ERDC
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Education Outcomes of Washington Students in Foster Care

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About the ERDC

The research presented here uses data from the Education Research and Data Center, located in the Washington Office of Financial Management. ERDC works with partner agencies to conduct powerful analyses of learning that can help inform the decision-making of Washington legislators, parents, and education providers. ERDC's data system is a statewide longitudinal data system that includes de-identified data about people's preschool, educational and workforce experiences.

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Executive Summary

Students in foster care make up a very small portion of the statewide student population. Like the statewide population, they attend mostly non-rural schools in the largest counties. Roughly half of middle and high school students in foster care attend school in a low-income district.[1] About a quarter of school districts do not have any middle or high school students in foster care, and 15% of districts do not have elementary school students in foster care. In comparison to students with economic disadvantage,[2] there are more American Indian/Alaskan Native, Black, White, and Multiracial students in foster care and fewer Asian American, Hispanic, and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students. The middle and high school students in foster care are more likely to be female. Students in foster care are overrepresented among students receiving special education services, and a majority of students in foster care have also experienced homelessness at some point.

Students in foster care that live in districts that are 75% or more low-income had higher math proficiency and high school graduation rates compared to students with economic disadvantage. Rural high schools had slightly lower graduation rates for students in foster care than non-rural high schools. Small school districts had slightly lower graduation rates, while large districts had slightly lower math proficiency rates for students in foster care.

Students in foster care are less likely to start high school on track for graduation and continue to have low attendance, completion, and math proficiency rates, while having higher mobility and discipline rates in comparison to their peers. The systems that support students in foster care have not yet been able to adequately support students to achieve educational outcomes on par with their peers.

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[1] More than 50% of student enrollment eligible for Free-and Reduced-Price Meals (FRPM).
[2] Refer to appendix for definition of measures.

Introduction

Washington state statute[3] requires the Education Research & Data Center (ERDC) to report on the educational outcomes of children under the placement, care, and authority of a child welfare agency[4] and what school districts are having success or challenges in helping this student group. These students are also referred to as children in out-of-home care,[5] but this report will use the language "students in foster care" as this is the most commonly used and recognized terminology.

This study answered the following research questions:

- What are the educational experiences and progress of Washington students who are in foster care?

- What are the characteristics of school districts where students in foster care attend in relation to student outcomes?[6]

Previous studies have reported on Washington K-12 students in foster care. The Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) report card contains data on students in foster care for the statewide population, but not grade level specific. Data is published annually that describes how many students in foster care enroll each school year, how many students experience exclusionary discipline each year and how many days of exclusion, the 4-year graduation rate, and the proficiency rates for these students in English Language Arts (ELA), Math, and Science. These data have shown that Washington students in foster care often have higher exclusionary discipline rates and lower academic performance in comparison with their peers not in foster care (OSPI, 2021). Similar outcomes for students in foster care have been documented in other states (Barrat & Berliner, 2013; National Working Group on Foster Care and Education, 2014). It has also been found in other states that school mobility makes high school graduation less likely for students in foster care and increases the likelihood of obtaining a GED (Clemens et al., 2016).

A prior ERDC study took a grade specific, longitudinal approach, to capture elementary, middle school, and high school experiences of students in foster care. The study compared student characteristics, trends in enrollment, attendance, mobility, assessment, 5-year high school completion[7] and racial and ethnic differences of students in foster care against those that are not (Chen, 2019).

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[3] RCW 28A.300.525

[4] Does not include students in Tribal Child Welfare or Federal Foster Care.

[5] "Out-of-home care" means placement in a foster family home or group care facility licensed pursuant to chapter 74.15 RCW or placement in a home, other than that of the child's parent, guardian, or legal custodian, not required to be licensed pursuant to chapter 74.15 RCW (RCW 13.34.030).

[6] Due to small cell sizes, data cannot be disaggregated by school district.

[7] High school completion refers to students who have obtained a diploma or GED.

This current study has two purposes. First, it will provide updated data to the 2019 report. Second, it will explore data in areas that are not yet examined for Washington students in foster care: on-track for graduation in ninth grade, program participation in bilingual education, section 504, and McKinney-Vento, and the characteristics of the schools and districts where students in foster care attend.

Data

This study used data from multiple sectors: K-12 education, social services, and post-secondary education[8]. Data provided by the Office of Superintendent of Public Institution (OSPI) include the Smarter Balanced Assessment data, Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (WaKIDS), Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS), and organizational characteristics data from the Education Data System (EDS). The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) provided GED data, and the Department of Child, Youth, and Families (DCYF) foster care data from Famlink.

Analytical approaches

Descriptive analyses provide an overview of the educational experiences of Washington students in foster care compared to economically disadvantaged students that have not experienced foster care. Data are disaggregated by student characteristics, including race and ethnicity, and by characteristics of the districts that serve students in foster care.

Cohort Description. This study focused on three cohorts of students from the 2015[9] school year who were in foster care from age three to 21 at any point between 2002 and 2021. The comparison group is students who were eligible for participation in the Free and Reduced-Price Meals (FRPM) Program at any point during 2010 to 2019. Children who experience poverty are at an increased risk of child welfare involvement (Sedlak, et al., 2010). Rather than comparing students in foster care to all students not in foster care, this study aims to make a more specific comparison by narrowing to students with economic disadvantage who have not experienced foster care. This report refers to students who are FRPM eligible as students with economic disadvantage because it is important to acknowledge that some students receive an educational advantage by their family's economic circumstance.

The five most recent school years for which data are available were selected for analysis, 2015-2019. Cohorts were designed to reflect elementary, middle school and high school student experiences. The cohorts are comprised of kindergarteners, fifth graders, and ninth graders who

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[8] A limitation of this study is the small size of this student group. This limits how much the data can be disaggregated by race/ethnicity or geographically, and it can be difficult to make comparisons with groups that are much larger in size.

[9] 2015 school year refers to the school year that begins in 2014 and ends in 2015. This report will refer to school years in this manner.

enrolled in Washington public schools during the 2015 school year.[10] See Table 1 for a summary of cohort design.

