

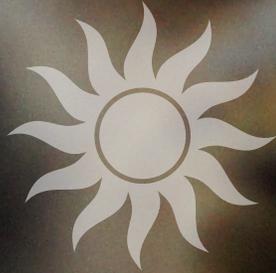


YOUTHBUILD



EXAMINING THE CORE

A Study of the Difference in the Achievement and Growth of Males of Color within Rhode Island Urban Core Communities





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Authors: Michael Berardino and Melissa Colon with Introduction and Conclusion by Anthony Hubbard. Research, development, and publication of this report was made possible in part by a grant from the Rhode Island Foundation.



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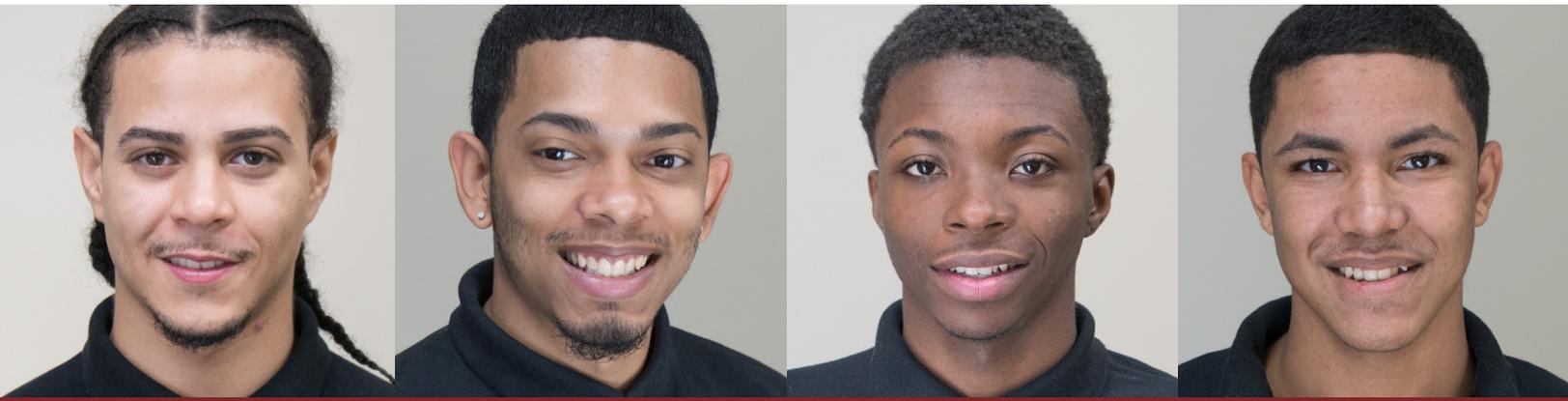
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INTRODUCTION

Examining the Core: A Study of the Difference in the Achievement and Growth of Males of Color within Rhode Island Urban Core Communities

Young men of color who live in the urban areas of Rhode Island face unique challenges. Parents, community members, policymakers, and the youth themselves have shared deep concerns about their status and the opportunities afforded to these young men. As director of YouthBuild Providence and the founder of the YouthBuild Preparatory Academy, I see the obstacles they face on a daily basis. Typically the young men who come to us have experienced serious educational gaps and often lack the skills necessary to meet their educational goals. In addition, their families are deeply challenged by a lack of economic security, which can manifest itself in such problems as family stress, homelessness, emotional and physical distress, limited access to high quality physical and mental care, as well as a cycle of underemployment in low wage jobs. This is consistent with a body of research regarding the experiences of young males of color across the U.S. showing that this group faces greater risk of poverty, stigmatization, racialization, criminal justice punishment, and educational discrimination.

But there is another story. Our work with young males of color also teaches us that they are a deeply diverse group with an incredible set of strengths that they contribute to community life each and every day. Even facing tremendous challenges, they come to our programs seeking a better life. They may arrive after years of educational neglect, having been told by society that they will amount to nothing, yet they still come and share their dreams and aspirations. They are well aware that they are often negatively categorized as being “at-risk.” At YouthBuild, we are committed to providing social, emotional, and human services designed to help young males of color to develop the skills necessary to thrive. We share with them our belief that providing a student-centered environment with a focus on academic success as well as social and emotional interventions will allow them to explore their latent skills and thrive in today’s society. At YBPA, we are committed to providing these services in a comprehensive educational setting. In sum, youth come to our program and others in the urban core of Rhode Island because they have not given up; they want the same things that most Rhode Islanders do: a good education, a good job, and a great family and community.

Motivated by deep concern as well as respect, and an appreciation for the lives for young males of color in Rhode Island, YouthBuild commissioned this report on educational outcomes and attainment by males of color because we wanted to better understand the disparities that such men face in Rhode Island’s urban core. We decided to analyze their educational outcomes and trajectories in order to guide the work of YouthBuild Preparatory Academy to address the needs of the youth we serve. By sharing these findings, we hope that they will help other organizations tackle important questions regarding educational equity.

This report offers several salient findings, summarized here and discussed in greater detail further in the report:

- A statewide demographic shift, leading to higher proportions of males of color and an increased concentration of students of color and low-income students in the urban core.
- Males of color in the urban core experience persistent and deep disparities on outcomes of standardized tests
- Males of color in the urban core suffer substantially higher chronic absenteeism and suspension rates than their white peers.
- There are clear disparities in educational opportunities and academic rigor among males of color and their white peers across the state.
- The consequences of such disparities are lower four-year graduation rates, lower college enrollments rates, and substantially lower college completion rates.

This report reinforces the reality that young males of color in Rhode Island are continuing to fall behind their white male peers in terms of academic engagement and associated academic outcomes. Yet we also see the demographics of both the urban core and the entire state are changing, with dramatic increases in black and Latino students. It is therefore imperative that the state and the districts that serve these students take a deeper look at the disparities and seek new solutions to this critical problem.

Despite improvements, males of color face a deep academic imbalance, as shown in numerous studies. Providing males of color with the resources required to succeed would alleviate some of the country's biggest socioeconomic problems, which cannot be eliminated unless their root causes are identified. It is critical to examine the data which are representative of the barriers and systemic conditions that affect the progress of this group. By sharing these findings, we hope to change policies, practices, and efforts and improve the educational experiences and outcomes of this population.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anthony Hubbard". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more legible than the last.

Anthony L. Hubbard
Executive Director, YouthBuild Preparatory



CONTEXT OF THE REPORT

The impetus of this report derives from long-standing concerns of community members, parents, and youth regarding the well-being and unique challenges faced by young males of color in Rhode Island. As substantiated by a robust body of empirical research, boys and men of color experience disproportionately negative exposure and outcomes on almost every measure of wellness, including health, academic, and economic indicators (Barbarin et al., 2016; Caperton, 2010; Johnson & Shelton, 2014; Miranda et al, 2014; Noguera, 2014; Noguera, Hurtado, & Fergus, 2013; Presidential Taskforce, 2014). Compared to their white male peers, males of color have a higher exposure to poverty, racialization and stigma, discrimination, harsher punishment in the criminal justice system, as well as fewer opportunities to attend high quality schools or take advanced coursework (Barbarin et al., 2016; Williams, 2016). In response to these concerns, communities nationwide have launched efforts to critically examine the experiences of males of color in order to develop policies, programs, and practices to better serve their needs (Presidential Taskforce, 2014). In addition, national efforts such as President Obama’s My Brother’s Keeper Initiative have called for increased data collection and reporting to inform policy and practice that addresses the socioemotional and health needs of young males of color (Johnson & Shelton, 2014; Miranda et al, 2014).

In alignment with local and national efforts, and in response to local concerns regarding the plight of males of color, YouthBuild Providence commissioned this report as part of a broader strategy by YouthBuild Providence and its partners to bring attention to the experiences, needs, and strengths of the young males of color living in Rhode Island. Given the importance of schooling as a critical institution in the lives of children, their families, and communities, this report provides a descriptive overview of academic and engagement outcomes for males of color enrolled in public schools in Rhode Island, with a focus on the urban core. As explained in subsequent sections, such a focus was deemed appropriate, given that two-thirds of all males of color in Rhode Island attend schools within the urban core.

To understand the outcomes for males of color in Rhode Island, this report maps out academic and engagement outcomes for five student groups: (1) all Rhode Island males enrolled in public schools statewide; (2) white male students enrolled in the urban core; (3) males of color in the urban core, including Asian, black, Latino, and Native American students; (4) black males enrolled in the urban core; and (5) Latino males enrolled in the urban core. This approach allows for comparison of all outcomes for urban core males of color compared with their white peers in the urban core, as well as male students statewide, while highlighting the experiences of black and Latino males in the urban core.

¹The Urban Core refers to Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket; the term includes all schools located in these communities, including traditional public schools as well as charter schools.

²This report uses the term Latino to represent RIDE data that categorizes students as Hispanic.

This report is divided into four sections. Section I offers a demographic profile of male students in Rhode Island as well as the urban core, including enrollment patterns for each subgroup. Section II discusses student engagement, and examines such factors as attendance and school disciplinary actions. Section III looks at academic achievement, including performance on standardized tests and high school completion rates. The fourth section focuses on academic rigor and preparation for post-secondary education by looking at SAT and AP results as well as college enrollment, persistence, and completion rates. Based on data availability, findings for all sections are aggregated by grade level: elementary (Pre K-5), middle school (grades 6-8), and high school (grades 9-12). The report concludes with a summary of the findings as well as considerations for policy and practice.

This report uses secondary aggregated data from Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) and the Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner (OPC), provided by DataSpark, a data and information accessibility initiative of the Providence Plan. RIDE is the data source for all K-12 topics and OPC the source for the post-secondary outcomes. Appendix I: Data and Methodology provides details on how measures were calculated in each section.



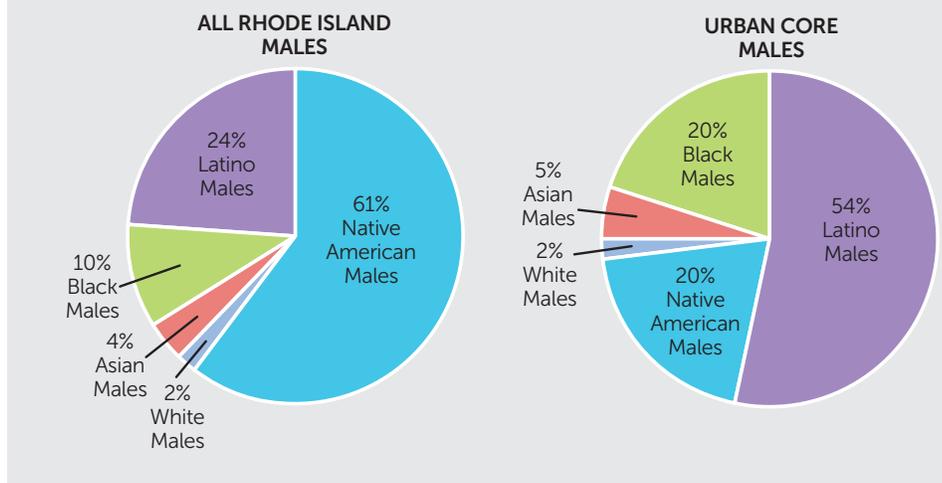


SECTION I: DEMOGRAPHICS

In School Year 15, 141,972 students were enrolled in Rhode Island public schools for grades Pre-K (PK) through 12. Over half of all students in Rhode Island (52%) were male, and Figure 1 shows, 61% were white, 24% Latino, 10% black, 4% Asian, and 2% Native American. There were 46,545 students enrolled in urban core public schools (including traditional public schools, charter schools, and state-run schools located in the urban core), representing a third of all public school students in the state. Males comprised 51% of all students in the urban core; among urban core males, Latinos were the largest subgroup, accounting for 54% of all male students; white and black accounted for 20%, Asian 5%, and Native American 2%. Male students of color in Rhode Island are concentrated in the urban core, with two-thirds attending school in the urban core. These include 73% of Rhode Island Latino males, 66% of all black males, and 36% of all Asian males. By comparison, only 11% of white male students in the state attend school in the urban core.

