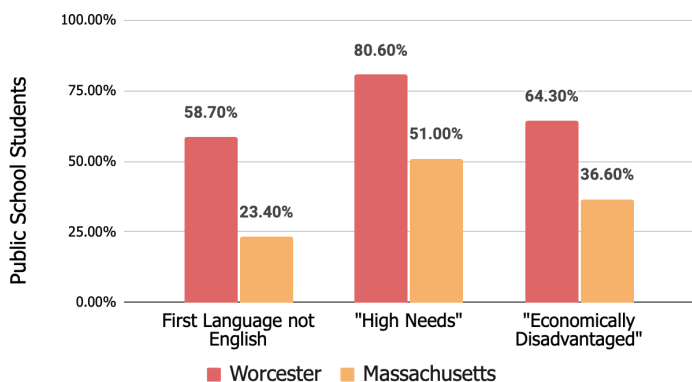


NEED IN WORCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

1 NEED IS HIGH IN WPS.

Needs in Worcester vs. Massachusetts Public Schools



59% of WPS students do not have English as their first language. 81% of WPS students are "high needs," and 64% of WPS students are "economically disadvantaged."

2 WPS ARE RACIALLY AND ETHNICALLY DIVERSE.



OVER 7 IN 10 WPS STUDENTS ARE PEOPLE OF COLOR.

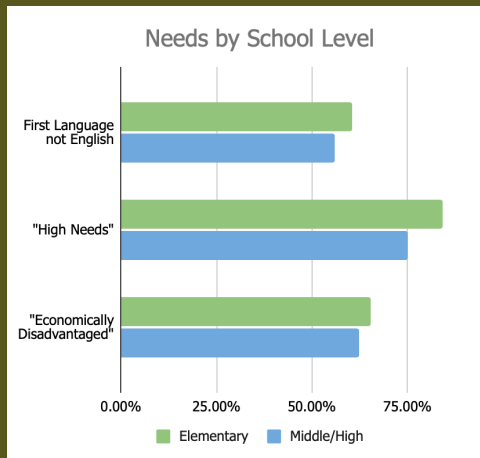


OVER 4 IN 10 WPS STUDENTS ARE HISPANIC.

These numbers are significantly higher than for the state as a whole; Massachusetts public school students are only 43% people of color and 22% Hispanic.

3 NEED LOOKS DIFFERENT ACROSS ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOLS

However, Elementary schoolers have more need than Middle and High schoolers.



Need is pervasive across middle/high schools, but the highest need is concentrated in just a handful of schools

33 Elementary Schools



11 Middle/High Schools

Elementary schools are smaller but have more concentrated local need.

The percent of "high needs" students reaches as high as over 90% in 14 Elementary Schools and over 80% in another 7.

DID YOU KNOW?

Over 50% of students are people of color in ALL WPS Middle/ High Schools and in 29 of the 33 Elementary Schools

4 THE CONCENTRATIONS OF INDIVIDUAL NEED AND OF STUDENTS OF COLOR IN EACH SCHOOL ARE STRONGLY CORRELATED.

The schools with the highest proportions of students of color are the same schools with the highest percentage of students with individual needs – including first language not English, "high needs," and "economically disadvantaged."

*The same correlation does NOT exist between race and population.

IMPACT OF COVID-19 AND NEXT STEPS



COVID-19 has significantly impacted youth's social, emotional, and academic development and has heightened inequality based on race and socioeconomic status.

Trauma

The pandemic has created and exacerbated traumatic experiences for youth (such as isolation, food insecurity, and stressors at home) which have far-reaching emotional and physical repercussions.



Mental health-related emergency room visits have increased **24%** for elementary schoolers and **31%** for middle schoolers.

Academics



Youth have lost **7 months** of learning as a result of the pandemic.

These estimates jump to **10 months** for Black and Latinx students and **12 months** for low-income students.

Chronic absenteeism has soared due to inaccessibility. Only **45%** of WPS students participated in remote learning in the spring of 2020.

Accessibility



For online school, students need both a personal device AND a reliable internet connection.

As of 2018, **18%** of Worcester households had NO internet access.

Only **67%** had a broadband internet subscription, with lower numbers for Latinx families and those unemployed and not in the labor force.

NEXT STEPS

VALUE OF ARTS EDUCATION

- Arts education affords youth the opportunity to form close, collaborative relationships with supportive adults.
- Arts education provides an environment for significant social-emotional learning.
- Art can function as an expression of emotion, identity, and experience.
- Arts programs can facilitate identity-conscious, justice-oriented mentorship between artists of different ages.



INVESTING IN ARTS EDUCATION IS INVESTING IN COMMUNITY.

Where should Worcester go from here?



Allocate significant resources to schools with the most need to promote equity and to address the needs of individual students.



Invest in BIPOC communities, address the unique needs of BIPOC students in WPS, and investigate and tackle systemic inequities in Worcester.



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HOW DOES MAIN IDEA FIT IN?

Based in Main South and Hispanic/Latinx-led, Main IDEA consistently serves diverse schools with significant need.



Schools with the most overall need

Elementary Schools

- Woodland Academy
- Clark Street Community
- Chandler Elementary Community

Middle and High Schools

- North High
- Claremont Academy
- University Park Campus School
- Worcester East Middle
- South High Community

*Schools Main IDEA serves

In the four schools Main IDEA directly serves (Burncoat Middle, Claremont Academy, UPCS, and Woodland Academy) the majority of students have one or more needs.

- **85%** – 17 in every 20 kids – are “high needs.”
- **69%** of students attending these schools have a first language other than English.
- A similar **71%** are classified as “economically disadvantaged.”



Students at Main IDEA schools are 60% Hispanic –3 in 5– and 85% are people of color.



“I WAS ABLE TO BE MYSELF IN THIS PROGRAM AND NOT HIDE FOR BEING DIFFERENT FROM EVERYONE ELSE.”

OUR WORK

Main IDEA provides free year-round arts programming to youth in Worcester ages 6-17, with priority given to residents of the Main South neighborhood. These arts programs focus on empowerment and intrinsic motivation while facilitating positive peer and mentor relationships between community artists/volunteers and neighborhood youth.

Our Programs:

- Visual arts
 - watercolor, acrylic, drawing, sculpting
- Music
 - ukulele, piano, hand drum, singing
- Dance
 - HipHop, salsa, ballroom, lyrical
- Creative Writing
- Creative Drama
- Culinary Arts
 - cookie decorating



MAIN
IDEA