Table 1: Cohort Design

	2015	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**
Kindergarten (K) cohort	Kindergarten	1st grade	2nd grade	3rd grade	4th grade
Fifth grade cohort	5th grade	6th grade	7th grade	8th grade	9th grade
Ninth grade cohort	9th grade	10th grade	11th grade	12th grade	

Table 2: Number of students by cohort and student group and the percentage of the statewide student population

Cohort	**Students with economic disadvantage**	**Students in foster care**
all cohorts (total)	148,978	3,803
Kindergarten cohort	48,392 (56.8%)	1,775 (2.1%)
Fifth grade cohort	49,632 (60.3%)	1,229 (1.5%)
Ninth grade cohort	50,954 (58.9%)	799 (0.9%)

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[10] Some districts have either small numbers of students in foster care or none, but all districts were still included in the analysis.

What we found

Student Characteristics

Program participation. Students in foster care make up a very small portion of the statewide student population. The kindergarten cohort is the largest of the 3 cohorts in this study and represents only 2.1% of all kindergarteners in 2015 statewide. The fifth-grade cohort represents 1.5% of all fifth graders, and the ninth-grade cohort of students in foster care is the smallest and makes up less than 1% of all ninth graders in 2015 (see Table 2).

Geographic location. The largest concentrations of students in foster care reside in the most populated geographic areas. Of the 39 counties in Washington, there are 8 that consistently have the most students in foster care across cohorts: Clark, King, Kitsap, Pierce, Snohomish, Spokane, Thurston, and Yakima (see Table B-2 in appendix). Some school districts did not report any students in foster care enrolled during 2015 to 2019. Fifteen percent of school districts do not have elementary school students in foster care, 24% have no middle school students in foster care, and 26% of districts do not have any students in foster care from the high school cohort (not included in Table).

Race & ethnicity. Across the three cohorts, a higher percentage of students in foster care identify as American Indian/Alaskan Native, Black, White, or Multiracial compared to economically disadvantaged students not in foster care (see Table 3). There is a lower percentage of students identifying as Asian American, Hispanic, or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander.

Gender. The kindergarten cohort in foster care has a similar gender distribution to the comparison group, but the fifth and ninth grade foster care cohorts have higher percentages of female students.

Homelessness. Overall, there are higher proportions of students in foster care who have ever experienced homelessness compared to economically disadvantaged students not in foster care. This group makes up 50% of the kindergarten cohort in foster care and increases to 64% of the fifth-grade cohort, and then even more of the ninth-grade cohort at 67%.

Special education. Students in foster care are more often receiving special education services and 504 accommodations, and less often receiving English learning services. For special education, the overlap is slightly higher in the middle and high school cohorts than the elementary cohort. For ninth grade, 43% of students experiencing foster care also receive special education services, in comparison with only 22% of students with economic disadvantage. Table 3 shows that this overrepresentation of students in foster care receiving special education services is consistent across cohorts. See Table B-1 in the appendix for more details on students in special education.

Table 3: Student characteristics by cohort and student group

	Students with economic disadvantage			Students in foster care		
	Kinder. cohort	*Fifth grade cohort*	*Ninth grade cohort*	*Kinder. cohort*	*Fifth grade cohort*	*Ninth grade cohort*
Gender						
Female	49%	48%	48%	48%	56%	54%
Male	51%	52%	52%	52%	44%	46%
Non-binary; other gender identity	<1%	<1%	<1%	.	<1%	.
Race & ethnicity						
American Indian/Alaskan Native	2%	2%	2%	3%	4%	4%
Asian American	4%	6%	6%	1%	2%	2%
Black/African American	6%	6%	7%	7%	10%	10%
Hispanic/Latino	37%	33%	30%	24%	20%	21%
White	41%	44%	47%	52%	52%	53%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	<1%
Two or more races	9%	8%	7%	12%	11%	10%
Unknown race	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	.	.
Ever special education						
No	77%	75%	78%	60%	57%	57%
Yes	23%	25%	22%	40%	43%	43%
Ever English learner						
No	67%	69%	82%	88%	87%	92%
Yes	33%	31%	18%	12%	13%	8%
Ever economic disadvantage						
No	.	.	.	1%	1%	2%
Yes	100%	100%	100%	99%	99%	98%
Ever 504 accommodation						
No	96%	93%	93%	92%	88%	86%
Yes	4%	7%	7%	8%	12%	14%
Ever homeless						
No	87%	84%	82%	50%	36%	34%
Yes	13%	16%	18%	50%	64%	66%

Notes: May not sum to totals because of rounding. *'.' indicates no students.* Even though all foster youth are FRPM eligible, not all foster youth turn in the application form. If the form is not submitted, the OSPI's data system would not record the foster youth as FRPM eligible. For a description of measures, see Appendix A.

Academic achievement

Ninth grade on-track. The rate at which ninth graders in foster care are on track for graduation, as measured by the passing of attempted courses during their ninth-grade year, is lower than the comparison group. Figure 1 shows for the ninth-grade cohort, 39% of students were on track, in comparison with 57% of their peers. In the fifth-grade cohort, 42% were on track, compared with 61% of their peers. See Table B-3 in the appendix for disaggregation by gender, race & ethnicity.

Figure 1: Percent of students on track in 9th grade
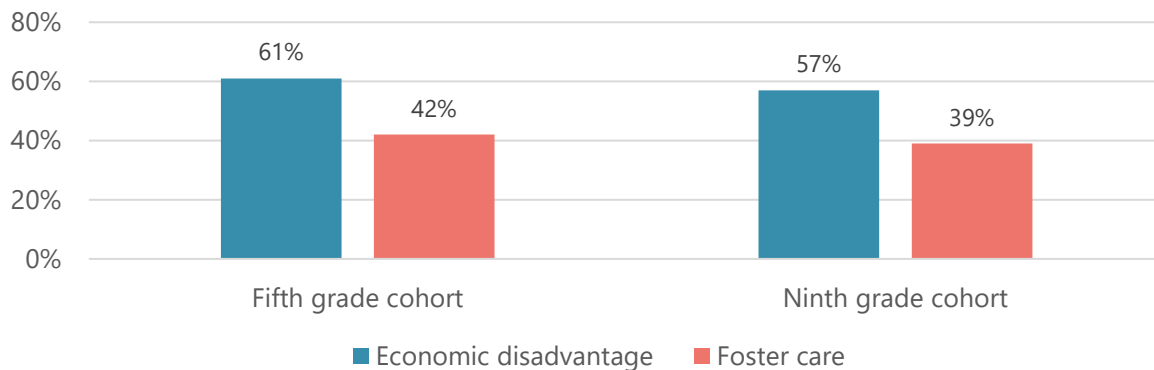
High school completion. When compared to students with economic disadvantage, a larger percentage of the students in foster care obtained their GED and a larger percentage earned both a GED and diploma (see Table 4). Further, the 5-year graduation and completion rates of students in foster care are much lower than their peers. These findings are consistent with results from a prior report that finds students experiencing foster care are more likely to get their GED (Chen, 2019). Among students in foster care, the groups with the lowest completion rates were special education (38%), male (40%), and Black students (43%) (see Table B-4 in appendix).