The Rhode Island Pre K-12 public education system has experienced dramatic demographic shifts in recent years. As demonstrated in Figure 2 above, statewide Pre K-12 male enrollment has dropped 8% over the past ten years. During this time, the number of white males enrolled in Rhode Island public schools decreased by 21%, while enrollment of males of color increased by 24%, driven by a 28% increase in the number of Latino males and a 7% increase in the number of black males. As a result of these changes, the ethno-racial composition of male students in the public schools has changed. Over the past ten years, the proportion of white males decreased by 10 points, while the percentage of Latino males increased by 7 points, and the percentage of black, Asian, and Native American males each increased by a percentage point.

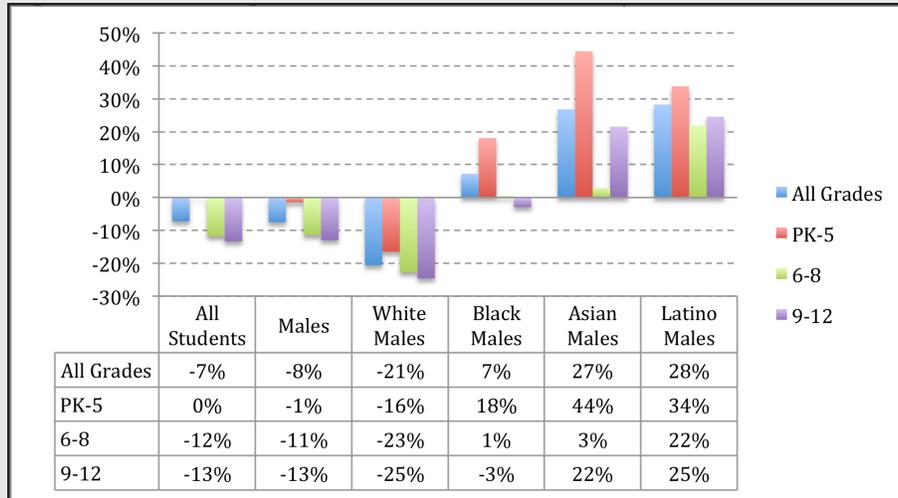
Figure 1. Male Demographics, Statewide and Urban Core, SY15



³Gender, ethnicity, and program status information calculated as of October 1st for a given school year.

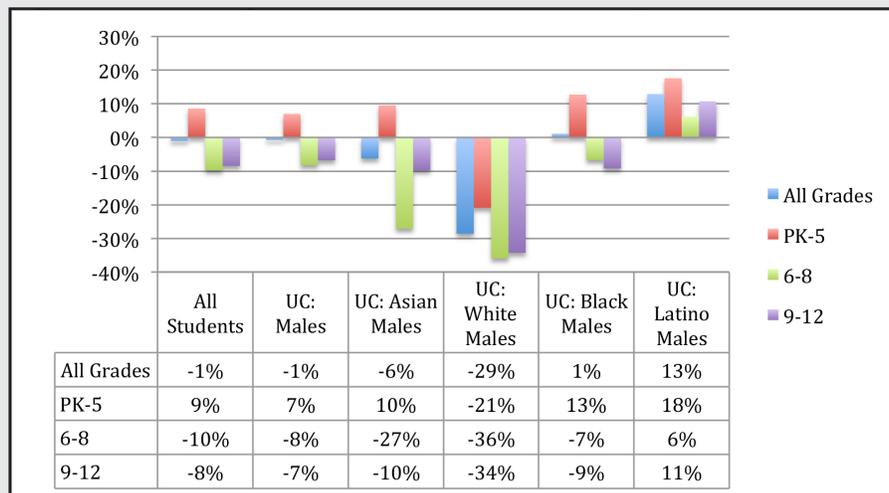
⁴School Year 15 refers to the 2014-2015 school year ending in June of 2015.

Figure 2. Percent Change in Enrollment – Statewide Males by Grade Level, SY06-SY015



The majority of growth in number of Latino males is occurring in the urban core, while the number of Latino males outside the urban core more than doubled since 2006, from 2,272 to 4,655 students. The demographic shift in Rhode Island public schools is most pronounced in grades Pre K-5, where number of male students decreased by one percent over the past ten years, while the number of white male students decreased by 16 percent. This has been offset by increased numbers of Asian males (44%), Latino males (34%), and black males (18%) in grades Pre K-5. This statewide increase suggests that these trends in demographic shifts will continue in upcoming years.

Figure 3. Percent Change in Enrollment – Urban Core Males by Grade Level, SY06-SY15

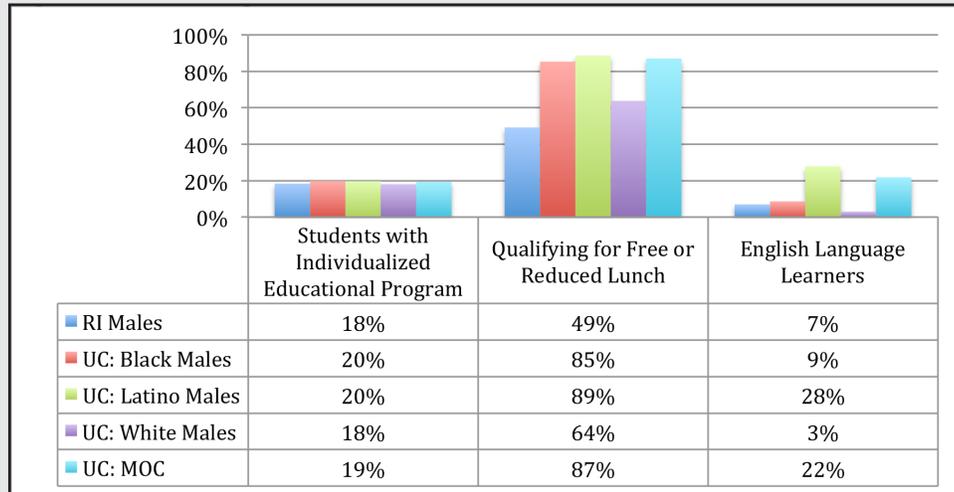


While overall enrollment in the urban core has remained unchanged for the last ten years (see Fig. 3 above), there are marked differences in enrollment for the major ethno-racial groups. During this time, there was a 6% decrease in the number of Asian male students and a 29% decrease in number of white male students in the urban core. These deficits were offset by a 13% increase in number of Latino male students and a one percent increase in the number of black male students. Such changes in enrollment have substantially altered the ethno-racial distribution in the urban core, where the proportion of Asian males and black males has remained consistent, while the percentage of white males decreased by eight points, and the percentage of Latino males increased by seven points. Underscoring the demographic shift occurring in the urban core, white males were the only ethno-racial group that experienced a drop in enrollment in Pre K-5 (20% decrease); all other groups saw a more than ten percent increase.

To gain a deeper understanding of the demographics and characteristics of male students in Rhode Island and the urban core, this section examines the percentage of each group that have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), qualify for free or reduced lunch, and are classified as English Language Learners (ELL).



Figure 4. Student program status, SY15



Individualized Educational Plan (IEP): In SY15, 18% of all Rhode Island male students had an IEP, making them eligible for special education services. IEP rates statewide and in the urban core were comparable, with urban core black and Latino males both receiving IEPs at a rate of 20%, slightly higher than the 18% for urban core white males. There were similar IEP rates across all grade levels for each subgroup, with the exception of urban core black males, who had an IEP rate five points higher in high school than elementary school. Since 2006, the proportion of Rhode Island males with an IEP decreased from 25% to 18%. Similarly, the IEP rate decreased by six points for urban core black males, four points for urban core Latino males, and a remarkable 13 points for urban core white males.

Free or Reduced Lunch (FRL): The most pronounced difference in demographics between all Rhode Island males and urban core males was the proportion of students categorized as low-income (defined as students who qualify for free or reduced lunch). In 2015, 87% of all urban core males of color (85% black males and 89% Latino males) were categorized as low income, more than 20 points greater than the rate for urban core white males (64%) and almost 40 points higher than the rate for all Rhode Island males (49%). Since 2006, the proportion of all Rhode Island male students categorized as low-income increased by 13 percentage points (36% to 49%). In the urban core, the percentage of low-income males of color increased by three points, while that of white males increased by ten points.

English Language Learners (ELL): In 2015, 7% of all Rhode Island male students were classified as English Language Learners (ELL). At 22%, the ELL rate was substantially higher in the urban core, driven by a 28% rate for urban core Latino males. The ELL rate for urban core white males was considerably lower at 3%, nine points lower than the rate

⁵According to NCES (2016 - IEP), 16.4% of male students aged 3-21 receive services for a disability.

for urban core males of color and four points lower than the rate for all Rhode Island males. The ELL population is overwhelmingly concentrated in the urban core, accounting for 80% of all English language learners in the state, while urban core Latino male students account for 65% of all male ELL students in Rhode Island.

Since 2006, the number of male English language learners has increased 35% statewide, comprising 5-7% of all male students. There has also been growth in the number of male English language learners in the urban core, where black ELL students increased by 25%, Latino ELL students increased by 35%, and white male ELL students increased by 86%. Similar to national trends (NCES, 2016a), the ELL rates in Rhode Island are higher for Pre K-5 students than other grades, with English language learners accounting for 10% of such male students statewide, 22% of male urban core Pre K-5 students, and 35% of urban core Latino males. In contrast, English language learners accounted for only 5% of high school males, 14% of urban core males, and 20% of urban core Latino males.

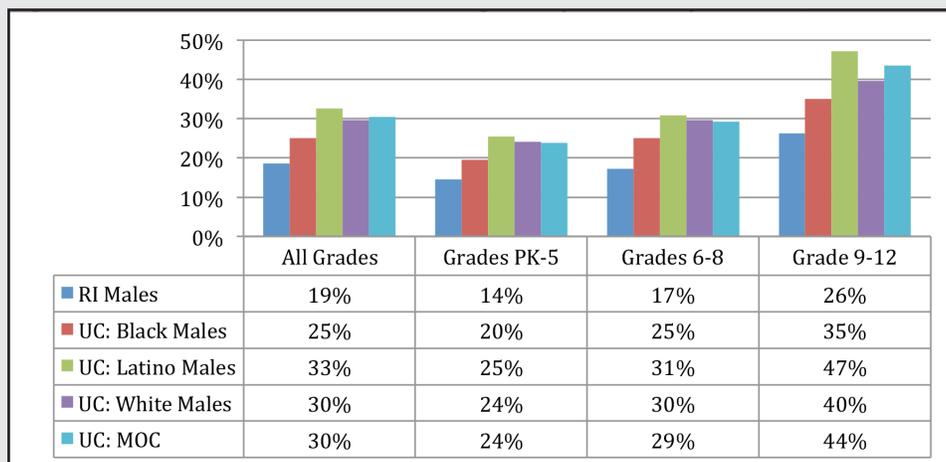




SECTION II: ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT

This section discusses chronic absenteeism and out-of-school suspensions (OSS), indicators related to academic engagement and closely tied to long-term academic success (Fredericks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004). Academic engagement, broadly understood as a student’s investment in the work of learning, is a critical concept for understanding academic persistence and success (Fredericks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004). While academic engagement is a complex concept, two indicators are used to examine engagement: student attendance and student discipline (Appleton, Christenson, & Furlong, 2008). Student attendance reflects active participation in schooling; low attendance is associated with decreased academic achievement, increased likelihood of dropping out, and long term consequences for employment and earnings (US DOE, 2016). Suspensions and other disciplinary actions are associated with a lower likelihood of completing high school, enrolling in higher education, and lower lifetime earnings (Archambault, Janosz, Fallu, & Pagani, 2009). It is important to note that both chronic absenteeism and OSS rates are complicated metrics designed to measure student engagement as well as student responses to systemic factors involved in disengagement from school. For instance, students who feel unwelcome in a school environment, or discriminated against by teachers and administrators, are less likely to attend school and more likely to be disruptive in the classroom (Fredericks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004). Without further research into this area, this study cannot offer explanations for why such differences exist; it can only explain what current disparities in chronic absenteeism and suspensions look like in the state.

