

Connecticut's State-Funded After School Programs, 2012-13

Connecticut State Department of Education

Prepared by: Hannah B. Mudrick, Elizabeth J. Siembida, Stephen A. Anderson, and Ronald M. Sabatelli
Center for Applied Research in Human Development
University of Connecticut

Executive Summary

The Connecticut After School Grant Program, as defined in Section 10-16x of the Connecticut General Statutes, was implemented in the 2007-08 school year. The program began its third two-year funding cycle during the 2011-12 school year. The 2012-13 academic year is the second year of the third funding cycle. Each two year funding cycle consists of a new cohort of grantees awarded through a competitive grant process.

This report presents the result of a process and outcome evaluation of state-funded after school programs (ASPs) operating during the 2012-13 school year. The Center for Applied Research in Human Development at the University of Connecticut was commissioned to analyze existing data provided by the Connecticut State Department of Education and participating after school programs. The full report provides an overview of the characteristics of the ASP sites and the youth who were involved in the ASPs. The report also presents the outcomes of the programs. The outcomes assess how 2012-13 program participants performed on three performance measures identified by the legislature: academic achievement, school day behavior, and school day attendance.

Characteristics of After School Program Sites and Patterns of Attendance

In 2012-13, funding provided by the General Assembly supported 35 grant initiatives. Through these grants, 5,246 students were served at 55 after school sites in 22 school districts across the state. Programs varied in the degree to which they served the number of students they had planned to serve. Across all sites, the average daily program attendance was about 76 percent; meaning that, on average, sites were serving more than three-quarters of the number of youth they planned to serve. This exceeds the 60 percent target set by the Connecticut State Department of Education. Average daily attendance varied from site to site, but 40 sites (73%) attained or exceeded 60 percent throughout the grant period. Sites serving primarily elementary school students or elementary and middle school students had higher average daily attendance than sites serving either primarily middle school or primarily high school students. However, the number of high school sites meeting the 60 percent target has steadily increased across the past few years.

Across all sites, about 63.3 percent of registered students achieved adequate dosage (defined as attending 30 or more days of programming); however, this percentage also varied considerably from site to site. Sites serving elementary school students or elementary and middle school students had, on average, higher proportions of regularly attending students compared to middle and high school sites.

Attendance was also examined in terms of individual participants' attendance rates, defined as the number of days a student attended his or her after school site divided by the number of days that site was open. The average participant attended 53 percent of days his or her site was open. Sites serving elementary or elementary and middle school students had, on average, higher rates of individual attendance than did sites serving only middle or high school students. All sites, however, showed improvement from 2011-12.

Characteristics of After School Program Participants

In 2012-13, state-funded after school sites served slightly more females than males, with males showing higher attendance rates. Programs enrolled/served a higher number of younger students than older students; older students also attended less frequently.

When compared with the total population of all students statewide, state-funded ASP participants included higher proportions of English Language Learner students (ELLs) and students whose home language was not English. However, these groups were somewhat underrepresented when after school program participants were compared with all students attending schools in the districts where the sites were located: 6.3 percent of after school program participants were ELLs, compared to 11.3 percent in the districts where the sites were located; 23.8 percent of after school program participants had a home language other than English, compared to 25.4 percent in the districts where after school sites were located. This finding suggests that recruitment and

retention of students who are ELLs and whose families speak a language other than English at home has improved, but may require additional attention to meet the needs of students in ASP districts.

Student Performance

Participants were compared with students statewide and with the public school population in the school districts where state-funded after school sites were located.

In terms of academic performance on the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT), the overall proportion of elementary and middle school participants who were proficient in writing and science were similar to that of the districts in which their ASP sites were located. However, proficiency rates of ASP participants for reading and math were lower than district rates. There was a slight decrease in the overall rates of proficiency across subject areas this year, except for writing proficiency, which increased slightly. High school students attending state-funded ASPs had considerably higher proficiency rates on all four portions of the Connecticut Aptitude Performance Test (CAPT) when compared to students in their ASP districts.

In regard to school day attendance rates, ASP participants had significantly higher rates of school attendance when compared to students in ASP districts and statewide. Although this is a promising finding, these results may not be practically significant, as they only indicate that ASP participants attend about 1.5 additional school days.

The third performance measure, school day behavior, was assessed using records of participants' disciplinary infractions during the 2012-13 school year. ASP participants showed a favorable divergence from the population in the districts where sites were located. Among students in the 2012-13 participant group, 9.8 percent had at least one disciplinary infraction. This is similar to the statewide figure, which is 9.5 percent. However, it is significantly smaller than the percentage for students in the comparison districts, where 15.3 percent of students had at least one infraction. The average number of infractions per student was slightly better among students in ASPs (average of 2.4 incidents), than among students in comparison districts (3.1), and students statewide (2.7).

Finally, comparisons were made between students who attended one, two, three, or four years of ASP programming between the 2009-10 and 2012-13 academic years. Comparisons on student academic performance data indicated that students performed similarly, although a trend of higher scores for three- and four-year participants was emerging for Math, Writing, and Science. Comparisons for school-day attendance indicated there was a statistically significant increase in attendance rates with each additional year of ASP programming. These amounted to a 1 to 3 day difference in school attendance. Lastly, comparisons for disciplinary infractions showed that the percent of students who had at least one disciplinary infraction was smaller for three- and four-year participants when compared to one- and two-year participants. Similarly, there were a lower proportion of incidents per student in the three- and four-year participant groups.

Conclusions

The results of this evaluation indicate that 2012-13 state-funded ASPs delivered programming that was consistent with the After School Grant Program's purpose of providing opportunities for academic enrichment that complement students' school day learning. Moreover, the evaluation results suggest that state-funded ASPs generally are serving students who are representative of the school districts in which the programs are located.

The findings regarding participants' rates of attendance at their ASP sites showed a clear pattern of differences based on the primary age group served by the site. Overall, sites serving primarily elementary students or elementary and middle school students showed higher rates of attendance compared to sites serving middle or high school students. This pattern was found across all three metrics used to measure program attendance. However, there was an improvement this year in attendance rates for high school participants. State-funded ASPs may benefit from continued examination of the programming being offered to older students and the efforts being made to recruit and retain older participants.

Data on the three performance indicators show that elementary and middle school students in state-funded ASPs performed similarly in writing and science compared to the students in the school districts where programs were located, but less favorably in reading and math. High school students in state-funded ASPs had higher proficiency rates on all components of the test when compared to students in their ASP districts. This suggests that participation in ASPs may be having a positive effect on particularly older students' academic achievement, but these findings should be determined conclusively through future evaluations that focus on tracking ASP participants, in conjunction with a comparison group of non-participants, as they progress through grade levels. The findings for ASP participants' school attendance and school day behavior also are positive and promising. Participants showed a higher attendance rate than students in ASP districts and statewide, and the rate of disciplinary infractions was considerably lower than students in ASP districts and more similar to students statewide.

The multi-year comparisons indicated that there is some evidence that three- and four-year participants scored higher on the 2013 CMT/CAPT, attended school more often, and had fewer disciplinary infractions than those who attended only one or in some cases two years of ASP programming. However, it cannot be determined whether participation in an ASP contributes to these positive trends, or ASPs are retaining higher performing students across multiple years. Additional analyses examining how individual multi-year participants changed over time on performance measures can provide additional information in regard to this issue. Overall, these results suggest the importance of continuing to evaluate the effectiveness of state-funded ASPs over the course of time. A longitudinal evaluation covering all ASP participants over multiple years will be able to determine the optimal length of participation for maximum student performance outcomes.

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Introduction

Connecticut's state-funded after school initiative began during the 2006-07 school year, when the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) piloted a one-year after school grant program. In the following year, 2007-08, legislation formally established the After School Grant Program, as defined in Section 10-16x of the Connecticut General Statutes. The purpose of this grant program is to implement or expand high-quality programs outside of school hours that offer academic, enrichment, and recreational activities to students in grades K through 12. These activities are intended to reinforce and complement the regular academic program of participating students.

The grants awarded through the After School Grant Program are available to any non-profit organization within the state of Connecticut, including community-based organizations, towns, and school districts. The grants are awarded through a competitive process, and those competing for the grants are required to submit their application with a partner applicant with whom they would collaborate to provide the ASP services. Most partner applicants have been school districts, boards of education, or particular schools or community organizations such as museums, youth service bureaus, or branches of the YMCA. Many awardees serve multiple locations using funds from a single grant.