Table 4: Students who obtained high school completion credential by the 2019 school year

Credential(s)	Students with economic disadvantage		Students in foster care	
	n	%	*n*	%
GED	1,534	3.0%	56	7.0%
Diploma	35,872	70.4%	339	42.2%
No credential earned	14,193	27.9%	430	53.8%
At least one credential *(GED and/or diploma)*	36,761	72.1%	369	46.2%
Two credentials *(both GED and diploma)*	645	1.3%	26	3.3%

Assessments. Students in foster care lag slightly behind the comparison group in kindergarten readiness. This is most pronounced when it comes to social emotional readiness (see Figure 2). Kindergarten readiness is assessed each fall for students starting their kindergarten year to understand how students are transitioning into kindergarten. Students are assessed in six developmental domains: social emotional, physical, language, cognitive, literacy, and math. Twenty six percent of students in foster care are ready in all domains, in comparison with 30% of students with economic disadvantage. To put this into context, 37% of the statewide cohort is ready in all domains. See Table B-5 in the appendix for disaggregation by gender, race & ethnicity.
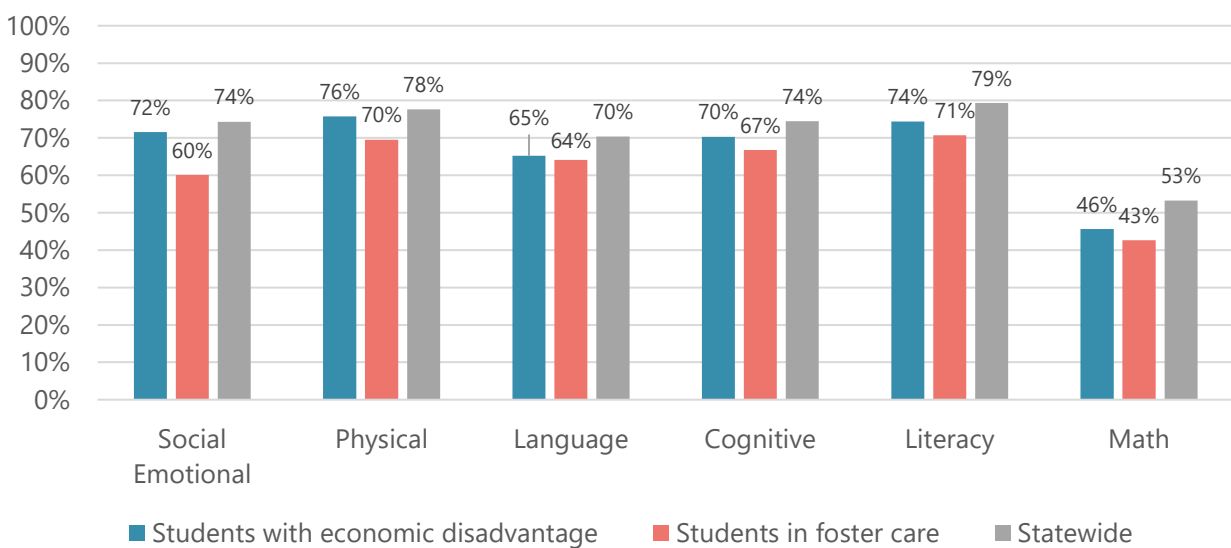
Figure 2: Percent of students' kindergarten readiness by domain

The students in foster care as a group have lower proficiency rates in Math and English Language Arts (ELA) than students who are economically disadvantaged. For students in foster care, the gap between ELA and math proficiency is wider in middle and high school than it is in elementary school or in the comparison group. In addition to kindergarten readiness, the kindergarten cohort's math and ELA assessments during the third-grade year were examined. For the fifth-grade cohort, math and ELA assessments during fifth grade and eighth grade were examined. Table 5 shows that while both groups follow similar trends, the gap in proficiency between students in foster care and their peers widens more for math than ELA, consistent with previous findings (Chen, 2019).

Table 5: Students proficient by subject (based on meeting standards on state assessments)

| Cohort	Grade at Assessment	Students with economic disadvantage				Students in foster care			
		Math		*ELA*		*Math*		*ELA*	
		n	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*
Kindergarten cohort	3	18,699	45.7%	17,685	43.2%	490	36.5%	474	35.3%
Fifth grade cohort	5	16,922	36.3%	21,650	46.4%	259	23.4%	376	33.7%
Fifth grade cohort	8	15,597	36.6%	21,377	50.0%	215	22.3%	359	37.1%

School experience

Attendance. Across all cohorts, students in foster care tended to have more absences from school than their peers, as is consistent with previous findings (Chen, 2019). Table 6 shows that both students in foster care and students with economic disadvantage followed similar trends over time for full day absences. Students in foster care had more absences per student per year. However, the comparison group has similar numbers of absences per student during the junior and senior years of high school. This can be explained by the share of students with economic disadvantage with high numbers of annual absences increasing during the 2017 and 2018 school years and the share of students with no absences decreasing during these years. Figure 3 shows that over a five-year period, middle school students in foster care had an average of 21 more absences than their peers. There were 17 additional absences for elementary school students, and 9 for high school students.