Figure 5. Chronic absenteeism rate (missing 10% or more school days), SY15



The 2015 statewide attendance rate for males was 93%; among males in the urban core, Latino males had a slightly lower attendance rate at 90%, with black males at 92% and

white males at 91%. While there were small differences in the mean attendance rate for male subgroups, Figure 5 shows substantial differences in the chronic absenteeism rate (defined as the percentage of students who missed 10% or more school days). Across all grades, 19% of all Rhode Island male students were chronically absent in SY15. The chronic absenteeism rate was higher for the urban core, where black males missed class at a rate of 25%, Latino males 33%, and white males 30%. In other words, almost a third of all males in the urban core missed at least 10% of the school year. To place these figures into context, according to the U.S. Department of Education, the chronic absenteeism rate for all males nationally in 2016 was 13%, and for high school males, 18%.

Figure 5 also shows differences in chronic absenteeism rates by grade level, with the highest rates occurring at the high school level. Statewide, the chronic absenteeism rate for grades 9-12 was 26% for all male students, 12 percentage points higher than the statewide rate for elementary school male students. The chronic absenteeism rate for urban core males of color in high school was 44%, 20 points higher than elementary school rates. Most alarming, there was 47% chronic absenteeism for urban core Latino males in grades 9-12, down 13 percentage points since SY05, but the highest among all subgroups. Finally, there was a gap in chronic absenteeism rates between urban core males of color and all Rhode Island males that almost twice as big for high school students than elementary school.

School Disciplinary Action

Out-of-school suspensions (OSS) are a complicated and critical topic related to academic and economic success or failure (Archambault, Janosz, Fallu, & Pagani, 2009). This is especially important for males of color, as research studies from as far back as the 1970s have found disproportionate enforcement of school discipline by race (Skiba, Eckes, & Brown, 2009). Even when controlling for socioeconomic status and other school characteristics, males of color are more likely than any student groups to receive disciplinary action in school (Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010; Losen, & Gillespie, 2012; Skiba et al., 2009). Reflecting national trends in racial disproportionality, Figure 6 shows that urban core males of color received substantially more suspensions than their white peers in the urban core or all Rhode Island males. In 2015, the OSS rate (defined as number of suspensions per 100 students) for urban core males of color was 20%, seven points higher than that of urban core white males and all Rhode Island males. Urban core black male students had the highest OSS rate (24%) among all ethno-racial groups. Further underscoring the racial discipline gap, urban core males of color represented only 14% of the total enrollment for all Rhode Island students, yet received 42% of OSS suspensions in the state.

Figure 6 shows different patterns of OSS across grade levels, with the highest rates occurring in

⁶The OSS rate is defined as the number of out-of-school suspensions per 100 students, based on average daily enrollment relative to the total number of out-of-school suspensions for each subgroup. OSS rates may include multiple suspensions for the same student.

middle school. In 2015 OSS rates for middle school urban core males of color was 42%, 16 points higher than urban core white males and 22 points higher than males students statewide.

Figure 6. Out-of-School Suspension Rates per 100 students by Grade Level, SY15

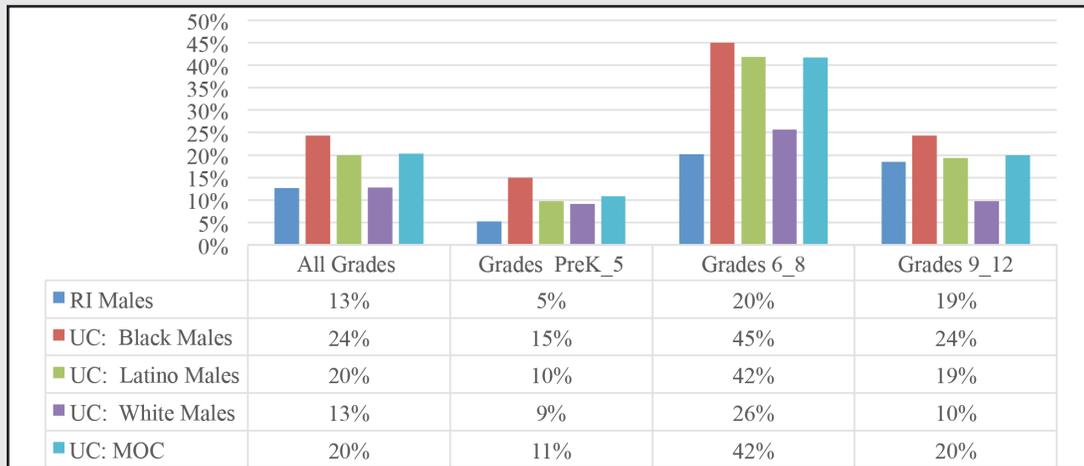
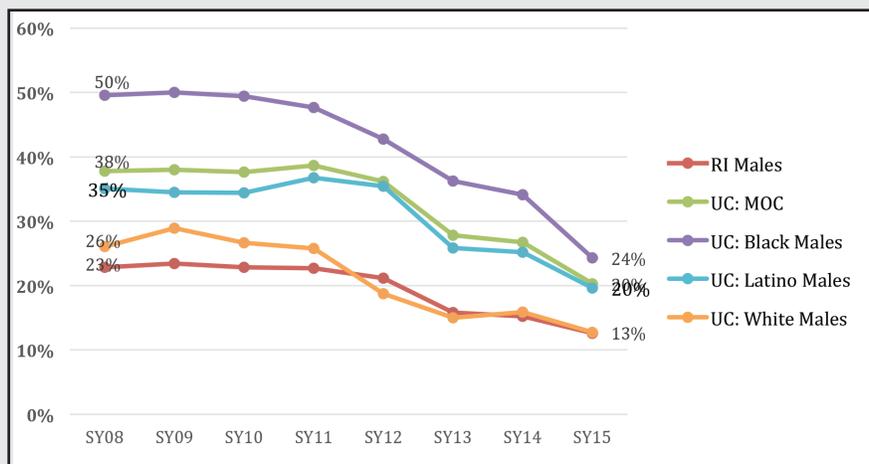


Figure 7 shows substantial disparities in OSS rates in 2015, an improvement from eight years prior. Since 2008, the OSS rate for urban core males of color has decreased 18 points, including a noteworthy 26-point decrease for urban core black males. Over this period the OSS rate for urban core white males fell by 13 points while the rate for all Rhode Island males fell by 10 points. Such improved OSS rates reduced over half of the gap between urban core males of color and Rhode Island males, and 42% of the gap between urban core males of color and urban core white males. Figure 7 also demonstrates that from 2008-2011, OSS rates were fairly stable, followed by substantial decreases across ethno-racial groups.

Figure 7. Annual Out-of-School Suspension Rates per 100 students, SY08-15





SECTION III: ACADEMIC OUTCOMES

The following section reports on the academic achievement of male students in Rhode Island and the urban core, looking at most recent results from the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) and the New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP). The section presents four- and five-year graduation rates and dropout statistics.

PARCC

Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers tests are a series of standardized tests developed to measure student achievement based on the Common Core State Standards (PARCC, 2016). In 2015, six states (Colorado, Illinois, Maryland, New Jersey, New Mexico, and Rhode Island) and the District of Columbia used the PARCC to assess student achievement. In Rhode Island, PARCC assessments replaced the NECAP (described below). As reported here, it includes the percentage of students “meeting or exceeding expectations” (scoring Level 4 or higher). Although this report discusses only grades 3, 8, and 11, tests are administered to every grade, from third grade through high school.

Table 1 shows the results of the 2015 PARCC assessments in English Language Arts (ELA) and math for grades 3, 8, and 11. There were substantial gaps for urban core males of color compared with urban core white males and all male students statewide, across all grades on both the math and ELA tests. On the grade 3 math test, only 15% of urban core males of color met or exceeded expectations, 11 points lower than urban core white students and 21 points below all males statewide. Only 12% of urban core males of color met or exceeded expectations on the grade 3 ELA test, 11 points lower than the rate for urban core white males, and 21 points below the rate for all male students statewide.

For the grade 8 math test, only 6% of urban core males of color met or exceeded expectations, three points lower than the rate for urban core white males and four points lower than the rate for all males statewide. While double the percentage (12%) of urban core males of color met or exceeded expectations on the eighth grade ELA test, there was a six point gap with urban core white males and 14 points with all Rhode Island males.

Among all tests analyzed, urban core males of color had the lowest performance on the high school math test, where only 3% of urban core males of color met or exceeded expectations, two points lower than the rate for urban core white males, and ten points below the rate for all Rhode Island males. Finally, 14% of urban core males of color met expectations on the Grade 11 ELA test, 15 points below the rate for urban core white males and 11 points below the rate for Rhode Island males (urban core white males outperformed males statewide).

Table 1. Students who met expectations or higher on PARCC math and ELA tests, SY15

Met or Exceeded Expectations+	Grade 3		Grade 8		High School	
	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Geometry	ELA
RI Males	36%	33%	10%	26%	13%	25%
UC: Black Males	18%	15%	4%	9%	3%	13%
UC: Latino Males	14%	10%	6%	11%	2%	13%
UC: White Males	26%	23%	9%	18%	5%	29%
UC: MOC	15%	12%	6%	12%	3%	14%

Note: On April 2017, RIDE officially ended use of the PARCC and will be adopting the MCAS as the state standardized test (Borg, 2017).

NECAP Scores

Prior to the use of the PARCC assessment, Rhode Island students participated in the NECAP to fulfill federal testing requirements. These are a series of achievement tests administered annually and developed by a collaboration of New England states (New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont) in response to No Child Left Behind (RIDE, 2014). Like many standardized tests, the NECAP was designed to measure grade level expectations; students received both a scaled score and performance level (1-4) score relative to their proficiency rates. Table 2 and Appendix II show the percentage of students who scored proficient or "proficient with distinction" (Levels 3 and 4) on each test, i.e., the proficiency rates.

Both math and reading assessments for grades 3, 8, and 11 show a persistent achievement gap between urban core males of color and both males statewide and urban core white male students. In 2014, the proficiency gap between urban core males of color and all Rhode Island males ranged from 21-27 points, while the gap with urban core white males was 10-19 points. Substantial gaps existed despite consistent improvement in proficiency rates for urban core males of color over the previous eight years.

Table 2. SY14 students scoring proficient or higher, NECAP grades 3, 8, 11, reading & math

	Grade 3		Grade 8		Grade 11	
	Reading	Math	Reading	Math	Reading	Math
RI Males	64%	57%	69%	56%	79%	37%
UC: Black Males	41%	33%	47%	25%	59%	11%
UC: Latino Males	42%	33%	43%	29%	57%	13%
UC: White Males	55%	50%	55%	41%	75%	32%
UC: Males of color	42%	33%	45%	30%	58%	13%

Grade 3

As seen in Table 2, urban core males of color had substantially lower proficiency rates than either urban core white males or males statewide. From 2006-2014, proficiency rates on third grade math tests improved for urban core males of color by nine points, while scores for males statewide improved by five points and for urban core white males by just two points. As a result, urban core males of color closed 14% of the gap with Rhode Island males and nearly a third of the gap with urban core white males. Similarly, proficiency rates on third grade reading tests over the same period improved by 13 points, at a higher rate than both Rhode Island males and urban core white males, resulting in a 19% reduction in the performance gap with Rhode Island males and a 65% reduction in the gap with urban core white males.

Grade 8

From 2006-2014, urban core males of color improved proficiency rates on the eighth grade math tests by ten percentage points while the statewide male proficiency rate increased by eight percentage points, resulting in a slight reduction in the substantial performance gap, from 28 points to 26. Urban core white males maintained the same proficiency rates over period. Thus, urban core males of color managed to close nearly half the distance with urban core white males. The proficiency rates for urban core males of color on the Grade 8 reading tests improved by 25 points from 2006 to 2014, cutting the gap with urban core white males in half and reducing the gap with all Rhode Island males by almost a fourth.