As established by the legislature, Connecticut's state-funded after school programs (ASPs) operate on a two-year grant cycle. The first cycle spanned the 2007-08 and 2008-09 school years, when 36 grant initiatives operated 69 sites across 29 cities and towns. After a second competitive application process, the second cycle of grants spanned the 2009-10 and 2010-11 school years. During the second grant award process, a total of 40 grants were awarded to operate 59 sites throughout the state. Of these 40 grantees, 12 were new and 28 carried over from the prior funding cycle (2007-09). The 2011-12 school year marked the start of the third cycle of grants. A total of 35 grants were awarded to operate throughout the state, with 6 grantees being new and the others carrying over from the previous funding cycle (2009-11). The 2012-13 school year is the second year in the third funding cycle.

For the 2012-13 academic year, individual grants ranged from \$40,000 to \$125,339, with an average of \$114,054. The number of students that grantees intended to serve across all sites operated by the grant during 2012-13 ranged from 10 to 150, with an average of 58.

In addition to allocating funds for direct services, the legislation also provides for "technical assistance, evaluation, program monitoring, professional development, and accreditation support," and further stipulates that a report on performance must be submitted based on measures identified by the legislation. As established by the original legislation, the report "shall include, but not be limited to, measurement of the impact on student achievement, school attendance, and in-school behavior of student participants" (C.G.S., § 10-16x)¹. For the 2012-13 fiscal year, the CSDE commissioned the University of Connecticut's Center for Applied Research in Human Development (CARHD) to analyze existing data provided by the CSDE and participating after school programs in order to evaluate the state-funded after school programs (ASPs) operating during this period. This report focuses primarily on the sites operating during the 2012-13 period; some information about previous years' ASP participants is also included for comparison purposes.

This report includes the following sections: (a) site characteristics, such as program locations, availability, and attendance patterns; (b) a description of youth who participated in the programs; (c) details about program implementation and activities, including academic and family/parent programming, the relationships programs had with their partner schools, and the staff who worked in these programs; (d) student performance data, including standardized test scores, school day attendance, and disciplinary infractions; and (e) student performance data for students participating across multiple years, and (f) interpretation of results and discussion of next steps in terms of both programming and evaluation.

¹ Connecticut General Statutes, Title 10, Chapter 164, Section 10-16x.

Evaluation Methods

This evaluation examined data from several sources. The evaluation data included site-level information on all Connecticut state-funded ASPs that operated during the 2012-13 school year. It also included individual-level data on students who participated in the state-funded ASPs, as well as comparable state and regional information about the general public school population.

Information about After School Programs

Site- and program-level data were drawn from two sources. Basic information, such as student enrollment in ASPs and program hours of operation, were provided by the CSDE using information stored in the *AfterSchool21* data system. All state-funded ASPs are required to use this data collection system to report to the CSDE regularly and systematically on program operations.

Additional information about program implementation and operations was available from a required End of Year Report (EYR) that was completed by all sites at the conclusion of the 2012-13 program year. The EYR was developed by CARHD evaluators in collaboration with the CSDE. The survey was used to gather information about specific areas of program operation and implementation, including the academic, enrichment, recreation, and family/parent programming that programs offered, the relationships programs had with their partner schools, and the staff who worked in these programs. The EYR was completed by the site coordinator at each state-funded after school site.

Information about Individual Participants

Information about individual students' 2012-2013 ASP attendance and some demographic information was obtained from the *AfterSchool21* database mentioned above. The CSDE provided CARHD with data about students who participated in state-funded ASPs during 2012-13, including students' demographics, test scores, school day attendance, and disciplinary infractions. Performance data for students who attended multiple years of ASP programming was also available for a smaller sample of participants.

Information about State and Regional Student Characteristics

For an additional point of comparison, CARHD evaluators used information publicly available on the CSDE's website to examine differences between ASP participants and the general public school population in the state and in the specific districts where state-funded ASPs operated². The most recent publically available data about student demographics, however, were from 2011-12 with the exception of academic achievement which was available for the 2012-13 school year. Therefore, comparisons in these areas are made between 2012-13 ASP participants and students in ASP districts and across the state in 2011-12.

Comparison data from the state and ASP districts in regard to students' achievement, school day attendance, and disciplinary infractions were specifically requested for the purposes of this report. Therefore, for these measures, comparison data is available for the 2012-13 academic year. It should be noted that schools are only required to report serious disciplinary infractions to the state, but some schools choose to also report less serious disciplinary infractions, like school policy violations. Therefore, the comparison data for disciplinary infractions at the district and state level may be skewed in favor of certain districts because some schools reported both serious and less serious offenses whereas other schools only reported serious offenses.

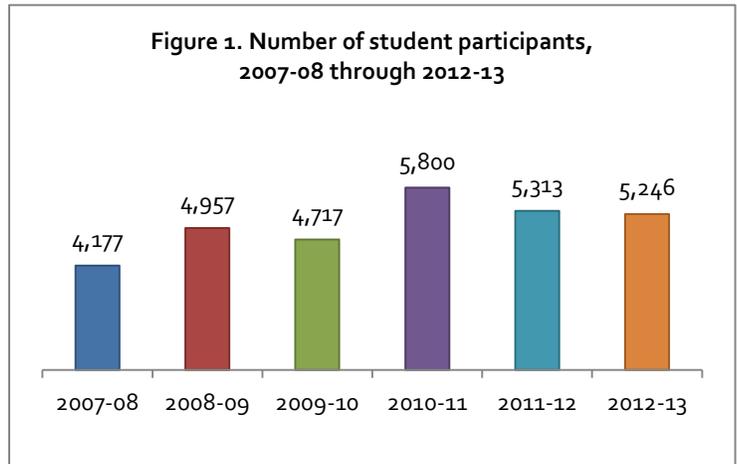
² District and state numbers were obtained at the aggregate level, so ASP participants' data are included in district and state level percentages. However, it is unlikely that this biased the results, given that the group of ASP participants is small (5,246) relative to the number of students in ASP districts (180,156 students) and statewide (570,494 students).

Section 1: Site Characteristics

Size, Location, and Participant Enrollment at State-Funded ASPs

Funding provided by the General Assembly for ASPs in 2012-13 supported 35 grant initiatives operating a total of 55 sites. Twenty-five sites were run primarily by a community-based organization, 25 were operated primarily by a school district, and five were operated by another agency. Figure 1 (right) shows the number of students that state-funded ASPs served across the last six years. From 2011-12 to 2012-13, ASPs showed a 1 percent decrease in the number of students served.

Twenty-nine sites (52.7%) reported serving elementary school students, 12 sites reported serving K-8 students (21.8%), 15 sites reported serving middle school students (27.3%), and 9 sites reported serving high school students (16.4%). (Site coordinators were allowed to choose all categories that applied, so percentages can sum to more than 100.)



The 55 sites were located in 22 Connecticut school districts. Figure 2 (below) shows the geographic distribution of sites throughout the state.

Table 1 (next page) shows the specific numbers of grants, sites, and participants for each of the 35 districts.