Table 6: Number of full day absences per student per school year

Year	Students with economic disadvantage			Students in foster care		
	K cohort	*Fifth grade cohort*	*Ninth grade cohort*	*K cohort*	*Fifth grade cohort*	*Ninth grade cohort*
2015	9.6	7.3	11.5	14.3	9.9	16.4
2016	10.8	10.3	15.9	14.9	14.4	20.2
2017	10.5	12.0	17.0	14.1	17.3	17.9
2018	10.0	13.0	17.6	13.3	17.9	18.7
2019	10.4	14.6	12.2	12.8	21.2	11.8

Figure 3: Average number of full day absences per student from 2015 to 2019
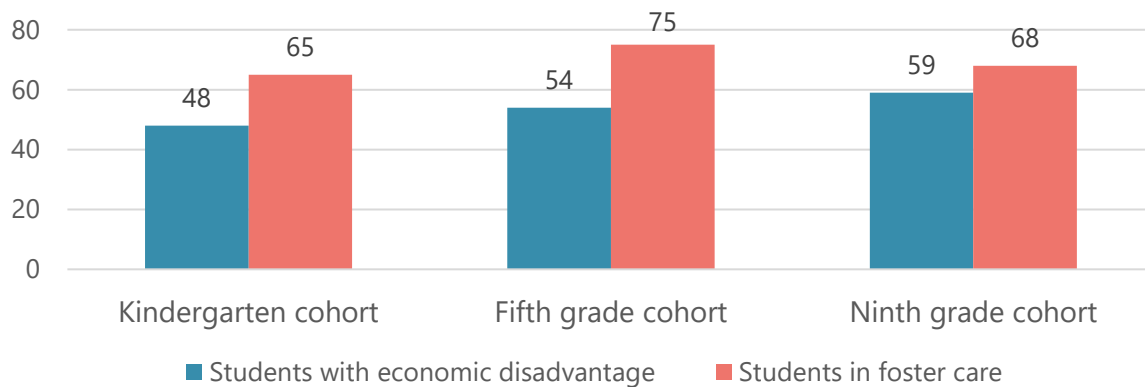
Discipline. Students in foster care continue to experience their school's formal discipline system and receive suspensions and expulsions more so than their peers. In each cohort, the percentage of students in foster care who were ever disciplined over a five-year period exceeded that of their peers. Figure 4 shows that in the kindergarten cohort, 36% of students in foster care received discipline, in comparison with 16% of their peers. In the fifth-grade cohort, 58% of students in foster care received discipline, while 34% of their peers were ever disciplined. In the ninth-grade cohort, 56% of students in foster care and 30% of students with economic disadvantage received discipline. Table 7 shows that during a five-year period for students in foster care, there was on average one out-of-school suspension or expulsion per kindergartener, nearly two per fifth grader, and one and a half per ninth grader. The table shows much smaller numbers of out-of-school exclusions per student for the comparison group.

Figure 4: Percent of students ever disciplined from 2015 to 2019
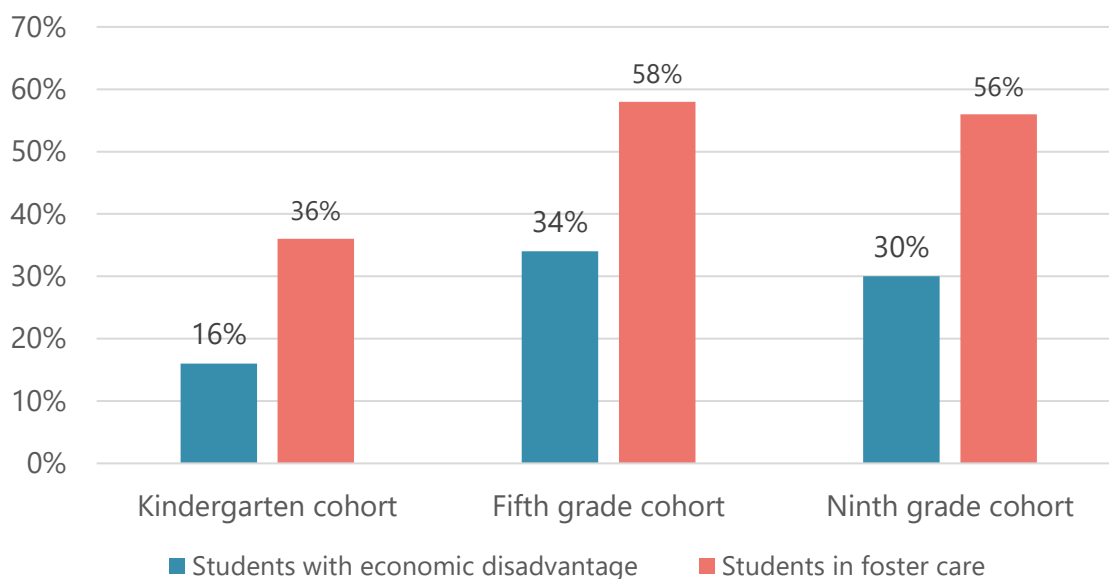
Table 7: Average number of disciplinary out-of-school exclusions per student from 2015 to 2019

Cohort	Students with economic disadvantage	Students in foster care
K cohort	0.2	1.0
Fifth grade cohort	0.6	1.8
Ninth grade cohort	0.4	1.5

Mobility. Students in foster care are more mobile than their peers, like findings suggest (Chen 2019). Table 8 shows that over the course of five years, the kindergarten and fifth-grade cohorts attend about one additional school and district more than their peers. For the ninth-grade cohort, district mobility was greater than the other cohorts. On average, these students attended 2.8 different districts while in high school. Additionally, the gap between them and their same grade level peers is also greater. School mobility is higher in the fifth-grade cohort overall, but this can be explained by promotional school changes (transitioning from elementary to middle to high school). Figure 5 shows that 72% of ninth graders in foster care attend more than one district during high school, while only 27% of their peers experience a change in school district. Students in foster care do not have the same access as their peers to completing their K-12 education when they are frequently transferring between districts during high school. See Table B-6 in appendix for more details.