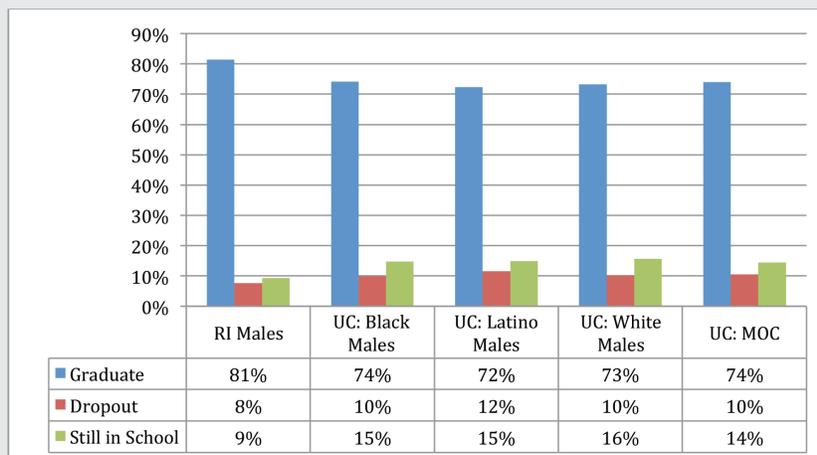
Similar to the PARCC high school math test, the NECAP grade 11 math assessment has some of the lowest proficiency scores across all groups. Rhode Island males scored a 37% proficiency rate in 2014, while urban core males of color scored only 13%. From 2008-2014, urban core males of color improved their proficiency rates by only five points, while urban core white males improved by 14 points and overall Rhode Island male students by 13 points. As a result, the achievement gap widened by 90% between urban core males of color and urban core white males and by 50% with male students statewide. Compared with grade 11 reading proficiency scores, the 2014 proficiency rates were over four times as high for urban core males of color and more than twice as high for all Rhode Island males, meaning that on the reading tests, urban core males of color scored 17 points lower (58%) than urban core white males and 21 points below male students statewide. From 2008-2014, this proficiency rate improved, but rates for other groups did as well, leaving the achievement gap nearly unchanged over that seven-year period.

Graduation and Dropout Rates

Both PARCC and NECAP evaluate academic achievement and mastery of content and skills for grade levels, relative to established standards. While they are important assessments, it is important to look at the cumulative measures of academic achievement

in order to understand overall outcomes, including high school graduation and dropout rates. For students to receive a high school diploma in Rhode Island, they must fulfill certain requirements, including proficiency in six core areas and successful completion of 20 high school courses and two performance assessments (exhibitions, portfolios, and/or comprehensive course assessments) (RIDE, 2016).

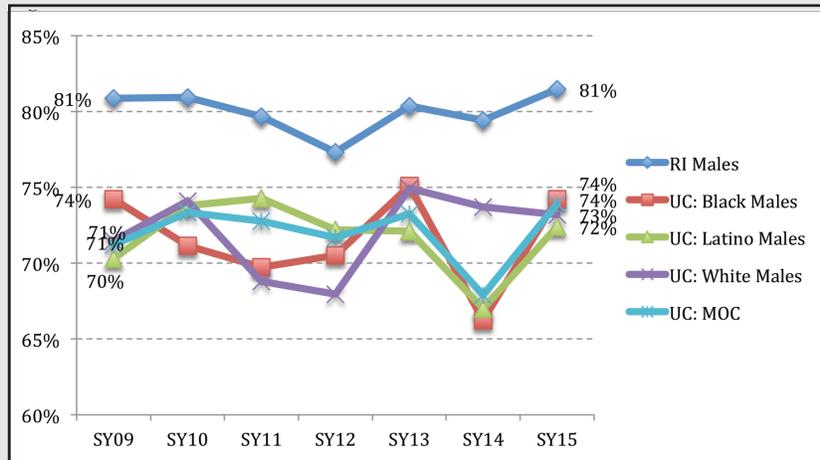
Figure 8. Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rate, SY15



In 2015, Rhode Island male students had a four-year cohort graduation rate of 81%, seven points higher than the rate for the urban core males of color cohort and eight points higher than the rate for urban core white males. While there was a large gap in graduation rates, there was only a two-point difference in four-year dropout rates for 2014 between Rhode Island males and urban core males of color, and no difference between urban core males of color and urban core white males. Other differences in four-year outcomes are seen in the “still in school” rate. Specifically, 14% of urban core males of color were still in school after four years, five points higher than the rate for all Rhode Island males. Within the urban core, the four-year cohort outcomes for urban core black, Latino, and white males were very similar.

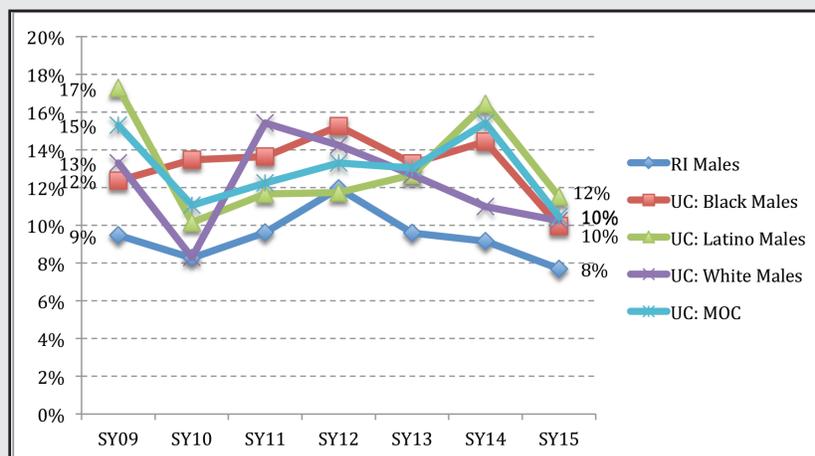
⁷Four-year cohort rates are students who start high school together and later graduate, drop out, or remain in school four years later. The denominator is the overall number of students who begin high school together.

Figure 9: Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rate, SY15



From 2009 to 2015, the four-year graduation rate for all Rhode Island males dipped from 81% to 77%, then increased to 81% in 2015. Over the same period, the four-year graduation rate improved slightly for males in the urban core, with urban core Latino males and urban core white scores increasing by two points, while the rate for urban core black males remaining unchanged. As a result, the gap in graduation rates for males in the urban core compared to males statewide remained largely unaffected. As seen in Figure 9, there was a seven percentage point increase in graduation rates for urban core males of color in 2015, offsetting four years of decreasing graduation rates for urban core Latino and black males in 2014.

Figure 10: Four-Year Cohort Dropout Rate, SY-09-SY15



Since 2009, the four-year dropout rate fell slightly for all Rhode Island males, and somewhat more for urban core males of color. As a result, urban core males of color have closed most of the gap in dropout rates compared with Rhode Island males. Similar to trends in four-year graduation rates, there have been annual fluctuations in dropout rates for urban core males of color, with an increase in 2014, followed by dramatic decreases in 2015. The improvements in the four-year dropout rates have been offset by minimal movement in four-year graduation rates, meaning that an increased number of students in the urban core are staying in school after four years rather than dropping out. To gain a more complete picture of high school completion rates for males in the urban core, it is important to look at the five-year outcomes for students. Table 3 shows outcomes for students five years after starting high school, where the statewide graduation rate for male students increased by five points, while the graduation rate for urban core males of color increased by seven (there was a nine-point increase for urban core black males and seven points for urban core Latino males). By adding another year of high school, dropout rates increased. The five-year dropout rate increased by three points for all Rhode Island males, while the rate increased by five points for urban core males of color (six for urban core black males and four for urban core Latino males). In other words, comparing five-year to four-year outcomes, the data show a smaller graduation gap but a larger dropout gap for Rhode Island males compared to urban core males of color.

Table 3. Four- and Five-Year Cohort Graduation Outcomes, SY14

	Graduation Rate		Dropout Rate		Still in School	
	4-Year	5-Year	4-Year	5-Year	4-Year	5-Year
RI Males	79%	84%	9%	12%	10%	3%
UC: Black Males	66%	75%	14%	20%	19%	5%
UC: Latino Males	67%	74%	16%	20%	16%	4%
UC: White Males	74%	80%	11%	14%	13%	3%
UC: Males of color	68%	75%	15%	20%	16%	4%

⁸These outcomes are based on the 2014 cohort, which had substantially lower graduation rates and higher dropout rates.



SECTION IV: ACADEMIC RIGOR AND PREPARATION FOR POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

The final section of this report concerns curricular rigor, preparation for success in post-secondary education, and post-secondary outcomes. First, this section discusses participation and performance in Advanced Placement (AP) and SAT tests which measure academic rigor and preparation for post-secondary academic education. It then provides information on enrollment, persistence, and graduation in Rhode Island public colleges and universities.

AP Participation and Performance

The Advanced Placement program is one of the nation's oldest college access and preparation programs, allowing students to participate in college-level coursework, with the chance to earn college credits while still in high school (Wakelyn, 2009).

National efforts have focused on improving AP access and participation rates for underrepresented student groups, primarily low-income and ethno-racial minority students, as a strategy for improving educational standards and increasing participation in post-secondary education (Wakelyn, 2009). In Rhode Island, AP tests are offered in 30 different subjects; students are expected to take placement exams following year-long AP courses (RIDE, 2016a). If students score well enough on the AP tests, they may qualify for college credits or advanced standing in college. Because students take specific AP courses and tests in different grades in high school, this analysis uses a twelfth grade cohort, calculating AP participation and performance over four years of high school. Table 4 shows participation rates by subgroup, average number of tests the students took during high school, and the pass rates (scoring 3 or higher) among test takers. It also shows large disparities in AP test participation and performance between urban core males of color on one hand and urban core white males and all Rhode Island males on the other. For the twelfth-grade 2014 cohort, 21% of all males took at least one AP exam; urban core Latino males had a slightly lower participation rate, at 19%, and urban core black males had a participation rate five points lower, while urban core white males had a participation rate five points higher than the statewide male rate. Not only was there a discrepancy in AP participation rates for the urban core between white males and males of color, the table shows a wide disparity in the number of tests taken.

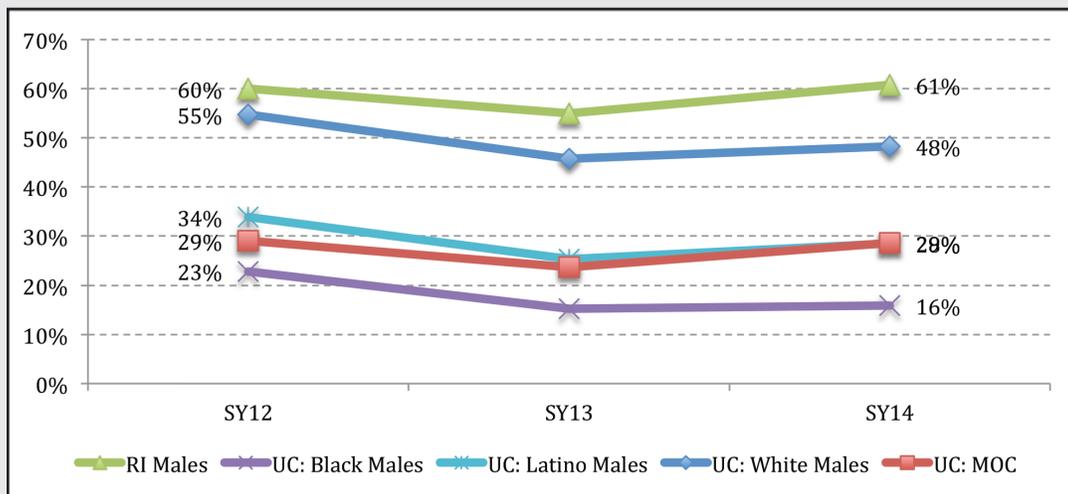
⁹Participation by urban core males of color was higher than the rate for urban core Latino and Black males because of the 44% participation rate for urban core Asian males in the Grade 12 cohort.