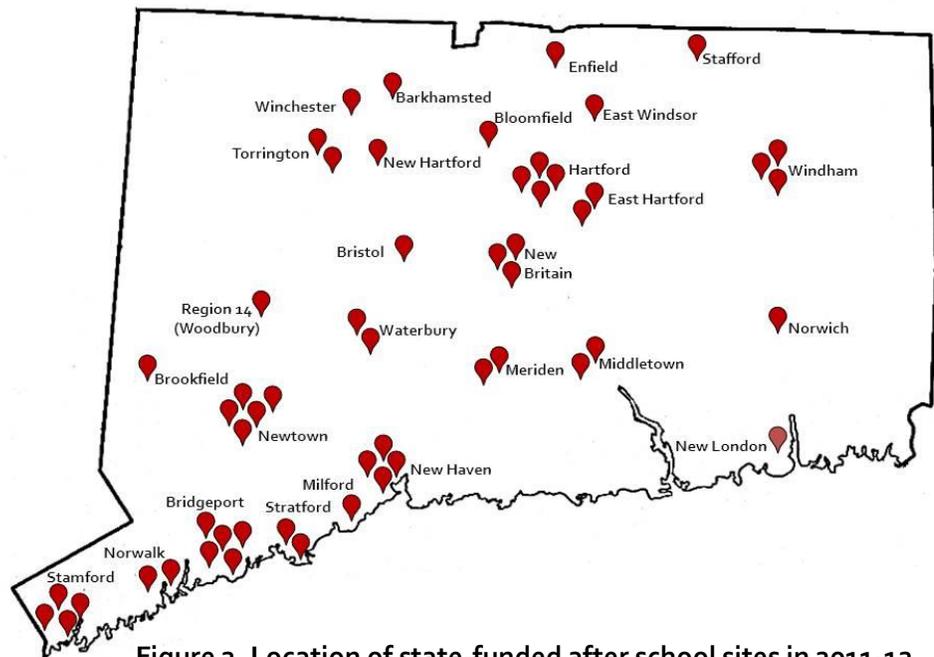


Figure 2. Location of state-funded after school sites in 2011-12

Table 1. Number of grantees, sites, and participants by district

Grantee	# of Grants	# of Sites (Names)	# of ASP Participants
Bloomfield	1	1 (Carmen Arace Middle School)	83
Bridgeport	2	5 (Blackham, Curiale, Longfellow, Roosevelt, & McGivney Center)	966
Bristol	1	1 (ELCCT)	93
East Hartford	1	2 (Mayberry & Norris)	121
East Windsor	1	1 (East Windsor Middle School)	91
Enfield	1	1 (JFK)	46
Hartford	4	4 (Core, Sanchez School, Kennelly, & Fred Wish School)	506
Litchfield	1	11 (Barkhamsted, Hawley, Head O'Meadow, Huckleberry, Mitchell, New Hartford, Newtown MS, Reed, Sandy Hook, East School, & Vogel Whitmore)	484
Meriden	1	2 (Nathan Hale & Pulaski)	39
Middletown	2	2 (Farm Hill & MacDonough)	224
Milford	1	1 (West Shore Middle School)	89
New Britain	2	3 (Jefferson, Gaffney, & New Britain High School)	144
New Haven	3	4 (Hill Central, Ross/Woodward, Common Ground, & COOP)	542
New London	1	1 (STMHS)	150
Norwalk	2	2 (Norwalk Housing Authority & Choices for Success)	117
Norwich	1	1 (Thames River Academy)	142
Stafford	1	1 (Stafford Elementary School)	202
Stamford	3	4 (Turn of River Middle School, Cloonan Middle School, Stamford High School, & Westhill High School)	507
Stratford	1	2 (Flood Middle School & Wooster Middle School)	281
Waterbury	2	2 (Bunker Hill & North End Middle School)	146
Winchester	1	1 (Batcheller)	55
Windham	2	3 (Natchaug, Sweeney, & Windham Heights Center)	218
TOTAL	35	55	5246

Snack

s

Nutrition is an important component of after school participants' overall wellness, and offering snacks to participants is one way to promote wellness. **Fifty-two sites (94.5%) offered snacks for participants.** Ten sites (18.2%) indicated they received federal reimbursement, without being specific of the type. Snacks were provided through the National School Lunch Program at 13 sites (23.6%) and through the Child and Adult Care Food Program at 11 sites (20.0%), both specific sources of federal funding. Three additional sites provided breakfast through the National School Breakfast Program (5.5%) and one site provided breakfast through the Child and Adult Care Food Program (1.8%), again both federal sources of funding. Therefore, 38 sites (69.1%) in total used federal funding to provide either snacks or a meal. Twenty-six sites (47.3%) used their own funds for snacks, two sites (3.6%) funded snacks through donations, two sites (3.6%) had children bring their own snacks, and three other sites (5.5%) used school funds. Other infrequently reported sources of funding included food service program, foodshare, registration fees, and teacher-provided snacks. These numbers add up to more than 55 because sites could select more than one funding source for snacks.

Participant Attendance Patterns across Sites

The requirement of the program as articulated in the RFP is that students must attend their ASP for four or more days over the year in order to be included in attendance analyses. In 2012-13, 5,246 students met this criterion, and the following analyses pertain to those students.

Three metrics were used to examine patterns of participant attendance across sites: average daily attendance at the site, percent of participants at the site attending at least 30 days of programming, and the average percentage of days of the site's programming that participants attended.

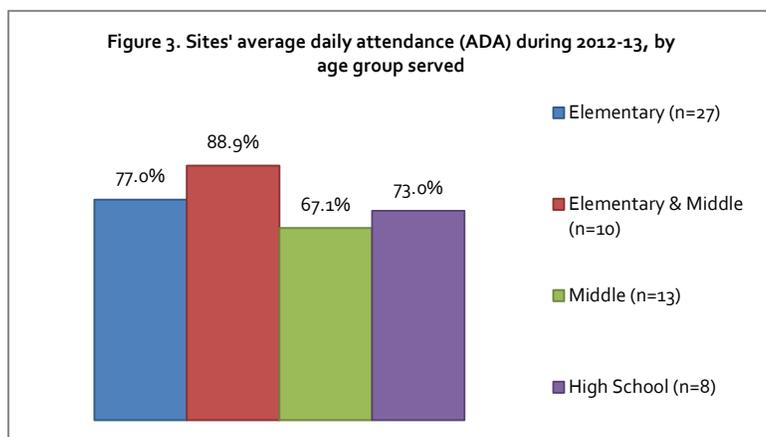
An important source of variation in attendance patterns is the primary age groups served by the site. Prior evaluations of Connecticut's state-funded ASPs have shown that recruitment and retention of middle and high school students is more difficult compared to recruitment and retention of elementary school students. Thus, the results for each of the three indicators are presented based on the primary age group served by the site.

Average Daily Attendance

The first metric, "average daily attendance" (ADA), compares the number of youth attending a site on a given day with that site's target number.³ The CSDE has established 60 percent ADA as the goal for state-funded ASPs. **Across all sites, the ADA was 76.0 percent, meaning that on an average day, sites were serving at least 76 percent of their target number of students.** This year's ADA across all sites was slightly lower than the 79.2 percent ADA reported for sites operating during 2011-12. Although this average was well above CSDE's established target of 60 percent, this suggests attention may need to be given to improving sites' ability to serve their targeted number of participants for the 15 sites that had an ADA of less than 60 percent.

Figure 3 (right) shows the ADA according to the age group served. The total number of sites is more than 55 due to a few sites serving both middle school and high school students. Sites serving elementary school students or elementary and middle school students had a higher ADA than sites serving either middle or high school students. This finding is quite similar to the findings from previous years.

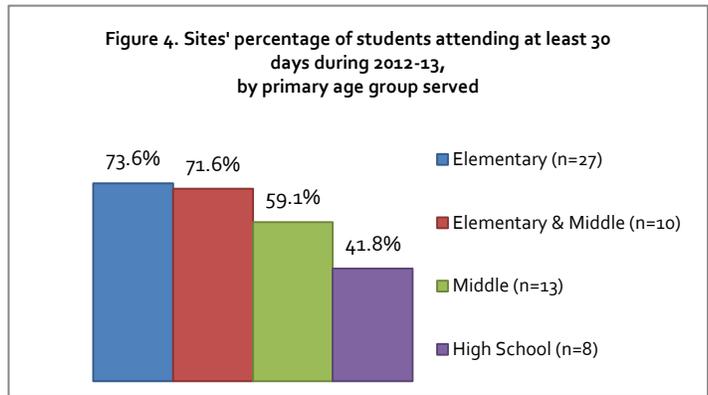
Twenty of the elementary sites (74.1%) had 60 percent ADA or higher, compared to 9 elementary and middle sites (90.0%), four middle school sites (40.0%), and six high school sites (75.0%). In 2011-12, 79 percent of elementary sites, 93 percent of elementary and middle sites, 50 percent of middle school sites, and 67 percent of high school sites had an ADA of 60 percent or more. Therefore, this year there are more high school sites that are meeting an ADA of 60 percent, whereas there are fewer elementary school sites, combined elementary and middle school, and middle school sites that are meeting this benchmark. The number of high school sites achieving 60 percent ADA or higher has steadily risen each year, from 30 percent in 2010-11 to 75 percent in 2012-13.



Percentage of Youth Attending 30 or More Days of Programming

³ The "average daily attendance" value for each site was calculated using the following formula: (Total Number of Individual Attendances) / (Target Number of Youth to Be Served * Total Number of Days Open). An 'individual attendance' refers to one student attending on one day.

