, changes in demographic subgroup representation in the overall student population were modest among students at the kindergarten level despite changes in enrollment.

The analyses provided in Figure 15 show that District kindergarten enrollment increased by 17 percent from the 2020-21 academic year to the 2021-22 academic year. For students that identify as either Black/African American or Hispanic/Latinx, the share of the racial/ethnic group increased by approximately 2 percent. The percentage of white students among all students enrolled in District kindergarten programs declined by 3 percent between 2020-21 and 2021-22. Asian student representation among all students enrolled in District kindergarten programs declined by 2 percent between the 2020-21 and 2021-22 academic years. The share of economically disadvantaged students in the District's population of kindergarten students increased by 6 percent from 2020-21 to 2021-22.

^a Analyses excludes racial/ethnic groups constituting less than 5 percent of the District's total student population: *Multi-Racial/Other, American Indian/Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander,* and students whose race/ethnic identity is unknown or unreported.

Figure 15. Share of kindergarten students in District schools by selected demographic subgroups, 2020-21 and 2021-22.



Source: Qlik Enrollment App: *Enrollment: Subgroup Comparisons* Sheet, retrieved on December 3, 2021. **Note:** The vertical axis indicates total number of students in the given group enrolled in the District schools at the kindergarten level in the 2020-21 and 2021-22 academic years. Analyses excludes racial/ethnic groups constituting less than 5 percent of the District's total student population: *Multi-Racial/Other, American Indian/Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Students whose race/ethnic identities are unknown or unreported.*

Table 3 allows us to see the change in total number of students for each demographic group. The number of economically disadvantaged kindergarten students increased by 25 percent (1,224 students) from 2020-21 to 2021-22. The number of English Learners enrolled in District kindergarten programs increased by 32 percent (325 students) from 2020-21 to 2021-22. The enrollment of kindergarten students with an IEP increased by 271 percent between the 2020-21 and 2021-22 academic years (149 students).

Table 3. Changes in kindergarten enrollment by selected demographic groups, District schools, 2020-21 to 2021-22.

Student Group	Kindergarten Student	Kindergarten Student	% Change in Kindergarten			
Student di oup	Enrollment	Enrollment	Student			
	2020-21	2021-22	Enrollment			
Race/Ethnicity ^a						
Asian	788	767	-3%			
Black/African American	2,684	3,320	+24%			
Hispanic/Latinx	1,918	2,416	+26%			
White	1,437	1,446	+1%			
Economic Disadvantage Status						
Economically Disadvantaged	4,816	6,040	+25%			
Non-Economically Disadvantaged	2,327	2,286	-2%			
English Learner Status						
Non-EL	6,141	6,999	+12%			
EL	1,002	1,327	+32%			
Special Education Status						
Non-Special Education	7,088	8,122	+13%			
Special Education	55	204	+271%			
Overall						
All District Kindergarteners	7,143	8,326	+17%			

Source: Qlik Enrollment App: *Enrollment: Subgroup Comparisons* Sheet, retrieved on December 3, 2021.

^a Analyses excludes racial/ethnic groups constituting less than 5 percent of the District's total student population: *Multi-Racial/Other*, *American Indian/Alaskan Native*, *Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander*, and students whose race/ethnic identity is unknown or unreported.

Conclusion

Overall, enrollment in public schools in Philadelphia declined 2 percent between 2020-21 and 2021-22. District schools experienced a 4 percent decline in enrollment, and enrollment in City Charter schools declined by 2 percent. District Alternative programs, which had the smallest student population of the sectors examined (2,766 students), experienced the steepest declines during that time (6 percent, or 190 students). An exception to these trends could be found in the increase in the number of students enrolled in Cyber Charter schools, which increased from 9,481 to 11,374 (20 percent) during the same time.

Another notable departure from the overall trends seen in student enrollment was observed among kindergarten students. Both for District schools, as well as Philadelphia public schools overall, kindergarten enrollment increased despite the decrease in overall enrollment between 2020-21 and 2021-22. This trend may be a product of the Covid-19 pandemic and its impact on public education, and more specifically, a large decrease in the number of kindergarten students enrolled during the 2020-21 school year.

There did not appear to be any significant shifts in enrollment when considering high school enrollment by admission type in the last year. Career and Technical Education programs also did not appear to experience any significant changes in enrollment between the 2020-21 and 2021-22 academic years.

The trends in overall enrollment did not result in any shifts in the demographic make-up of the student body by race/ethnicity, economic disadvantage status, EL status, and IEP status, though there was a trend observed in enrollment in Alternative schools, where the share of Black/African American and Hispanic/Latinx students increased as population in the sector decreased.