Table 4. AP Participation and Pass Rates Grade 12 Cohort, SY14

	Took an AP Exam	Average # of Tests Taken	% of AP Test-Takers Passing at Least One Test	% of Grade 12 Cohort Passing At least One AP Exam
RI Males	21%	2.75	61%	13%
UC: Black Males	16%	2.11	16%	3%
UC: Latino Males	19%	2.39	28%	5%
UC: White Males	26%	3.98	48%	12%
UC: Males of color	20%	2.52	29%	6%

Urban core males averaged almost four tests, while urban core Latino and black males averaged less than 2.5. As seen in Table 4, there were huge disparities in AP test performance among test-takers, with 28% of urban core Latino males and 16% urban core black males passing at least one AP test, substantially lower than the statewide male pass rate of 61% and the urban core white pass rate of 48%. Looking at these results in terms of the total high school cohort, we see that only 3% of urban core black males and 5% of urban core Latino males took and passed at least one AP tests compared with 12% of urban core white males and 13% of all Rhode Island males. These disparities suggest differences in the access to AP courses and how students are being prepared to take the AP exams.

Figure 11. Percentage of AP test takers who are passing at least one test by Grade 12 Cohort, SY12-SY14



From 2012 to 2014, the AP participation rates increased for all male students, but most of all for urban core white males, producing a participation gap between urban core males of color and white males larger than three years prior. While the proportion of urban core Latino and black males taking AP tests increased since 2012, Figure 11 shows that the proportion of urban core black and Latino male students passing at least one exam decreased, with the urban core Latino male pass rate decreasing by five points and that for urban core black males by seven. Over this period the urban core white male pass rate also decreased by seven points, but remained 20 points higher than pass rates for urban core males of color. The pass rate for all Rhode Island males increased by a point, resulting in larger gaps than in 2012.

SAT Participation and Performance

The SAT (or the ACT) tests are often required as part of college admissions procedures, used as a measure for college readiness and a standardized assessment to compare students across districts and states (NCES, 2016c). Like the AP results, this section reports on SAT results by grade 12 cohorts, including students' highest scores if they took the SATs multiple times. Table 5 below shows that in the 2014 twelfth-grade cohort, a little over half the males took the SAT test at least once. In 2014, urban core black males had a SAT participation rate of 52%, one point higher than the statewide rate, while urban core Latino males had a slightly lower rate at 45% and urban core white males had the lowest participation rate among male subgroups in the urban core (39%).

Table 5. SAT Participation and Mean SAT scores by test Grade 12 Cohort, SY14

	Took the SAT	Mean Reading Score	Mean Math Score	Mean Writing Score
RI Males	51%	493	506	473
UC: Black Males	52%	386	405	379
UC: Latino Males	45%	400	415	385
UC: White Males	39%	521	523	495
UC: MOC	49%	401	417	387

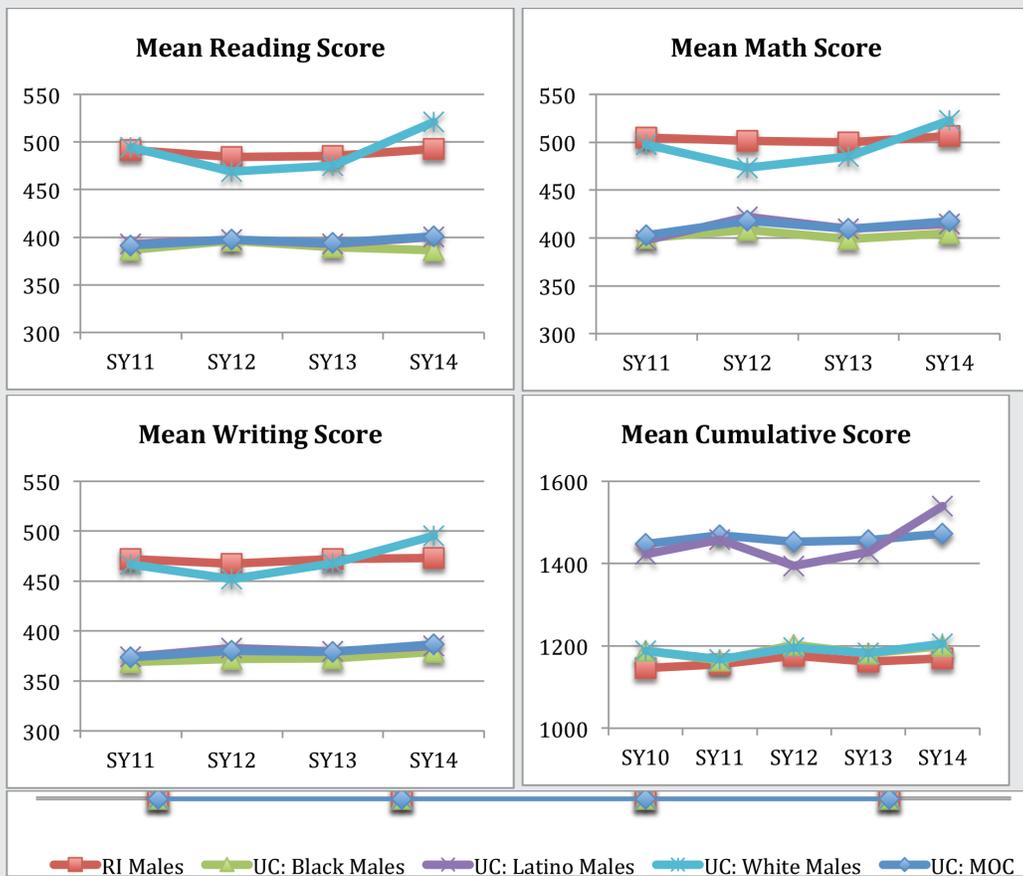
¹⁰The state began collecting AP results in SY10; therefore 2013 and 2014 are the only grade 12 cohorts with complete data. The 2012 cohort is included because 99% of AP tests are taken in grades 10-12.

¹¹RIDE has collected SAT data since 2010; 99% of SAT test-takers take them in 11th and 12th grades. This study reports on the grade 12 cohorts from 2011-2014, which omits up to 1% of 2011 and 2012 twelfth-grade cohorts.

¹²According to RIDE data, approximately 3% of graduating seniors participated in the ACT, meaning only 55% of graduating seniors took either the ACT or SATs. This is far below the participation rate of neighboring states, i.e., 84% in Massachusetts, 88% in Connecticut, and 76% in New York.

Table 5 also reports on the mean scores for the subgroups, using the highest test score if students took the tests multiple times. These mean scores show that while urban core white males had lower participation rates than urban core males of color and all Rhode Island males, they had substantially higher mean scores than urban core black males and urban core Latino male students, as well as higher scores than the statewide mean for all males. According to these national SAT scores, urban core black males and Latino males score 0.8 standard deviations lower than all males in Rhode Island and over one standard deviation lower than urban core white males, representing huge achievement gaps (College Board, 2014)

Figure 12. Mean SAT scores and cumulative scores for Grade 12 Cohort, SY11-14



There has been an increase in SAT participation among males in the urban core males of color over the past four years, with Latino, black, and white males increasing their SAT participation rates by four points over the past four years, while statewide the male participation rate increased by only percentage point. As seen in Figure 12, while urban core Latino and black males have increased their SAT participation rates since 2011, there has been little improvement in the mean SAT scores. The gap in mean SAT scores between urban core males of color and statewide males decreased by eight points in reading, 13 points in math, and 12 points in writing (33 points cumulatively). On the

other hand, the gap between urban core males of color and white males increased over the past years by 17 points in reading, 11 points in math, and 16 points in writing (43 points cumulatively).

Post-Secondary Education Enrollment, Persistence, and Graduation

The final section reports on the enrollment, persistence, and graduation rates of high school graduates in Rhode Island public institutions of higher education. Specifically, it reports on enrollment at the Community College of Rhode Island (CCRI), Rhode Island College (RIC), and the University of Rhode Island (URI), persistence into the second year of college, and completion of the school within 150% of the expected time (3 years at CCRI and 6 years at URI and RIC), a common measure of college completion that allows for disruption in post-secondary education (NCES, 2016b). These measures are intended to provide a snapshot of post-secondary outcomes for urban core males of color relative to urban core white males and all Rhode Island males. The data do not include information on students enrolled in college outside of Rhode Island nor private colleges in Rhode Island. It shows that while there are comparable enrollment rates at the three schools, urban core males of color face large disparities in persistence and completion rates, especially for students enrolling at CCRI.

Figure 13. Percentage of high school graduates enrolled in RI public colleges or universities within 16 months of graduating high school, SY13

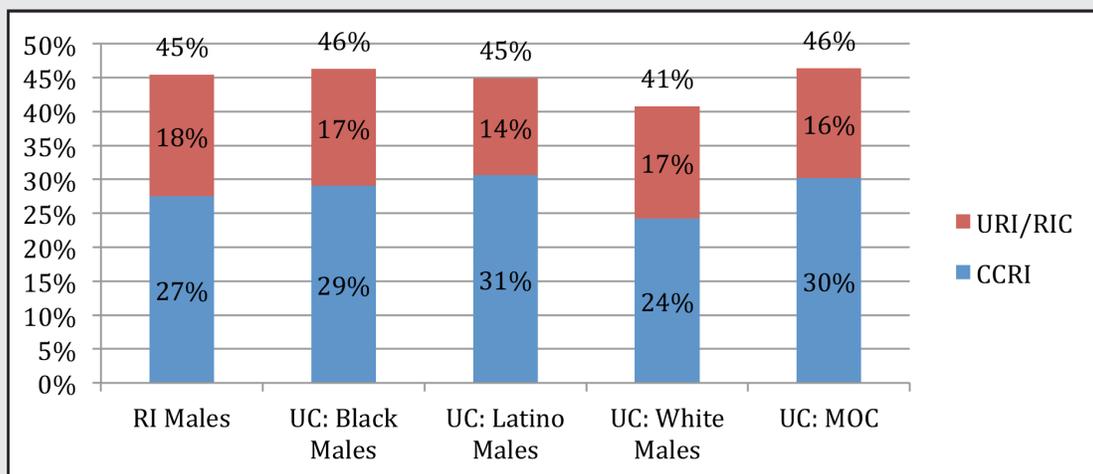
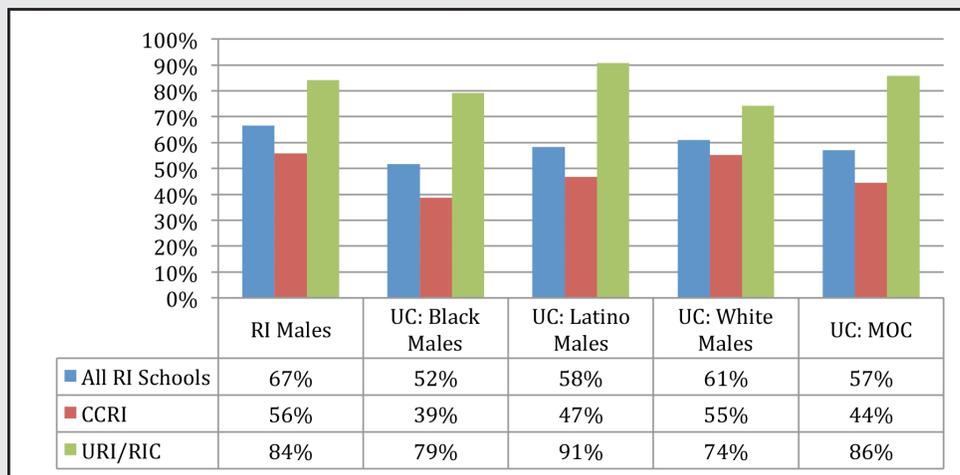


Figure 13 shows the percentage of high school graduates enrolled in one of the three Rhode Island public colleges/universities (CCRI, RIC, and URI) within 16 months of completing high school; almost half of Rhode Island male high school graduates enrolled in one of these three institutions. Urban core males of color had a similar enrollment rate, at 46%, while urban core white males had a slightly lower enrollment rate at 41%. Among male students enrolling in Rhode Island public colleges and universities, the majority enrolled at the community college, including two-thirds of urban core males of color.