Average daily attendance is a useful metric for examining how successful sites are at recruiting participants to attend their program. It is also important, however, to know whether sites are able to retain those participants for a significant period of time (for example, sites could have high average daily attendance but serve a different group of students each day). The extent to which sites served a consistent group of participants was examined through the percentage of students who attended the program “regularly” at each site. Individuals were considered regular attendees if they attended the program at least 30 days over the academic year. Similar to ADA, the CSDE has set 60 percent as a target; it is expected that at least 60 percent of the participants registered at each site will attend at least 30 days of programming.

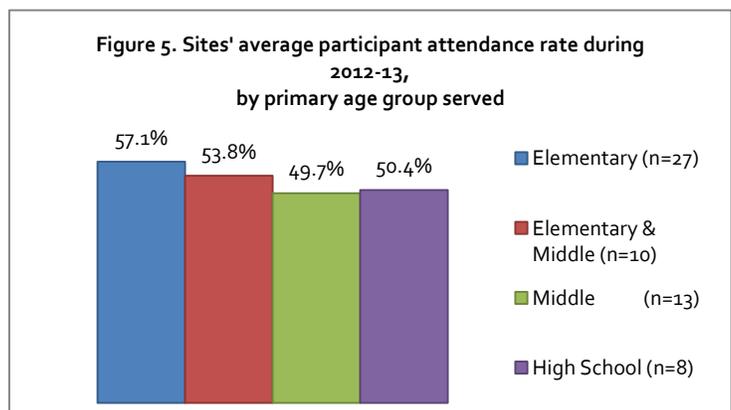


Across all sites, 63.3 percent of students attended regularly. This means that just over three-fifths of all registered participants attended their ASP at least 30 days during 2012-13. This percentage is slightly higher than that reported for the 2011-12 (61.5%) academic year. Figure 4 (above) shows the distribution of sites in terms of the percentage of students who attended at least 30 days during the 2012-13 year, according to the primary age group served by the site.

Forty-two sites (76.3%) met the CSDE’s target of having at least 60 percent of students attend 30 or more days of programming. There is an overall slight trend toward more sites meeting the criteria of having 60 percent of registered students attend regularly. As with ADA, however, there are differences according to the age group served at the site. Sites serving elementary school students or a combination of elementary and middle school students had higher percentages of students attending 30 or more days (80.6% and 76.2%, respectively), as compared to the middle school and high school sites. Across the 13 middle school and 8 high school sites, only 66.7 percent and 61.7 percent of registered participants met this criterion, respectively. It is notable, however, that the number of middle school sites that met the 60 percent target was higher this year than in 2011-12, when just over half of middle school the sites did so.

Average Participant Attendance Rate

Because sites differ in the number of days they are open, another metric to measure attendance is the actual percentage of available days that youth attend. This was computed individually for each participant by dividing the number of days he or she attended the site by the total number of days his or her site was open during 2012-13. This percentage was then averaged across all participants at each site to obtain a site-level figure of average participant attendance rate.



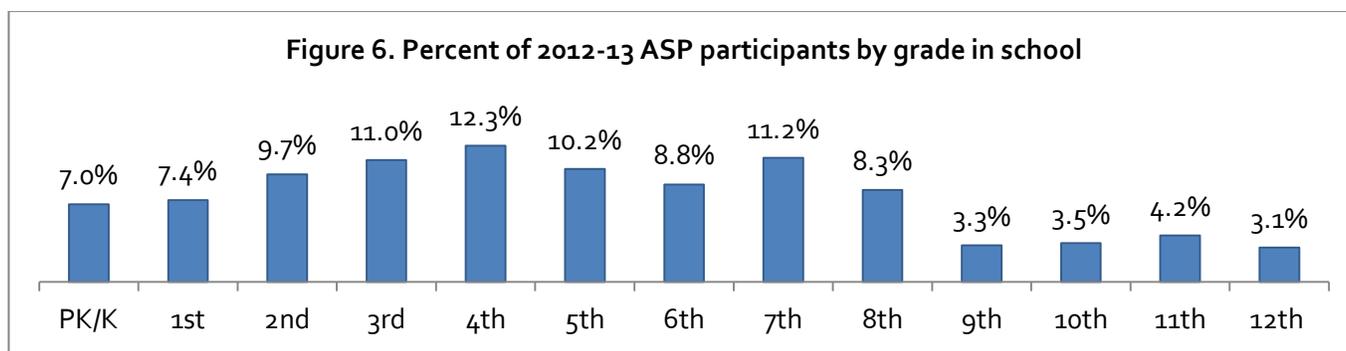
Across all 2012-13 ASP sites, the average participant attendance rate was 53.0 percent. This means that, on average, participants attended about 53 percent of the days that their sites were open. This varied considerably from site to site, however (range: 17.7%-86.4%). Average participant attendance rates were higher at sites serving either elementary school students or a combination of elementary and middle school students (Figure 5, above). During the 2012-13 academic year, only middle school participants attended less than half the available days of programming, an improvement from 2011-12.

Section 2: Description of Participants

Participant Demographic Information

Grade Level

In 2012-13, ASPs served students from pre-kindergarten to 12th grade. Grade level information was available for 5,180 participants (98.7%). Figure 6 (below) shows the distribution of ASP participants by grade. As the figure shows, the highest numbers of participants were in 4th, 7th, and 3rd grade. The participant group included far fewer older students, as was also the case in previous years.



Racial/Ethnic Background

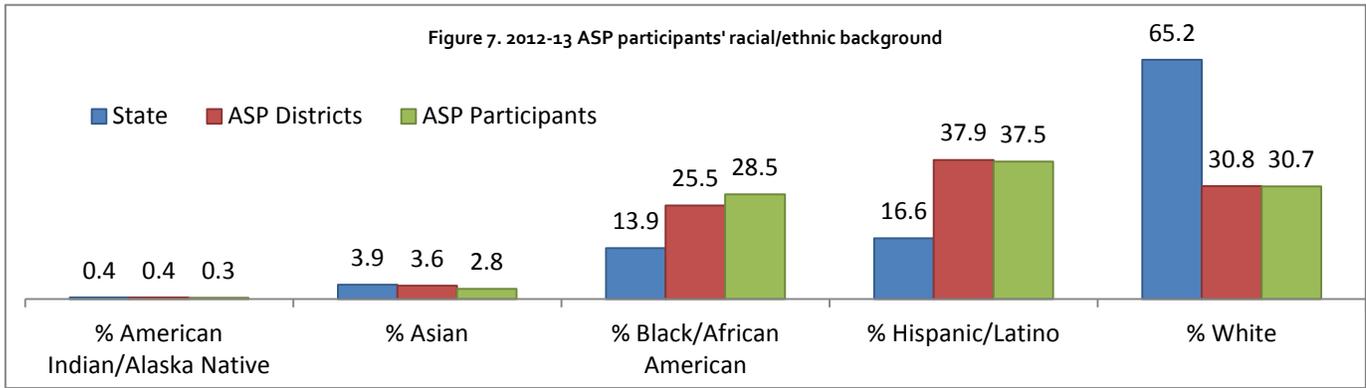
Racial/ethnic background information was available for 5,103 participants (97.3%). Figure 8 (below) shows the racial/ethnic background of ASP participants in comparison to the public school population in the same ASP districts and statewide. It is important to note that the district and state data come from the 2011-12 academic year, whereas the ASP participant data comes from the 2012-13 academic year.

Ethnicity and racial data for two students who were reported to be multi-racial and 14 students who were reported to be Pacific Islander are not included in Figure 7 (next page). ASPs enrolled a higher portion of Black/African American students and a lower portion of all other racial/ethnic groups compared to the student population in the districts in which ASPs were located. However, only the differences for the percentage of Black/African American and Asian students were statistically significant.⁴ During the 2011-12 academic year, ASPs served a higher proportion of Black/African American and White students and a lower proportion of all other racial/ethnic groups compared to the students in ASP districts. Therefore, the only consistent finding was that ASPs served more Black/African American students.