Figure 5: Percent of students who changed districts from 2015 to 2019
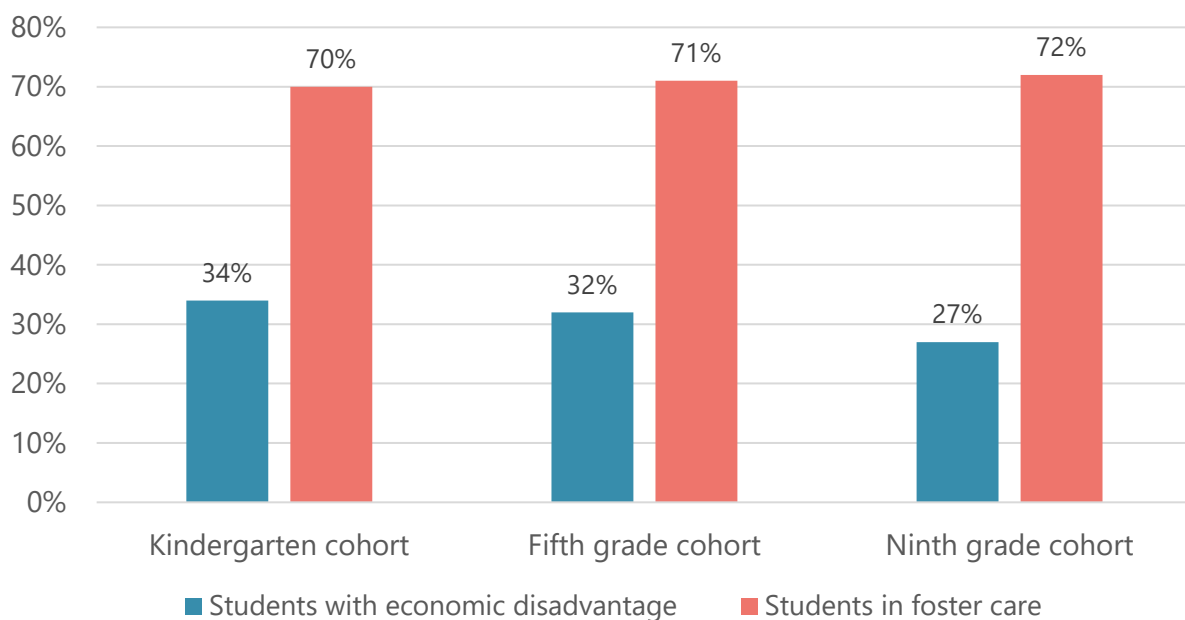
Table 8: Average number of districts and schools attended per student from 2015 to 2019

Cohort	Number of districts		Number of schools	
	Students with economic disadvantage	*Students in foster care*	*Students with economic disadvantage*	*Students in foster care*
Kindergarten cohort	1.5	2.4	1.9	3.1
Fifth grade cohort	1.4	2.5	3.3	4.4
Ninth grade cohort	1.4	2.8	1.7	3.5

Student outcomes by school and district characteristics

This section looks at graduation and math proficiency rates of students in foster care by county, district income level, district size, and rural location. Proficiency indicates that the student met the state assessment standard. Math was selected to focus on rather than ELA because it is the subject where students in foster care had lower performance.

Geographic locale. As shown in Figure 6, schools in Kitsap county had the highest graduation rate (57%) for students in foster care than other counties. Schools in Clark county had the lowest graduation rate (32%) for students in foster care than other counties. Table B-7 in the appendix shows that Benton and Whatcom counties had the highest math proficiency rates for students in foster care, while Yakima county had the lowest.

Figure 6: Graduation rate by select counties

Yakima
- Students in foster care: 44%
- Students with economic disadvantage: 74%

Whatcom
- Students in foster care: 36%
- Students with economic disadvantage: 68%

Thurston
- Students in foster care: 46%
- Students with economic disadvantage: 69%

Spokane
- Students in foster care: 41%
- Students with economic disadvantage: 75%

Snohomish
- Students in foster care: 49%
- Students with economic disadvantage: 71%

Pierce
- Students in foster care: 36%
- Students with economic disadvantage: 72%

Kitsap
- Students in foster care: 57%
- Students with economic disadvantage: 71%

King
- Students in foster care: 53%
- Students with economic disadvantage: 70%

Clark
- Students in foster care: 32%
- Students with economic disadvantage: 70%
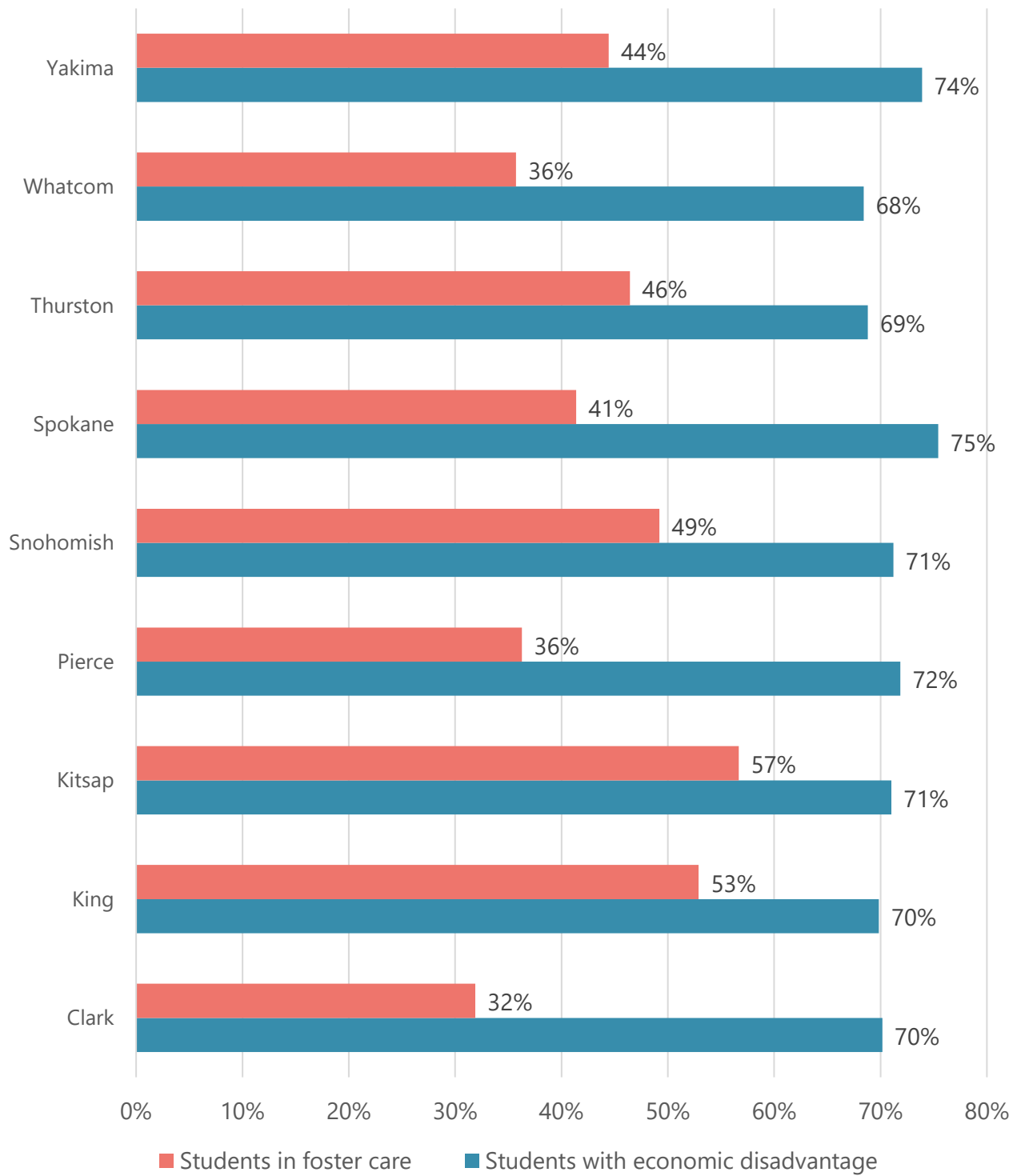
■ Students in foster care   ■ Students with economic disadvantage