¹³For post-secondary education, SY13 refers to the year in which students graduated high school.

Figure 14. Persistence rates for second year of RI public higher education, SY12



As seen in Figure 14, among the urban core males of color students enrolling in Rhode Island public colleges and universities, only 57% persisted into the second year of college, ten points lower than the rate for all Rhode Island males, and four points lower than urban core white males. Urban core black males had the lowest persistence rate among urban core males, at 52%. For all male subgroups, the persistence rate was higher at four-year colleges (URI/RIC) than the two-year college. The persistence rates at URI and RIC were almost 30 points higher than at CCRl for all Rhode Island males, over 40 points higher for urban core males of color, but a mere 19 points higher for white males. While urban core males of color had a lower overall persistence rate, Figure 14 shows that the persistence rate at four-year colleges was higher than for males statewide, highlighted by a 91% persistence rate for urban core Latino males enrolled at URI or RIC.

Figure 15. Three-year graduation rate for students initially enrolled at CCRl, 2005-09

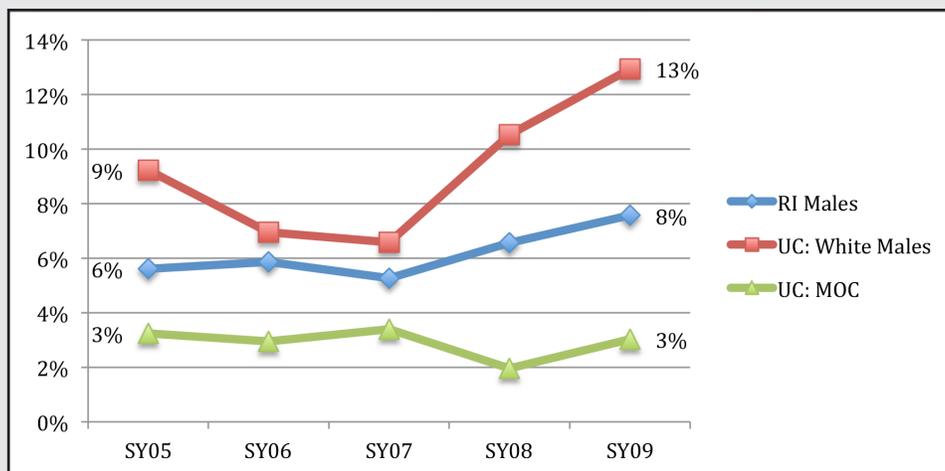


Figure 16. SY06 URI/RIC Cohort Persistence and Graduation Rates

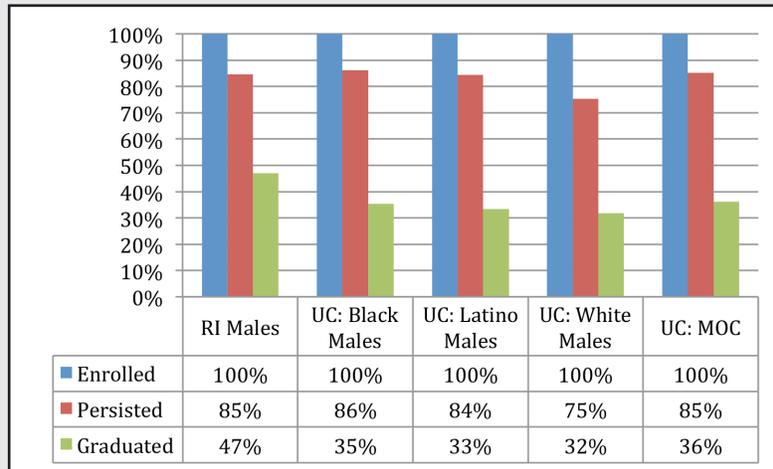


Figure 15 shows low graduation rates from CCRI for all Rhode Island males and the urban core male subgroups. Urban core white males had a three-year graduation rate of 13%, males statewide had a rate of 8%, and urban core males of color had a graduation rate of just 3%. It is important to note that graduation rates do not account for students who transferred to other schools prior to receiving a degree. To account for these students, the study analyzed six-year outcomes for students who initially enroll at CCRI but graduate from either CCRI or URI/RIC. In 2006, the most recent year of graduation data from URI and RIC, the expanded graduation rate was approximately three points higher for all student groups. For the cohort of 2006, urban core males of color had a graduation rate of 6%, two points lower than that of urban core white males, and four points below males statewide.

Figure 16 reports on the six-year outcomes of students (graduating within 150% of expected time) enrolled at URI and RIC. For the cohort starting in 2006, urban core black males and Latino males graduated from URI/RIC at a rate of 35% and 33% respectively. These are slightly higher than the graduation rates for urban core white males but ten points lower than for all Rhode Island males. These disparities in graduation rates are even more dramatic when you consider the high second-year persistence rates by urban core males of color enrolled at URI or RIC.







CONCLUSION

This report provides a comprehensive descriptive profile of the academic and engagement outcomes for males of color enrolled at public schools in Rhode Island, with a focus on males in the urban core. Total data reveal several key findings:

- **Statewide demographic shift leading to higher proportions of males of color and an increased concentration of students of color and low-income students in the urban core.** It is common knowledge that the nation as a whole is experiencing a demographic shift that will become increasingly apparent in the next two decades, and Rhode Island is a good indicator of what is to come. The demographic shift in Rhode Island public schools shows a clear decrease in the white majority along with a rising number of Latino, black, and Asian students. The demographics in Rhode Island and the urban core are changing as the state is becoming more “brown,” with higher proportions of Latino and black students. Along with this change has come an increasing concentration of low-income students. However, these data suggest that white students leaving the urban core are not low-income, resulting in a greater concentration of low-income students, regardless of race.
- **Persistent academic disparities.** The report shows that, in all measures of achievement, urban core males of color face deep and persistent disparities. While there have been substantial improvements in several metrics, equal improvements are seen for urban core white students and all Rhode Island males, leaving the achievement gap unchanged in critical achievement metrics.
- **Males of color in the urban core sustain higher chronic absenteeism and suspension rates.** A third of urban core males of color missed 10% of school days or more. The problem is more acute at the high school level, where 44% of urban core males of color (including 47% of urban core Latino male students) missed 10% or more of all school days. The report shows that males of color are also more likely than urban core white males and males statewide to receive out-of-school suspensions. The 2015 OSS rates for urban core males of color was 20%, seven points higher than urban core white males and the average Rhode Island male student. Urban core males of color in middle school had a suspension rate of 42%, 16 points higher than the rate for urban core white males and 22 points higher than for all Rhode Island males. At the same time, urban core males of color comprised only 14% of all students in Rhode Island, but accounted for 42% of OSSs in the state.
- **Disparities in academic rigor.** The report shows that the proportion of urban core males of color taking AP tests and the SATs has increased in recent years, but the pass rates have remained stagnant,

or even decreased in some cases. Compared to urban core white males and males statewide, there were stark differences in AP participation and pass rates, speaking to disparities in access to rigorous curricula and highly qualified teachers. There were similar disparities among the SAT scores, but these may speak more to exposure to the tests rather than access to curricula or teachers. Differential educational outcomes. An unexpected finding was the comparable four-year graduation rates in 2015 for urban core males of color and white males, and the seven-point difference between urban core males of color and males statewide, despite substantial gaps in PARCC and NECAP proficiency rates for all grades, as well as chronic absentee and suspension rates. The longitudinal data show a spike in the graduation rates for 2015, suggesting either the one-year improvement is an anomaly, or Rhode Island graduation rates are below the standards for success in college. The latter argument is supported by low graduation rates from Rhode Island public colleges and universities for urban core males of color.

“Browning” of the state and increased concentration of low-income students

Rhode Island public schools are experiencing a dramatic demographic shift, with a clear trend toward a decreasing white majority along with a rising number of Latino, black, and Asian students. Overall percentage of white males in Rhode Island schools has decreased by ten percentage points since 2006, while at the Pre K-5 level, there has been a 16% decrease in the number of white males, while all minority groups aside from Native American have seen double-digit growth in percentages. Similarly, demographics for the urban core are changing, with decreasing numbers of white males and increasing numbers of males of color. Over the past decade the number of black male students has increased slightly (1%), while the number of Latino males has increased dramatically (28%).

These data suggest that demographic change has led to an increase in the number of low-income students. From 2006-2015, the proportion of low income male students statewide increased by 13% and the number of low-income males in the urban core increased by three points. While 85% of black males and 89% of Latino males in the urban core were designated low income students, the increased proportion of low income students cannot be solely attributed to males of color as the percentage of low income urban core white males increased by ten points.

Persistent Academic Disparities

The data show that in all measures of achievement, urban core males of color face deep and persistent disparities. Since 2006, their proficiency rates on statewide standardized tests has improved. However, urban core white students and males statewide have made equal or larger improvements, leaving the achievement gap largely unchanged. In 2015, urban core males of color tested 10 percentage points lower for both the math and ELA tests for grades 3, 8, and 11 than urban core white males or Rhode Island males, reaffirming that males of color are lagging academically compared with other ethno-racial groups in the state.

Urban males of color undoubtedly made advancements since 2006, but their gains are negligible when viewed as part of a statewide increase in academic proficiency. The data also suggest no difference in dropout levels between urban core males of color and white males. Within the urban core, the four-year cohort outcomes for urban core black, Latino, and white males were similar. While there have been improvements in four-year dropout rates, there has been minimal movement in four-year graduation rates, showing that more students in the urban core remained in school after four years as opposed to dropping out or graduating on time.

Chronic absenteeism and suspension rates

In 2015, at least 19% of male students in Rhode Island were chronically absent across all grades. This absenteeism was more pronounced in the urban core, with one-third of male students missing at least 10% of their classes, which can contribute to serious academic difficulties. Urban core males of color and white males did not display substantial differences in terms of chronic absenteeism rates. According to 2016 data provided by the U.S. Department of Education, chronic absenteeism of males nationwide was 13%, six percentage points less than Rhode Island statistics.

However, urban core males of color had much higher rates for chronic absenteeism in high school, with Latino males posting a staggering 47% chronic absenteeism for grades 9-12, which was still lower than 2005 statistics. Finally, the gap in chronic absenteeism rates between urban core males of color and all Rhode Island male students was almost twice as big for high school as elementary. Given this context, the poor test performance of urban core males of color makes sense.

Out-of-school suspension (OSS) rates were also racially disproportionate, with males of color more likely than any other group to receive disciplinary action. The OSS rate for urban core males of color in 2015 was 20%, seven points higher than urban core white males and the average Rhode Island male student. In order to definitively underscore the racial nature of such treatment, we need to remember that urban core males of color comprised 14% of all students in Rhode Island, but accounted for 42% of suspensions. These disparities are improvements from the discipline rates ten years earlier; data demonstrate that from 2008-2011, OSS rates remained stable, followed by substantial decreases across all ethno-racial groups.

Academic Rigor

The difference in AP participation rates and performance between males of color and white males in the urban core speak to potential disparities in access to rigorous curricula and highly qualified teachers. The data suggest that less than 25% of urban core males of color were likely to pass at least one AP test, while almost half of all urban core whites were. The statewide AP pass rate for 2014 was 61%. Access to such tests seems to be a serious problem, with urban core white males taking about four tests on average, while black and Latino males averaged fewer than 2.5 tests each. From 2012-2014, AP participation rates increased for all male students, but predominantly urban core white males, producing a larger participation gap than three years prior.

While it is encouraging to see more urban core males of color participating in the AP program, decreasing pass rates show that simply enrolling students in an AP course will not lead to success in this realm. The persistent disparities in SAT scores are similarly alarming, but may speak more to exposure to the tests than the access to rigorous curricula taught by effective teachers.