Gender

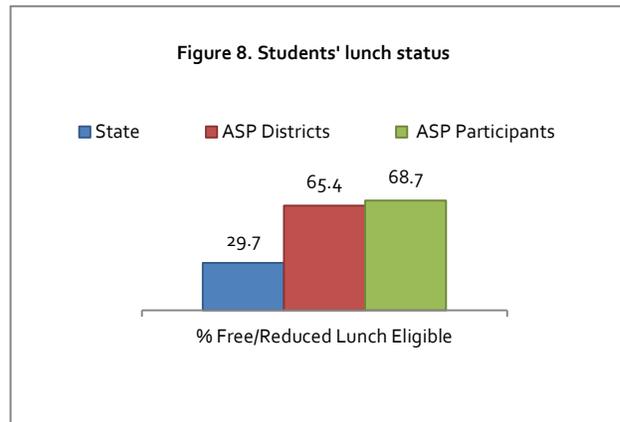
Gender information was available for 4,956 of the 5,246 (94.5%) 2012-13 ASP participants. A little over 52 percent of ASP participants were female, compared to the 48.6 percent in the public school population in the districts where ASPs were located during 2011-12. Males comprised 47.5 percent of the ASP group, compared to 51.4 in the ASP districts. Consistent with findings from 2010-11 and 2011-12, it appears that ASPs served a slightly higher proportion of girls compared with the general school population where the ASPs were located.

⁴ Statistical tests were used to evaluate differences between ASP participants group and students in ASP districts. For some of the racial ethnic groups, the differences were statistically significant. The test statistic was the z statistic, which evaluates whether the difference between two population values is larger than expected due to chance, based on the distribution of scores within each population. Statistically significant differences included: proportion of Asian students (2.8% vs. 3.6%), $z = -3.09$, $p = 0.002$ and proportion of Black/African American students (28.5% vs. 25.5%), $z = 4.81$, $p < 0.001$.



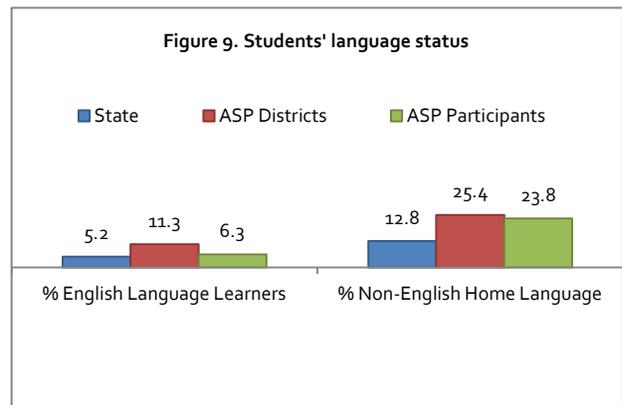
Free/Reduced Lunch Status

Figure 8 (right) shows the percentage of students who were eligible for free/reduced lunch statewide (2011-12), in the ASP districts (2011-12), and in the ASPs (2012-13). During 2012-13, 68.7 percent of ASP participants were eligible for free/reduced price lunch, compared to 65.4 percent of students in ASP districts and 29.7 percent of the general public school population. Compared to students statewide, students in the districts where state-funded ASPs were located were substantially more likely to be eligible for free/reduced lunch. ASP participants were also more likely to be eligible for free or reduced lunch than students in ASP districts.⁵



Language Status

Figure 9 (right) shows the percentages of students statewide (2011-12), in ASP districts (2011-12), and in the ASPs (2012-13) who were English Language Learners (ELLs) or who spoke a language other than English at home. ASPs served more English Language Learners than the proportion of students who are ELLs statewide. However, ASPs served a considerably lower proportion of ELLs than is found in the ASP districts.⁶ ASPs served a much higher percentage of students who spoke another language other than English at home than the proportion of students statewide, but a slightly lower percentage of students than the proportion of students in the ASP districts.⁶



In 2011-12, 7.2 percent of ASP participants were ELLs and 24.5 percent of participants spoke a language other than English at home.

⁵ Comparing ASP participants with students in ASP districts, there was a statistically significant difference in the proportion of students receiving free/reduced lunch (68.7% vs. 65.4%), $z=4.85, p<0.001$.

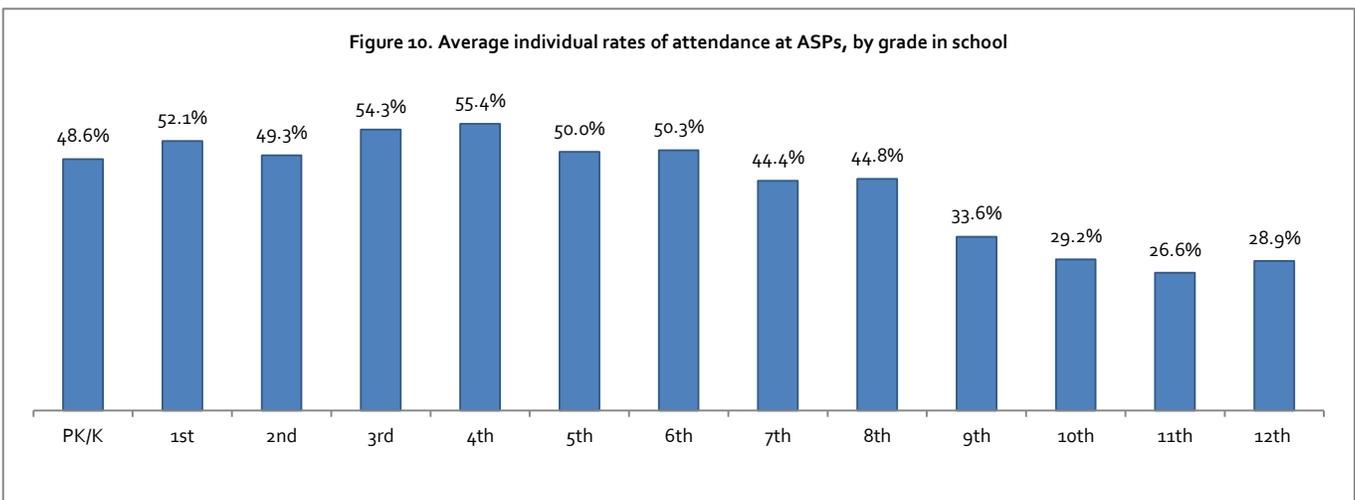
⁶ Comparing ASP participants with students in ASP districts, there were statistically significant differences in the proportion of ELL students (6.3% vs. 11.3%), $z=-11.33, p<0.001$; and the proportion of students speaking a non-English language at home (23.8% vs. 25.4%), $z=-2.30, p=.021$.

Individual Rates of Attendance

The average participant attendance rate was used to investigate whether individual attendance differed by students' demographic characteristics. As noted earlier, the rate of attendance was computed for each participant by dividing the number of days he or she attended the site by the total number of days his or her site was open. Across all students, the average participant attended about 47.2 percent of the days that his or her site was open⁷.

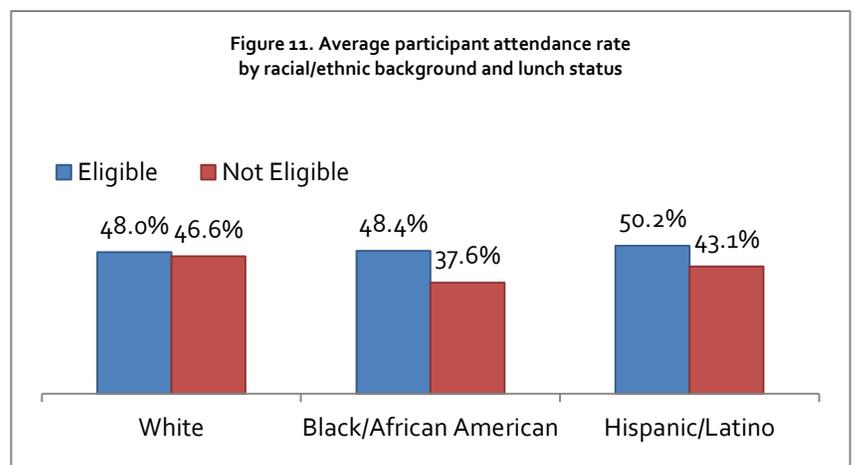
Attendance rates differed based on participants' grade in school, racial/ethnic background, eligibility for free or reduced price lunch, whether participants spoke a language other than English at home, and gender.