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Table 9: Number and percent of students in foster care by school and district characteristics of last school of enrollment

% low-income district	Kindergarten cohort		Fifth grade cohort		Ninth grade cohort	
	n	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*
0% to 34%	311	17.5%	225	18.3%	161	20.2%
35% to 49%	549	30.9%	431	35.1%	334	41.8%
50% to 74%	869	49.0%	539	43.9%	284	35.5%
75% or more	34	1.9%	27	2.2%	18	2.3%
District size						
Small district *(less than 8,000)*	296	16.7%	222	18.1%	205	25.7%
Medium district *(between 8-45,000)*	717	40.4%	511	41.6%	297	37.2%
Large District *(more than 45,000)*	750	42.3%	490	39.9%	295	36.9%
Rural						
yes	239	13.5%	168	13.7%	79	9.9%
no	1,523	85.8%	1,055	85.8%	714	89.4%

Note: See Appendix A for definitions of measures.

District income level. Table 9 shows that 51% of the kindergarten cohort, 46% of the fifth-grade cohort, and 38% of the ninth-grade cohort attended 50% or more low-income districts. Districts that have at least 75% low-income enrollment had the highest graduation rate (67%) as seen in Table 9 and highest math proficiency rate (46%) for students in foster care than other income categories (Table 10), but this is a very small percentage of the cohort (2.3%). However, the overall tendency was for lower income districts to have lower proficiency rates and higher income districts to have higher proficiency rates among students in foster care and students with economic disadvantage.

District size. Small school districts had slightly lower graduation rates (38%) for students in foster care than medium and large districts (Table 10), and large districts had slightly lower math proficiency rates for students in foster care (Table 11).

Rural/Urban Classification. Like the statewide population, students in foster care attend mostly non-rural schools (Table 9). Rural high schools had slightly lower graduation rates (39%) for students in foster care than non-rural high schools (Table 10). Rural schools had lower proficiency rates (17%) for eighth grade math assessments, but higher (41%) for third grade math assessments (see Table 11).

Table 10: Graduation rate by school and district characteristics

	Students with economic disadvantage	Students in foster care
% low-income district		
0% to 34%	70%	47%
35% to 49%	69%	37%
50% to 74%	72%	45%
75% or more	76%	67%
District size		
Small district (less than 8,000)	67%	38%
Medium district (between 8,000-45,000)	71%	45%
Large District (more than 45,000)	72%	44%
Rural		
yes	72%	39%
no	70%	43%

Note: See Appendix A for definitions of measures.

Table 11: Math proficiency by school and district characteristics

	Students with economic disadvantage			Students in foster care		
	K cohort	*Fifth grade cohort*		*K cohort*	*Fifth grade cohort*	
	Third grade	Fifth grade	Eighth grade	Third grade	Fifth grade	Eighth grade
% low-income district						
0% to 34%	52%	43%	45%	44%	30%	28%
35% to 49%	47%	38%	38%	38%	25%	25%
50% to 74%	43%	33%	32%	32%	20%	19%
75% or more	39%	26%	31%	46%	*	*
District size						
Small district *(less than 8,000)*	43%	32%	34%	38%	23%	24%
Medium district *(between 8,000-45,000)*	48%	37%	38%	38%	24%	23%
Large District *(more than 45,000)*	45%	37%	36%	35%	23%	21%
Rural						
yes	46%	34%	36%	41%	24%	17%
no	46%	37%	37%	36%	23%	23%

Note: See Appendix A for definitions of measures;* indicates n<10, data is excluded

Conclusion and Future Research

Conclusion

This study explored data for students in foster care in several areas: kindergarten readiness, on-track for graduation, attendance, discipline, math and English language arts proficiency, five-year completion and diploma, mobility, student characteristics, and characteristics of districts these student attend. Several key findings emerged:

- Students in foster care as a group continue to have lower attendance, completion, and proficiency rates than their peers, and higher mobility and discipline rates.

- Not many students in foster care are starting off high school on track for graduation.

- Despite having more absences overall, students in foster care have similar absence trends with their peers and by the last two years of high school their peers have caught up with them in number of absences per student.

- Most students in foster care have a middle and high school experience that includes formalized disciplinary actions. Even in elementary school, students in foster care are being suspended and expelled from school.

- Most students in foster care have also experienced homelessness at some point.

- Students in foster care are overrepresented among students receiving special education services as early as elementary school.

- Most students in foster care attend more than one district in a five-year period, and on average at least one more school and district than their peers.

- Although lower income school districts tended to have lower graduation and proficiency rates and higher income categories had higher rates for both student groups, the districts that are 75% and more low-income was the exception with the highest graduation and proficiency rates for students in foster care. Trends for rural/non-rural locations and district size were mixed.

Future research

After exploring these data trends for students in foster care, questions remain about students in foster care who receive special education services such as disability categories. It may be useful to explore other organizational characteristics such as student to teacher or student to counselor ratios, teacher turnover, and more. Also needed is a more in-depth look at the secondary to post-secondary transition of students who are in foster care that includes employment outcomes. Lastly, it will be important to understand how this group of students has been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

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Appendix A. Definition of measures

Student characteristics

Gender- most recent gender reported in student enrollment records between 2015 and 2019

Race & ethnicity- most recent race & ethnicity reported in student enrollment records between 2015 and 2019, using federal race & ethnicity categories.

Ever special education- whether or not a student ever[11] received special education services.

Ever English Learner- whether or not a student ever[11] received State Transitional Bilingual Instruction Program services.

Ever economic disadvantage- whether or not a student ever[11] was eligible for free- or reduced- price meals (FRPM).

Ever 504 accommodation- whether or not a student ever[11] received section 504 accommodation.