This reports shows gaps in PARCC and NECAP success at all grades, and large disparities in rates of chronic absenteeism and suspension, yet little difference in graduation rates. This suggests that either the 2015 increase in graduation rates are an anomaly, or the graduation requirements for Rhode Island are below the standards for success in college. This argument is supported by the low graduation rates for urban core males of color from Rhode Island public colleges and universities (again, urban core white males enrolled at URI and RIC had similarly low completion rates).

Taken together, the data in this report confirm that males of color in urban core communities are facing deep and persistent educational disparities compared to their white peers in the urban core and students statewide.

Where do we go from here?

Like young males of color across the country, those in Rhode Island lag behind their counterparts in several education parameters. The problems they experience in school parallel those experienced by men of color in adulthood, even though education is one of the best places to make sure that the next generation faces fewer problems than their parents. As Dr. Williams asks (2016), how can YouthBuild use the detailed data at our disposal to provide a greater degree of private and state assistance to males of color across Rhode Island?

Address the presence of cultural biases. The dilemma faced by males of color is a nationwide problem that is deeply rooted in the belief that no matter what they do, the system will fail minorities and discriminate on the basis of color. According to Boykin and Noguera (2010), the most critical variable affecting the ability of males of color to apply themselves to a particular subject or sport is whether a teacher or mentor cares about them in human terms.

This report shows that urban core males of color, especially in middle school, receive a disproportionate number of out-of-school suspensions. Research shows that this “racial discipline gap” may be the result of teachers and administrators misinterpreting boys’ behavior. Teachers in the urban core must address the adverse effects of unconscious bias against males of color in a fair and objective manner. Administrators must hire culturally competent teachers who have the ability to create a bias-free and nonstereotyped learning environment. Teachers must demonstrate sincere concern for the academic abilities of black and Latino students. School staff may need to jump through many hoops to make this possible, but ultimately believing in their methods will truly make a difference in the lives of males of color.



Help them cultivate a growth mindset. Males of color may feel safe in the classroom, but the real challenge is preparing them to successfully navigate unsafe environments. According to Aronson, Fried, and Good (2002), a robust mindset is capable of positively combating bias and stereotype threats. This applies to any stereotype (such as the notion that girls are bad at math), not just those of males of color. A growth mindset allows students to believe that any ability is acquirable and teaches them to combat stereotypes with vigor and motivation. Schools should encourage males of color to take AP courses, but provide the academic support necessary to succeed in these courses. Males of color should be exposed to successful post-secondary mentors so that students can aim for further education, making sure that four-year colleges are part of this landscape.

Encourage a reading culture. The gaps in academic preparation and performance are evident as early as the third grade. Encouraging and instilling a culture of reading in students is one of the best things that an educator can do. Books, not just online reading, will allow students to develop a broader horizon and worldview, including famous historical figures who cultivated literary habits in times of great adversity, such as Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois. All students should be encouraged to read thirty minutes to an hour a day. Instilling a reading culture represents a major step toward improving the lives of males of color.

Encourage at least one adult to be an active participant. In many cases teachers may need to convince parents to play an active role in their child's educational life, despite the hardships a parent may face. It is the job of schools and teachers to insure that parents are able to understand the benefits of a successful education in their children's lives, and to make schools welcoming to all family members. If a parent is unable to exert influence over a child's life, a family member or a surrogate coach may be able to encourage males of color to apply greater effort to academics.

Provide males of color with the platform to become critical thinkers. This report reveals troubling trends in urban core males of color, such as absenteeism, suggesting low academic engagement. Teachers and school leaders should address cultural biases and develop more culturally relevant curricula to get males of color students engaged in school. While school life inevitably involves the application of guidelines and rules, so does life; this should not discourage teachers from providing males of color the opportunity to become critical and creative thinkers. An educational style that cultivates objective discussion instead of mere compliance should be employed where possible. While setting curriculum may be outside a teacher's scope, they can adopt an application-based method of learning to improve students' real-world skills as a part of his development.

Customize the approach based on the student. A "one size fits all" approach is often detrimental to the development of male students of color. Take time to understand what works for each student, especially males of color who are less likely to receive personalized attention at home; it is imperative that a school provide for such students. Schools and educators need to customize their approach, based on a student's personal history and education record.

What Role Can YouthBuild Preparatory Academy Play?

In order to serve students who have not been successful in the traditional school system, YouthBuild Preparatory Academy (YBPA) will use a project based curriculum rooted in social justice and a real-world application of learning and skills. Based on our experience, many of the young people that YBPA has served did not understand the real value of education. To instill this, educational programming must be both challenging and relevant. Students, especially the young men we serve, must see a payoff in the near future. Therefore, in addition to the core academic content required of Rhode Island public high schools, YBPA offers three career-focused Academies—Community Building and Non-Profit Leadership, Human Services, and Future Teachers, based on the professions of primary interest to the young people we serve. Each is derived from a social justice/community development theme to which YBPA students have connected. In addition, YBPA will utilize a whole-student approach. The young people YBP serves are diverse in their interests, talents, skills, knowledge, and learning needs. A good number come from homes that may have lacked in resources or nurturing, the result of family stress or chaos caused by employment issues, substance abuse, homelessness, transportation, or physical and mental health challenges. The youth who arrive at our doors often have low self-esteem, anger issues, and, especially for the young men, little to no understanding of the concept of adulthood. Often they are in need of the structure, social, emotional, and human support so that they may develop the skills to manage life challenges, emergent circumstances, and conflict.

Whatever its cause, the young people we serve arrive without the essential skills to help them flourish socially and emotionally. By using a case management approach, YBPA targets programming (leadership development, service learning, individual and peer counseling) and locates human services supports (family counseling, housing and childcare) to advance social and emotional skills to alleviate emergent and ongoing life challenges. This evidence-based approach has resulted in those we serve becoming more self-confident, trusting, empathetic, intellectually inquisitive, competent in language use, and capable of relating to others.

All of these efforts will help YBPA establish a welcoming, nurturing climate and the conditions necessary to accelerate academic, social and emotional learning, and promote student achievement. These include three primary strategies: creating a sense of community, family and community engagement, and promoting healthy living.

Finally, it is important to note that such programming and services do not constitute a casual laundry list of options. Our model is comprised of academic coursework and experiential or applied learning coupled with student supports, and is based on YBP's 18+ years of experience serving young people at risk of failing to thrive. This evidence-based model is designed specifically to insure student engagement, promote school success, achieve postsecondary education and career readiness, and advance positive life outcomes for the young people we serve.



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APPENDIX I: DATA & METHODOLOGY

This study looked at the educational experiences of males of color in Rhode Island public schools, focusing on the outcomes of males of color in the urban core of Rhode Island. Using descriptive analysis, this study looked at recent trends in demographics, student achievement, and student engagement comparing males of color in the urban core to their white peers and male students statewide. For the purposes of this report, this study does not compare the outcomes of males of color to females of color.

This report uses data aggregated from Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) and Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner (OPC), provided by DataSpark, a data and information accessibility initiative of the Providence Plan. The table below provides a detailed description of specific variables included in the analysis.

The data are organized into two major comparison groups: Rhode Island public school students and public school students in the urban core, which consists of all traditional public schools, charter schools, and state-run schools located in Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket. Within each group the data are compiled by gender and ethno-racial group, producing six subgroups: Native American males, Asian males, black males, Hispanic non-white males, white males, and males of color (defined as any male student categorized as Native American, Asian, black, or Hispanic non-white). When possible, the study analyzed students by grade level, grouping them in Pre K-5, 6-8, and 9-12. Student groups smaller than ten and responses smaller than five were suppressed to preserve student confidentiality.

Below is a list of the variables used in the analysis, the source of the data, definition of the variable used, and pertinent notes about the construction of the variables. DataSpark provided the definitions and notes on the variables.

Variable	Source	Definition	Notes
Demographic Variables			
Gender	RIDE	Students categorized as male or female	Gender information is calculated as of October 1 of a given school year.
Race/Ethnicity	RIDE	Native American, Asian, Black, Hispanic non-White, and White.	Ethnicity information is calculated as of October 1 of a given school year.
Individualized Educational Plan (IEP)	RIDE	Specifies what special-education services the child should be receiving	Program status information is calculated as of October 1 of a given school year.
Free or Reduced Lunch (FRL)	RIDE	Students from families whose income falls below the federal guidelines (poverty or near-poverty) and are therefore eligible for free or reduced-price school lunch	Program status information is calculated as of October 1 of a given school year.
English Language Learner	RIDE	State defined status as English Language Learner	Program status information is calculated as of October 1 of a given school year.



Engagement Variables			
Chronic Absenteeism Rate	RIDE	Percentage of students missing 10% or more of school days enrolled	Chronic absenteeism is calculated out of students who were enrolled in an aggregation (urban core or statewide) for 90 or more days.
Out-of-School Suspension Rate	RIDE	The number of out-of-school suspensions per 100 students.	If students receive multiple suspensions, this is counted towards the number of total suspensions.
Achievement Variables			
NECAP – Proficiency Rate	RIDE	Percentage of students scoring “Proficient” or higher (Level 3 or 4)	NECAP Grade 11 data was not available for school years 2005-06 and 2006-07 for Reading, Math, and Science. NECAP Grade 11 data was not available for school years 2012-13 and 2013-14 for Science.
PARCC – “Proficiency” Rate	RIDE	Percentage of students scoring “Met Expectations” or higher (Level 4 or 5)	PARCC Levels are as follows: Level 1 - Did not yet meet expectations; Level 2 - Partially met expectations; Level 3 - Approached expectations; Level 4 - Met expectations; Level 5 - Exceeded expectations Students in 8th grade and younger who took the Algebra or Geometry PARCC exams are not included in the grade level math exams.
AP – Grade 12 Cohort Participation Rates	RIDE	Percentage of students in a Grade 12 cohort that took at least one AP exam	Note that all data given for AP exams only represents the data for students for whom we were able to match between data sets. This covers almost all students who took the exam, but not quite 100% of them.
AP – Grade 12 Cohort Number of Tests Taken	RIDE	Average number of AP exams taken by Grade 12 cohort	Note that all data given for AP exams only represents the data for students for whom we were able to match between data sets. This covers almost all students who took the exam, but not quite 100% of them.
AP – Grade 12 Cohort AP Pass Rate	RIDE	Percentage of AP test-takers in the Grade 12 cohort that scored 3 or higher on least one AP exam	Note that all data given for AP exams only represents the data for students for whom we were able to match between data sets. This covers almost all students who took the exam, but not quite 100% of them.
SAT – Grade 12 Cohort Participation Rate	RIDE	Percentage of Grade 12 Cohort that took that SATs at least once from Grade 9 to 12	
SAT – Grade 12 Cohort Mean Score	RIDE	Mean score for Grade 12 cohort for each SAT section (Critical Reading, Math, and Writing). The scores used are the maximum scores individual students received during grades 9-12.	For the SAT, sub-scores are reported for each of the three sections (Critical Reading, Math, and Writing), each being on a scale of 200 to 800. Adding these three sub-scores yields a composite score out of 2400.