Figure 10 (below) shows participants' average attendance rates according to grade in school. As shown in the figure, younger children had significantly higher attendance rates when compared with older attendees.⁸



Attendance rates were statistically different between the three racial/ethnic groups overall. Hispanic/Latino participants attended at a higher rate (49.2%) than both Black/African American (46.2%) and White participants (46.6%). Attendance rates also significantly differed among participants who were and were not eligible for free or reduced price lunch.⁹ Participants who were not eligible for free or reduced attended less frequently (44.2%) compared to those who were eligible (49.1%).

However, further analyses showed more complex relationships between



⁷ This is different from the 53.0 percent average site-level individual attendance reported in the previous section because the two percentages are calculated differently. The average site-level participant attendance rate starts with individual rates, then combines them across all students at each site, then averages across all sites (so the sample size is the 55 sites). The average reported here, however, is across all students regardless of site (the sample size is 5,246).

⁸ Overall test for differences by grade was significant, $F(13, 5232) = 29.46, p < 0.001$.

⁹ Overall test for differences by race/ethnicity was significant ($F(2, 4927) = 4.94, p = 0.007$), as was the difference between those eligible for free/reduced lunch and those that were not ($t(5051) = -5.30, p < .001$).

participants' attendance rates, racial/ethnic background, and eligibility for free or reduced price lunch. Figure 11 (next page) summarizes these differences. It should be noted that these analyses were completed with a smaller number of participants, including those that had information about both their lunch status and race/ethnicity.

As shown in Figure 11 (right), all students who were eligible for free or reduced lunch had higher attendance rates than participants of the same background who were not eligible. However, the difference between students eligible and not eligible for free or reduced lunch was only statistically significant for Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino participants.¹⁰

Participants who spoke a language other than English at home had higher rates of attendance compared to those who spoke English at home.¹¹ However, these students were also significantly more likely to be of Hispanic/Latino background.¹² Because these two variables (racial/ethnic background and language status) are so closely related, it is difficult to tell whether differences in attendances can be attributed more to factors relating to ethnic background or to the language participants speak at home.

Male participants attended ASPs at a higher rate than female participants (50.0% vs. 47.7%)¹³.

¹⁰ Comparing Black/African American students who were eligible for free or reduced lunch with those who were not (48.4% vs. 37.6%) resulted in a significant difference in attendance rates ($t(1399) = -5.01, p < .001$). Comparing Hispanic/Latino students who were eligible for free or reduced lunch with those who were not (50.2% vs. 43.1%) resulted in a significant difference in attendance rates ($t(1871) = -3.03, p = .002$).

¹¹ The difference between the attendance rates of participants who spoke a language other than English was statistically higher than those who spoke English at home (51.6% vs. 48.2%, $t(4057) = -3.09, p = .002$)

¹² Significant relationship between ethnic background and language status, $\chi^2(2) = 305.0, p < 0.001$.

¹³ Overall test of differences by gender was significant ($t(4954) = -2.69, p = .007$).

Section 3: Performance Measures

Based on requirements outlined by the legislature, three measures were chosen as performance indicators for ASP participants: academic achievement, school day attendance, and school day behavior.

Performance Measure 1: Academic Achievement (CMT/CAPT Proficiency)

The first performance measure was participants' academic achievement, represented by scores on the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) or the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT). CMT and CAPT data from the 2012-13 school year (tests administered in March 2013) were available for approximately 3,052 of the 5,057 ASP participants. Data were not available for the remaining participants because these students did not take the CMT or CAPT during the 2012-13 school year. Only 3rd through 8th graders took the CMT, and only 10th graders took the CAPT. In some cases, English Language Learner students also are exempt from these tests.

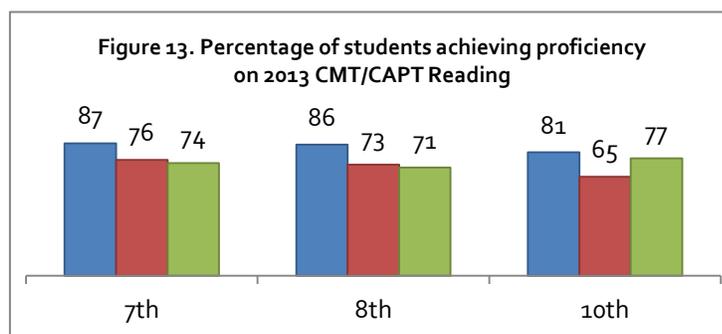
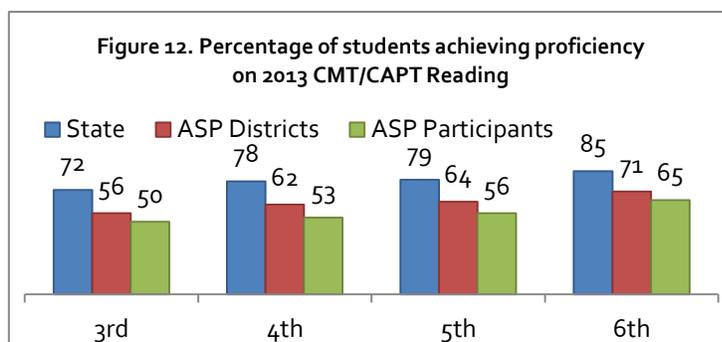
Reading Proficiency

Current Cohort of ASP Participants

Among ASP participants who took the 2013 CMT, 61.3 percent scored at or above proficiency in Reading, compared to 66.8 percent in ASP districts and 81.1 percent statewide. The difference in proficiency rates between ASP participants and students in ASP districts, as well as between ASP participants and students statewide, were statistically significant.¹⁴

For ASP participants who took the CAPT, 76.6 percent achieved proficiency, compared with 65.0 percent in ASP districts and 81.0 percent statewide¹⁵.

Figures 12 and 13 show the percentages of ASP participants, students in ASP districts, and public school students statewide who achieved proficiency in each grade.¹⁶ Overall, students in ASP districts achieved Reading proficiency at lower rates than students statewide. In general, ASP participants' proficiency was also lower than that of the districts where ASPs were located, with the exception of 7th and 8th graders, who scored similar to participants in ASP districts.¹⁷



¹⁴ (61.3% vs. 66.8%, $z=-6.10$, $p<.001$; 61.3% vs. 81.1%, $z=-26.73$, $p<.001$). These 'overall' numbers do not include CAPT scores.

¹⁵ The difference between participants and ASP districts was statistically significant (76.6% vs. 65.0%, $z= 3.17$, $p=0.002$), but the difference between participants and students statewide was not (76.6% vs. 81.0%, $z= -1.46$, $p=0.144$).

¹⁶ For all figures with achievement data, percentages are rounded to whole numbers to improve readability.

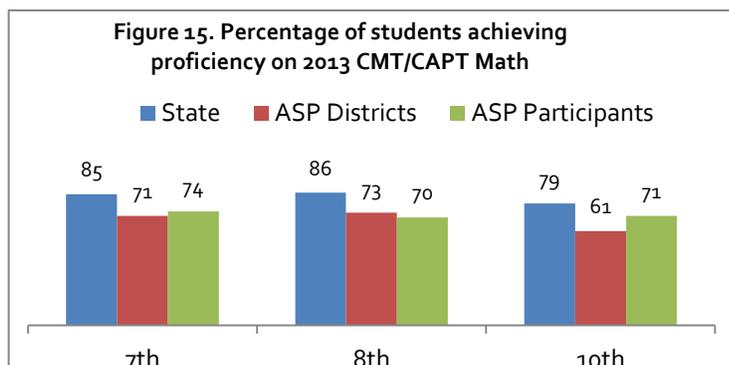
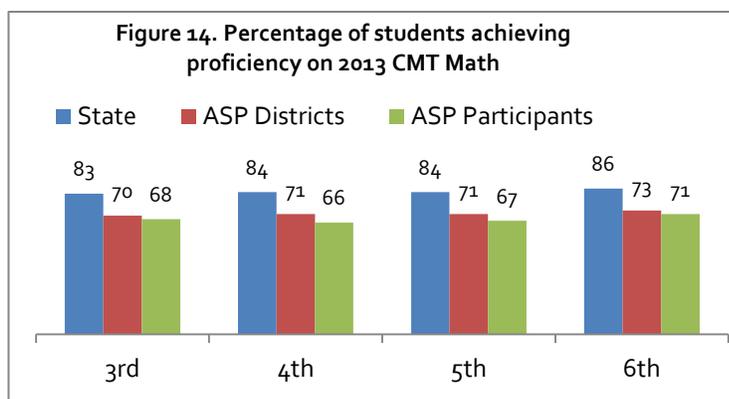
¹⁷ Differences between participants and ASP district students were not significant for: 7th: $z=-.94$, $p=0.347$ and 8th: $z=-1.00$, $p=0.317$). The differences for 3rd (49.8% vs. 55.8%, $z=-2.87$, $p=0.004$), 4th (53.1% vs. 62.0%, $z=-4.18$, $p<.001$), 5th (56.4% vs. 63.8%, $z=-3.18$, $p=0.002$), and 6th (65.0% vs. 71.3%, $z=-2.81$, $p<.005$) were significant.