Ever homeless- whether or not a student ever[11] was considered homeless as defined in McKinney-Vento Act, Section 725(2).

Foster care- whether or not a student was in foster care between 2002 to 2021 as reported in DCYF's Famlink database.

Outcomes

Ninth grade on-track- percentage of ninth graders whose credits attempted is not more than credits earned.

High school completion- whether or not the student obtains a high school diploma or a GED credential by the end of the 2019 school year.

High school graduation- whether or not the student obtains a high school diploma by the end of the 2019 school year.[12]

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[11] at any point during the 2010-2019 school years.

[12] The high school graduation rate used in this study refers to the percentage of 9th graders who ever enrolled in 2015 school year and graduated in five years (by the end of 2019 school year). The denominator of the calculation is the total number of 9th graders enrolling in 2015 school year, and the numerator is the total number of the same cohort who have high school graduation record from 2015-2019 CEDARS historical data. This calculation does not remove anyone who transfer out of WA public school system. Neither does it include those who transfer in. This calculation tracks the same group of 9th graders longitudinally for five years. It is advised to be cautious while

Kindergarten readiness- the percentage of students ready for kindergarten in all six domains (social-emotional, physical, language, cognitive, literacy and math) out of all kindergarteners enrolled in 2015, assessed using WaKIDS (Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills).

Proficiency- the percentage of students that met grade level standards on the Smarter Balanced Assessment or the Washington Access to Instruction and Measurement (WA-AIM) assessments out of the number who were tested in each subject in each grade level.

Absence- full day absences are when a student is absent as defined by the CEDARS manual for 50% or more of the student's scheduled day.

Ever disciplined- percentage of students that had at least one discipline incident documented between 2015 and 2019 as defined by CEDARS manual that results in exclusionary and non-exclusionary disciplinary actions.

Out of school exclusionary discipline actions- short- and long-term suspension, expulsion and emergency expulsion.

School mobility- the number of unique schools and districts students attended between 2015 and 2019.

School and district characteristics

County- county associated with the school physical location where student attended.

District income level- the percentage of students in a district eligible for Free- or Reduced-Price Meals out of all students enrolled.[13]

District size- "Small" is less than 8,000 students,[13] these districts have one or fewer high schools. "Medium" is between 8,000 and 45,000 students. [13] "Large" is more than 45,000 students, [13] these districts have 30 or more schools.

Rural- rural designation associated with the school physical location where the student attended, using census categories.

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comparing this graduation rate with the one from the OSPI report card. If students graduated from more than one school, the first school was selected.

[13] based on three-year average enrollment from the 2015 to 2017 school years

Appendix B. Tables

Table B-1 Student characteristics for students receiving special education services

	Students with economic disadvantage			Students in foster care		
	Kindergarten cohort	*Fifth grade cohort*	*Ninth grade cohort*	*Kindergarten cohort*	*Fifth grade cohort*	*Ninth grade cohort*
Gender						
Female	34%	35%	36%	33%	46%	42%
Male	66%	65%	64%	67%	54%	58%
Non-binary or other gender identity	.	< 1%	< 1%	.	.	.
Race & ethnicity						
American Indian/Alaskan Native	3%	3%	3%	3%	4%	4%
Asian American	2%	3%	3%	< 1%	*	< 1%
Black/African American	6%	6%	8%	9%	11%	12%
Hispanic/Latino	34%	31%	27%	19%	17%	19%
White	45%	49%	51%	56%	56%	54%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	1%	1%	1%	< 1%	< 1%	*
Two or more races	9%	8%	7%	11%	11%	10%
Unknown race	< 1%	< 1%	< 1%	< 1%	.	.
Ever special education						
No	.	.	.	.	.	.
Yes	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Ever English learner						
No	73%	75%	80%	89%	89%	92%
Yes	27%	25%	20%	11%	11%	8%
Ever economic disadvantage						
No	.	.	.	2%	< 1%	.
Yes	100%	100%	100%	98%	99%	100%
Ever 504 accommodation						
No	94%	89%	90%	92%	88%	90%
Yes	6%	11%	10%	8%	12%	10%
Ever homeless						
No	84%	79%	77%	49%	32%	30%
Yes	16%	21%	23%	51%	68%	70%

Notes: May not sum to totals because of rounding; * *indicates n<10, data is excluded; '.' indicates no students.* Even though all foster youth are FRPM eligible, not all foster youth turn in the application form. If the form is not submitted, the OSPI's data system would not record the foster youth as FRPM eligible.

Table B-2 Number and percent of students in foster care by county of last school of enrollment

County	K cohort	Fifth grade cohort	Ninth grade cohort	County	K cohort	Fifth grade cohort	Ninth grade cohort
Adams	*	*	.	Lewis	26 (1.5%)	19 (1.5%)	11 (1.4%)
Asotin	*	*	*	Lincoln	*	*	.
Benton	50 (2.8%)	28 (2.3%)	14 (1.8%)	Mason	33 (1.9%)	27 (2.2%)	12 (1.5%)
Chelan	20 (1.1%)	* *	10 (1.3%)	Okanogan	14 (0.8%)	17 (1.4%)	* *
Clallam	34 (1.9%)	20 (1.6%)	* *	Pacific	*	*	*
Clark	84 (4.7%)	65 (5.3%)	69 (8.6%)	Pend Oreille	*	*	*
Columbia	*	*	.	Pierce	262 (14.8%)	212 (17.2%)	102 (12.8%)
Cowlitz	38 (2.1%)	26 (2.1%)	13 (1.6%)	San Juan	*	*	*
Douglas	*	*	*	Skagit	38 (2.1%)	20 (1.6%)	12 (1.5%)
Ferry	*	*	.	Skamania	*	*	*
Franklin	31 (1.7%)	* *	* *	Snohomish	139 (7.8%)	111 (9.0%)	63 (7.9%)
Garfield	*	.	*	Spokane	172 (9.7%)	115 (9.4%)	58 (7.3%)
Grant	49 (2.8%)	14 (1.1%)	10 (1.3%)	Stevens	18 (1.0%)	* *	* *
Grays Harbor	38 (2.1%)	21 (1.7%)	*	Thurston	70 (3.9%)	51 (4.1%)	56 (7.0%)
Island	14 (0.8%)	* *	* *	WA State	* *	30 (2.4%)	75 (9.4%)
Jefferson	*	*	.	Wahkiakum	*	*	*
King	285 (16.1%)	198 (16.1%)	121 (15.1%)	Walla Walla	21 (1.2%)	14 (1.1%)	* *
Kitsap	65 (3.7%)	34 (2.8%)	30 (3.8%)	Whatcom	49 (2.8%)	38 (3.1%)	28 (3.5%)
Kittitas	15 (0.8%)	* *	* *	Whitman	*	*	*
Klickitat	*	*	*	Yakima	121 (6.8%)	84 (6.8%)	36 (4.5%)

Note: * indicates n<10, data is excluded; '.' indicates no students. WA State is listed as the county of record for institutions, juvenile detention centers, unaffiliated tribal schools or colleges/universities, and skills centers where OSPI is considered the Educational Service District.