4-Year Cohort Outcomes	RIDE	Percentage of students that start 9 th grade together that graduate, dropout, or remain in school after four years	A low proportion of students earn their GED or age out of school, therefore values may not add up to 100%
5-Year Cohort Outcomes	RIDE	Percentage of students that start 9 th grade together that graduate, dropout, or remain in school after five years	A low proportion of students earn their GED or age out of school, therefore values may not add up to 100%
Post-Secondary Education			
College Enrollment Rates	OPC	Percentage of graduating students that enroll in one of the three Rhode Island public colleges and universities within 16 months of completing high school.	"Enrolled in college within 16 Months" more specifically refers to students who enrolled in college within 5 academic terms (summer, fall, spring) of graduating from high school. RIDE high school graduates are included under the school year in which they graduated from RIDE. In cases where two graduation records were found for one student, the latter is counted.
College Persistence Rate	OPC	Percentage of students that enrolled in one of the three Rhode Island public colleges and universities that returned for the second year of college	"Persisted into 2nd Year" refers to students who returned for a second year of college. This means that they were enrolled in college again exactly three terms after their first term. The exception to this is students who started in the summer; those students are effectively shifted over into the following fall for persistence and graduation counts. So for students who start in the summer, persistence is defined as returning in 4 terms - two fall terms after their first enrollment. Students are grouped under whichever institution they started at and persistence is counted over the entire RI public Higher Ed system. For example, a student who went to CCRI for a year then immediately transferred to RIC would count as a CCRI student who persisted into a second year.
College Graduation Rate	OPC	Percentage of college enrollees who graduated from CCRI within 3 years, RIC within 6 years, and/or URI within 6 years.	Some students enrolled at more than one of CCRI, URI, and RIC. All of these students were ultimately classified under just one school. Those who were full-time at one school but part-time at another were categorized under their full-time institution. Those who were part-time at both (or full-time at both) were categorized as attending a
			four-year school.



APPENDIX II: NEW ENGLAND COMMON ASSESSMENT PROGRAM (NECAP) RESULTS

Figure 1Ia. NECAP Percentage Proficient and higher - Grade 3 Math, SY06-SY14

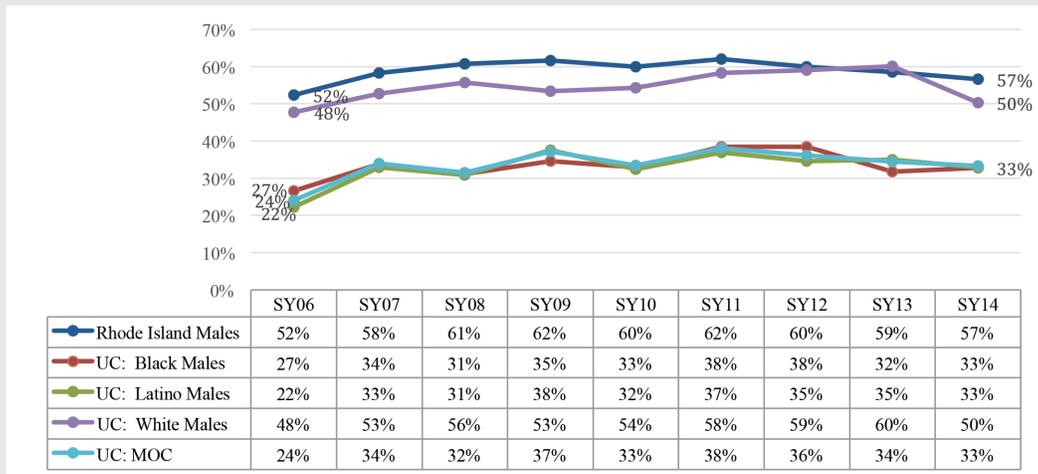


Figure 1Ib. NECAP Percentage Proficient and higher - Grade 3 Reading, SY06-SY14

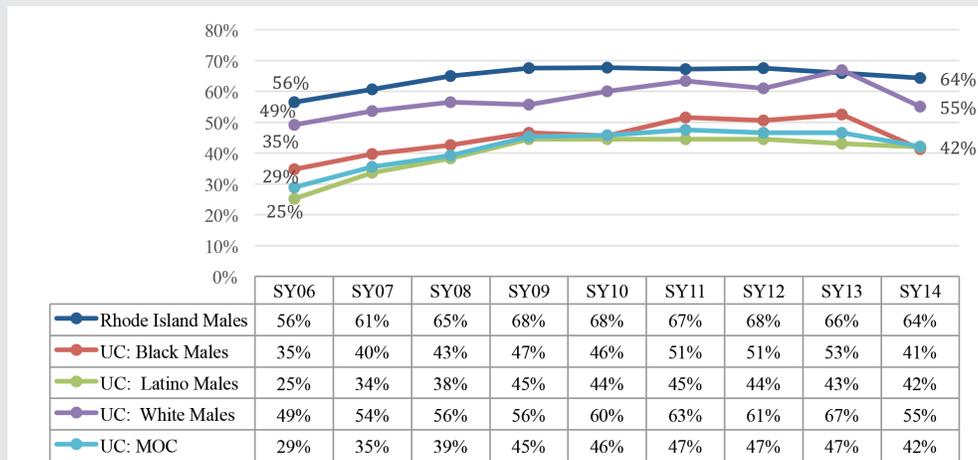


Figure 1Ic. NECAP Percentage Proficient and higher - Grade 8 Math, SY06-SY14

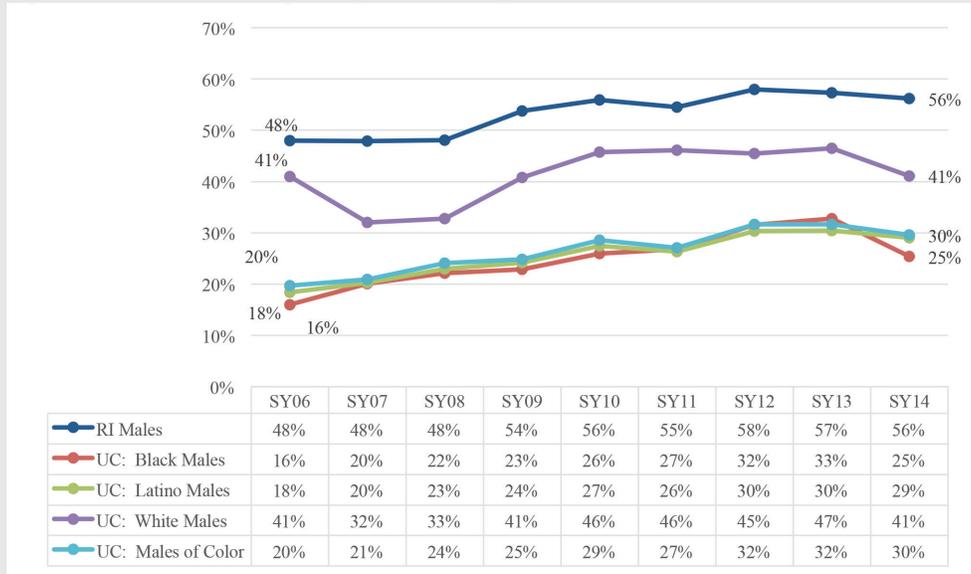


Figure 1Id. NECAP Percentage Proficient and higher - Grade 8 Reading, SY06-SY14

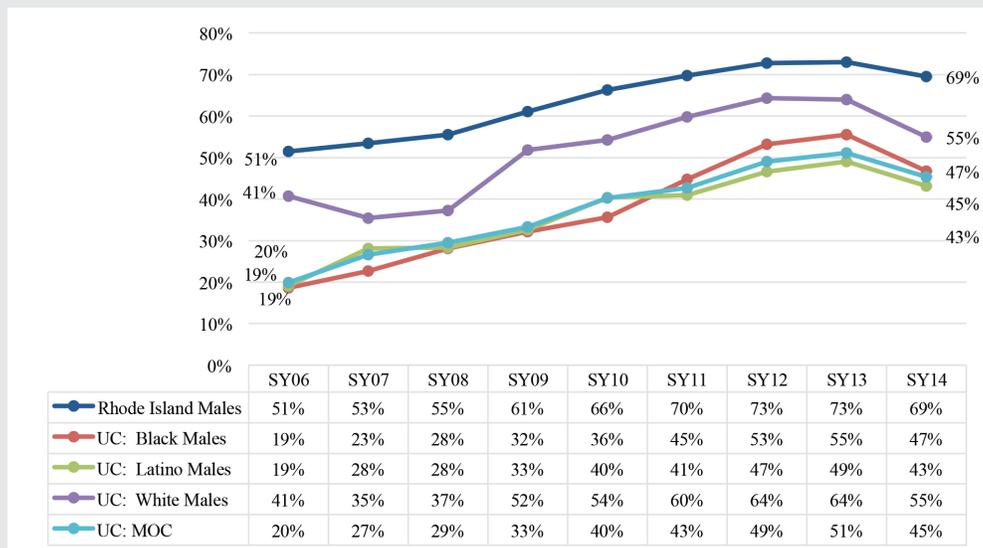




Figure IIe. NECAP Percentage Proficient and higher - Grade 11 Math, SY06-SY14

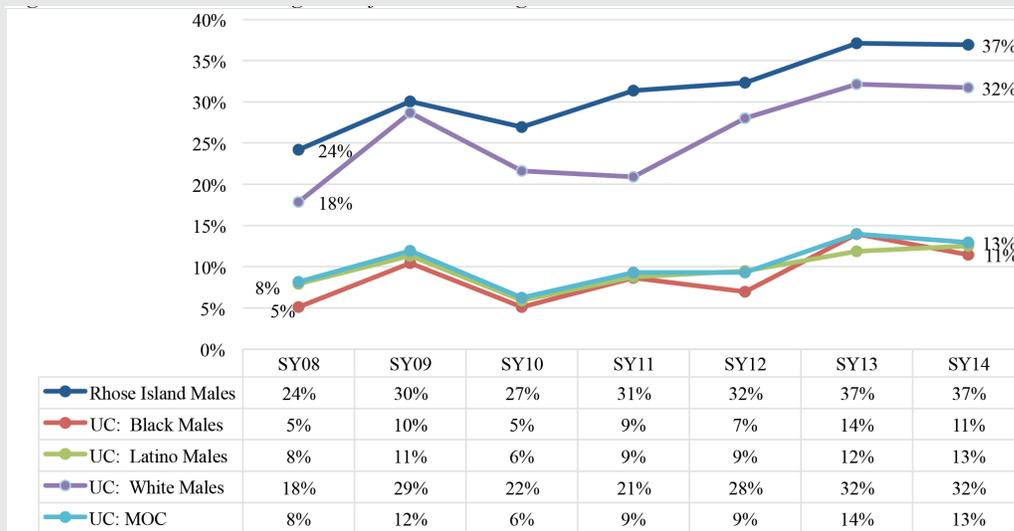
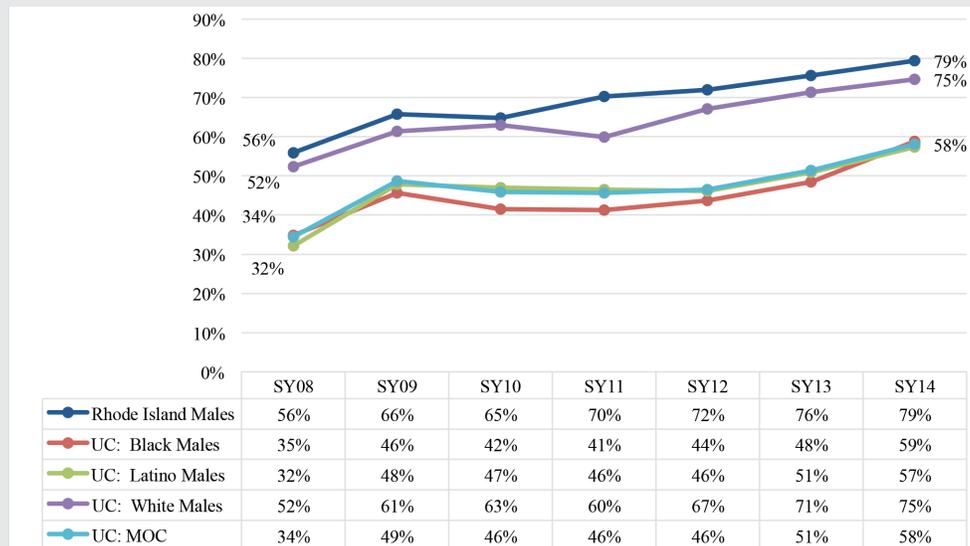


Figure IIlf. NECAP Percentage Proficient and higher - Grade 11 Reading, SY06-SY14







Enter to Learn. Depart to Serve.