Math Proficiency

Current Cohort of ASP Participants

Across all grades, 69.0 percent of ASP participants met criteria for proficiency in Math on the 2013 CMT, compared to overall percentages of 71.2 in ASP districts and 84.6 statewide.¹⁸ On the CAPT, 71.3 percent of participants achieved Math proficiency, compared with 60.5 percent in ASP districts and 78.6 percent statewide¹⁹. Figures 14 and 15 (right) show the percentage of students, by grade, who scored at the proficiency level or higher on the Math section of the CMT/CAPT test, as well as the percentage of students scoring at proficiency or higher in the ASP districts and the state as a whole.

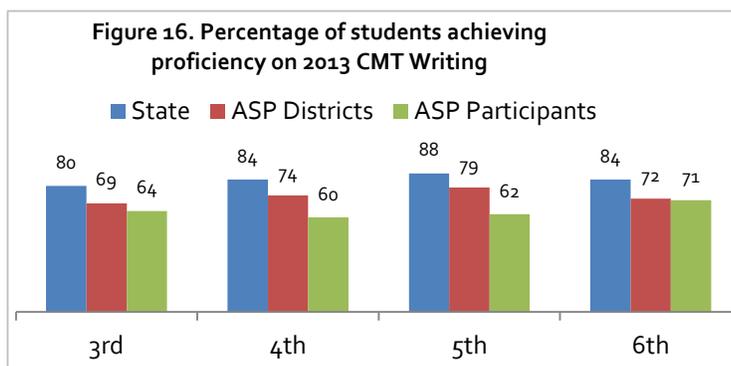
ASP districts had considerably lower Math CMT performance than students statewide, and ASP participants in general had proficiency levels similar to the population of students in the districts where ASPs are located²⁰. However, ASP participants in 4th and 5th grades scored lower than students in ASP districts.²¹



Writing Proficiency

Current Cohort of ASP Participants

Across all grades, 72.4 percent of ASP participants met criteria for proficiency on the Writing section of the 2013 CMT, compared with 73.3 percent in ASP districts and 84.1 percent statewide.²² On the 2013 CAPT, 89.6 percent of 10th grade ASP participants scored at proficiency or higher, compared with 77.7 percent of students in ASP districts and 88.9 percent of those who took the CAPT statewide.²³ Figures 16 and 17 (right and next page) show the percentage of students in each



¹⁸ The difference in the overall CMT Math proficiency among ASP participants versus ASP districts was statistically significant (69.0% vs. 71.2%, $z=-2.35$, $p=.019$), as was the difference between ASP participants and students statewide (69.0% vs. 84.6%, $z=-21.13$, $p<.001$). These 'overall' numbers do not include CAPT scores.

¹⁹ The difference in CAPT proficiency rates was significant for ASP participants compared to students in ASP districts (71.3% vs. 60.5%, $z=2.87$, $p=.004$), and was significant for ASP participants compared to students statewide (71.3% vs. 78.6%, $z=-2.35$, $p=.019$).

²⁰ The statistical tests for Math differences, by grade, yielded the following non-significant test statistic values: 3rd: $z=-.95$, $p=0.342$; 6th: $z=-1.04$, $p=0.298$; 7th: $z=1.53$, $p=0.126$; 8th: $z=-1.06$, $p=0.289$.

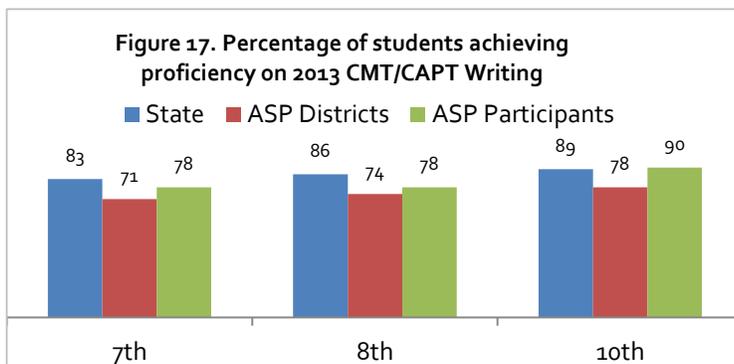
²¹ The differences in CMT math proficiency between 4th and 5th grade ASP participants and 4th and 5th grade students in ASP districts, respectively, were significant (66.4% vs. 70.6%, $z=-2.12$, $p=0.034$; 66.6% vs. 71.2%, $z=-2.09$, $p=.037$).

²² The difference in the overall CMT Writing proficiency among ASP participants versus ASP districts was not statistically significant ($z=-1.09$, $p=0.276$), but the difference between ASP participants and students statewide was (72.4% vs. 84.1%, $z=-17.04$, $p<.001$).

²³ The difference in CAPT Writing proficiency rates of ASP participants and ASP districts was statistically significant (89.6% vs. 77.7%, $z=3.74$, $p<.001$), but the difference between ASP participants and students statewide was not (89.6% vs. 88.9%, $z=.29$, $p=0.772$).

grade who scored at the level of proficiency or higher. Also shown is the overall percentage of students scoring at proficiency or higher in the ASP districts and statewide.

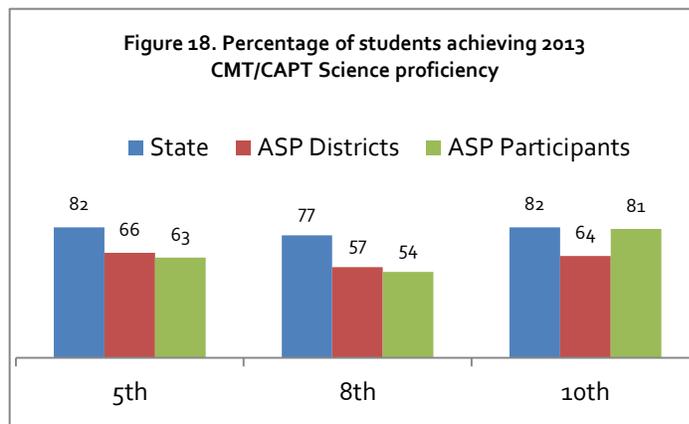
Figures 22 and 23 suggest that, similar to proficiency in Reading and Math, the Writing CMT proficiency rates for students in ASP districts were significantly lower than students statewide. ASP participants in general had proficiency levels lower than the population of students in the districts where the ASPs are located, except 7th graders who scored higher.²⁴ However, ASP participants in 6th and 8th grade scored similar to students in districts where ASPs were located.²⁵



Science Proficiency

Current Cohort of ASP Participants

During 2012-13, Science tests were given to students in 5th (CMT), 8th (CMT), and 10th (CAPT) grades. Figure 18 (right) shows the percentage of students meeting the criteria for proficiency among ASP participants, students in ASP districts, and students statewide. On the CMT, 59.1 percent of ASP participants met criteria for proficiency, compared to 61.9 percent in ASP districts and 79.0 percent statewide.²⁶ On the CAPT, 81.0 percent of ASP participants achieved proficiency, compared to 63.8 percent in ASP districts and 81.7 percent statewide.²⁷ ASP participants performed at a lower proficiency level than students in ASP districts in 5th grade and 8th grade.²⁸ In 10th grade, ASP participants performed similar to students in ASP districts.



Summary of Academic Achievement Results

Overall, these results indicate that elementary school ASP participants achieved similar or lower proficiency rates in reading, math, writing, and science than students in the districts where ASP sites were located. For middle school students, ASP participants achieved higher proficiency rates than students in ASP districts for some areas and lower or similar rates for others. High school students attending ASPs had higher proficiency rates on all components of the Connecticut Aptitude Test (CAPT) when compared to students in their ASP districts. The

²⁴ The statistical tests for Writing differences, by grade, yielded the following significant test statistic values: 3rd: (64.0% vs. 69.0%, $z=-2.36$, $p=0.018$); 4th: (61.5% vs. 73.5%, $z=-5.73$, $p<.001$); 5th: (61.5% vs. 79.4%, $z=-7.88$, $p<.001$); 7th: (77.8% vs. 70.9%, $z=3.46$, $p<.001$).