Table B-3 Percent of students on track in ninth grade by gender and race

	Fifth grade cohort	Ninth grade cohort	Fifth grade cohort	Ninth grade cohort
	Students with economic disadvantage		*Students in foster care*	
Total	61%	57%	42%	39%
Gender				
Female	66%	64%	42%	43%
Male	56%	51%	42%	35%
Non-binary or other gender identity	73%	*	*	.
Race & ethnicity				
American Indian/Alaskan Native	42%	42%	27%	*
Asian American	81%	80%	57%	*
Black/African American	55%	51%	37%	33%
Hispanic/Latino	56%	52%	35%	41%
White	64%	60%	46%	40%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	51%	51%	*	*
Two or more races	59%	56%	48%	41%
Unknown race	100%	*	.	.

Note: * indicates n<10, data is excluded; '.' indicates no students.

Table B-4 Student characteristics of ninth grade cohort diploma and GED obtainment by 2019

	Students with economic disadvantage			Students in Foster Care		
	GED	Diploma	GED and/or diploma	GED	Diploma	GED and/or diploma
Gender						
Female	2%	74%	76%	6%	48%	51%
Male	4%	67%	69%	9%	36%	40%
Non-binary or other gender identity	*	*	*	.	.	.
Race & ethnicity						
American Indian/Alaskan Native	5%	54%	56%	*	50%	50%
Asian American	<1%	84%	85%	*	*	*
Black/African American	3%	66%	68%	*	40%	43%
Hispanic/Latino	2%	71%	72%	*	45%	48%
White	4%	70%	72%	8%	40%	45%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	1%	62%	62%	*	*	*
Two or more races	3%	70%	72%	*	46%	48%
Unknown race	*	*	*	.	.	.
Ever special education						
No	3%	73%	75%	9%	47%	52%
Yes	2%	60%	61%	5%	36%	38%
Ever English learner						
No	3%	71%	73%	7%	42%	46%
Yes	1%	68%	69%	*	52%	54%
Ever economic disadvantage						
No	.	.	.	*	*	*
Yes	3%	70%	72%	7%	43%	46%
Ever 504 accommodation						
No	3%	71%	72%	7%	43%	46%
Yes	6%	67%	70%	*	40%	46%
Ever homeless						
No	3%	74%	75%	7%	44%	49%
Yes	5%	56%	59%	7%	41%	45%
Total	**3%**	**70%**	**72%**	**7%**	**42%**	**46%**

Notes: See Appendix A for definitions of measures. * indicates n<10, data is excluded; *'.' indicates no students.*

Table B-5 Percent of students ready for kindergarten in all domains by gender and race

	Students with economic disadvantage	Students in foster care	Statewide
Gender			
Female	34%	28%	41%
Male	27%	24%	34%
Non-binary or other gender identity	*	.	50%
Race & ethnicity			
American Indian/Alaskan Native	33%	*	33%
Asian American	35%	*	40%
Black/African American	35%	30%	37%
Hispanic/Latino	21%	20%	23%
White	38%	28%	47%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	26%	*	27%
Two or more races	38%	33%	44%
Unknown race	*	*	*
Total	30%	26%	37%

Note: * indicates n<10, data is excluded; '.' indicates no students.

Table B-6 Mobility by cohort and student group

	Students with economic disadvantage			Students in foster care		
	Kindergarten cohort	*Fifth grade cohort*	*Ninth grade cohort*	*Kindergarten cohort*	*Fifth grade cohort*	*Ninth grade cohort*
Total schools attended						
1	45.3%	3.7%	55.4%	17.2%	1.8%	19.0%
2	32.4%	11.6%	27.0%	25.6%	5.9%	20.3%
3	14.3%	54.9%	10.8%	21.5%	27.1%	18.8%
4	5.1%	19.6%	4.2%	16.3%	24.4%	14.8%
5	1.9%	6.5%	1.6%	9.6%	18.2%	11.5%
6	0.7%	2.4%	0.6%	5.4%	10.0%	5.9%
7	0.2%	0.8%	0.3%	2.7%	6.4%	3.9%
8	0.1%	0.3%	0.1%	0.9%	2.9%	2.8%
9+	< 0.0%	0.1%	< 0.0%	0.9%	3.3%	3.1%
Total districts attended						
1	66.2%	68.3%	72.7%	29.8%	29.0%	27.7%
2	24.6%	22.6%	19.6%	31.9%	29.7%	27.3%
3	7.0%	6.7%	5.5%	19.8%	21.0%	18.3%
4	1.7%	1.9%	1.5%	12.1%	11.2%	12.0%
5	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	4.0%	5.4%	6.0%
6	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	1.9%	2.3%	4.3%
7+	< 0.0%	< 0.0%	0.1%	0.6%	1.5%	4.5%

Table B-7 Math proficiency by county

| County | Students with economic disadvantage | | | Students in foster care | | |
| | Kindergarten cohort | Fifth grade cohort | | Kindergarten cohort | Fifth grade cohort | |
	Third grade	Fifth grade	Eighth grade	Third grade	Fifth grade	Eighth grade
Benton	44%	*	*	53%	*	*
Clallam	68%	*	*	42%	*	*
Clark	44%	40%	40%	33%	19%	30%
Grant	39%	*	*	32%	*	*
Grays Harbor	45%	*	*	34%	*	*
King	47%	40%	39%	33%	25%	25%
Kitsap	50%	*	*	42%	*	*
Pierce	50%	40%	37%	43%	29%	21%
Snohomish	46%	40%	40%	38%	29%	27%
Spokane	47%	40%	40%	39%	29%	31%
Thurston	55%	*	*	33%	*	*
Whatcom	*	38%	37%	*	31%	41%
Yakima	*	28%	36%	*	18%	19%

Note: * indicates n<10, data is excluded