²⁵ The difference in CMT proficiency between 6th grade ASP participants and 6th grade students in ASP districts was not significant (70.6% vs. 76.4%, $z=-2.95$, $p=0.003$). The difference between 8th grade ASP participants and 8th grade students in ASP districts was also not significant (75.3% vs. 66.6%, $z=4.41$, $p<.001$).

²⁶ The difference between participants and ASP districts was not statistically significant ($z=-1.67$, $p=0.095$, however the difference between participants and students statewide was statistically significant (59.1% vs. 79.0%, $z=-14.24$, $p<.001$).

²⁷ The difference in CAPT Science proficiency rates of ASP participants and ASP districts was statistically significant (81.0% vs. 63.8%, $z=4.70$, $p<.001$), but the difference between ASP participants and students statewide was not (81.0% vs. 81.7%, $z=-0.23$, $p=.826$).

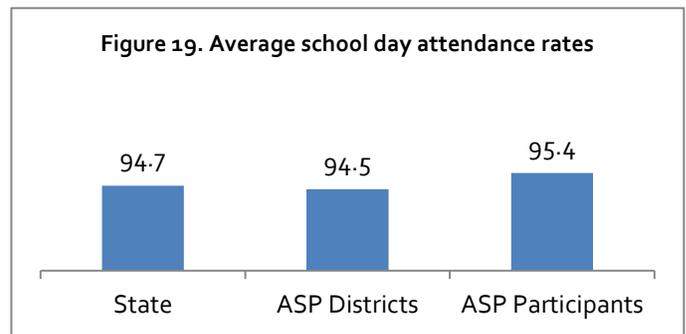
²⁸ Differences between ASP participants and students in ASP districts were statistically significant for 5th grade ($z=-2.27$; $p=0.023$) and 8th grade ($z=-2.95$, $p=0.003$).

overall percentages of participants attending ASPs who achieved proficiency in science increased this year, while proficiency rates in other areas decreased. However, it is important to consider that this is just a snapshot of students' academic achievement. Further, these results indicate that state-funded ASPs are targeting youth at-risk for problems in academic achievement. This pattern of results may show sites' increased ability to recruit their target population.

Performance Measure 2: School Day Attendance

The second performance measure is based on the school day attendance rate of ASP participants, which reflects the number of days a student was present as a percentage of the total days he or she was enrolled in school. Data on school day attendance were available for 4,902 students (96.9%). School attendance for individual participants varied, from 33 to 100 percent. The average attendance rate was 95.4 percent, which is equivalent to missing 8 days in a 180-day school year.

Figure 19 (right) shows average school day attendance rates for state, ASP districts, and ASP participants. ASP participants had significantly higher school day attendance rates than students statewide²⁹ and students in the ASP districts³⁰. However, although these differences were statistically significant, they represent relatively few days of difference over the school year. Overall, ASP participants attended about 1.25 school days more per year than students statewide and 1.5 school days more per year than students in ASP districts.

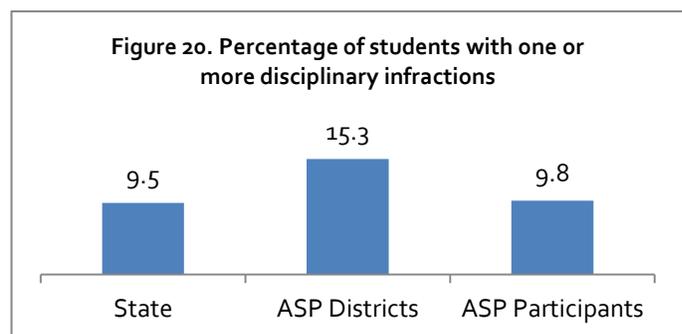


Performance Measure 3: School Day Behavior (Discipline Infractions)

The third performance measure consists of information about the in-school behavior of ASP participants, measured through behavior infractions during the 2012-13 school year. As a reminder, the schools are only required to report serious disciplinary infractions to the state, but some schools choose to report less serious offenses as well. As such, the data may be skewed in favor of the schools and districts who only reported serious offenses to the state.

Percentage of Students with Infractions

During 2012-13, 497 of the 5,057 ASP participants with disciplinary data, or 9.8 percent, had at least one disciplinary infraction. As shown in Figure 20 (right), the rate of disciplinary infractions for ASP participants was significantly lower than the rate for students in ASP districts (15.3%).³¹ The rate for ASP participants was more similar to the rate for all public school students statewide (9.5%).³²



Average Number of Infractions Per Student

²⁹ Using a one-sample *t*-test with a test value of 94.7, ASP participants' rate of school day attendance is significantly higher than that of students statewide [$t(4901)=11.58, p=0.000$].

³⁰ Using a one-sample *t*-test with a test value of 94.5, ASP participants' rate of school day attendance is significantly higher than the rate for students in ASP districts [$t(4901)=14.75, p=.000$].

³¹ Comparing ASP participants with students in ASP districts, there was a statistically significant difference in the proportion of students with a disciplinary infraction (9.8% vs. 15.3%, $z=-10.77, p<0.001$).

³² Comparing ASP participants to students statewide, the difference was not statistically significant (9.8% vs. 9.5%, $z=0.64, p=0.522$).

Discipline data for the state and for ASP district students from 2012-13 were used for comparison purposes. Considering only students in ASP districts who had one or more infractions, the average number of infractions was 3.1. For all students in the Connecticut public school system with one or more disciplinary infractions, the average was 2.7 incidents. Based on the available data on number of infractions per student, ASP participants' rate of 2.4 infractions appears to be better than the rate of students in ASP districts (3.1 infractions per student) or those statewide (2.4 infractions per student).

Section 4: Multi-Year Participants

This section of the report examines students who attended one, two, three, or four years of ASP programming between the 2009-10 and 2012-13 academic years. One-year participants were those that attended an ASP only during the 2012-13 academic year, and did not attend during any of the previous academic years according to our records. Two-year participants were those that attended the 2012-13 academic year and one previous year. Three-year participants were those that attended during the 2012-13 academic year and two previous years, and four-year participants attended all years between 2009-10 and 2012-13.

Comparisons are made between one-, two-, three-, and four-year participants on (a) student academic performance data, (c) school-day attendance, and (d) disciplinary infractions. The objective of this portion of the report was to examine whether students who attended an ASP for more years differed from those who attended fewer years in terms of overall performance (academic, attendance, and disciplinary behaviors). These comparisons were made using data from the 2012-13 academic year since they were the most recent data available and because all students in the sample had participated in an ASP during this academic year.

The subgroup of participants who participated in an ASP across all four academic years consisted of 195 individuals ("four-year participants"). Another 341 participants attended an ASP for three academic years ("three-year participants"), and 1606 participants attended an ASP for two academic years ("two-year participants"). Finally, 2,884 students attended an ASP only during the 2012-13 academic year ("one-year participants").

It is important to note that these analyses span two different cohorts of grantees. The number of grantees changed across time, with some grantees being funded during both cohorts and others only being funded during one of these cohorts. This resulted in differences in students' opportunities to attend a state-funded ASP in their district.

Table 2 (next page) displays participants' mean scores on the 2013 CMT and CAPT exams for Reading, Math, Writing, and Science. As a reminder, only students in 3rd through 8th grade took the CMT and only 10th graders took the CAPT. Scores on the CMT/CAPT Science were only available for 5th, 8th, and 10th graders.

Analyses indicated that although there was not a statistically significant difference between participants that attended one, two, three, or four years of ASP programming on any of the sections of the CMT/CAPT, there was a positive trend for Math, Writing, and Science. Scores on these sections of the CMT/CAPT were higher for participants attending multiple years when compared to those attending only during the 2012-13 academic year.

Also displayed in Table 2 is the average school day attendance rate for participants within each subgroup. There was a statistically significant difference between these scores, and a clear positive trend toward a higher attendance rate for each additional year of ASP attendance. These differences amount to an approximately 1 to 3 day difference in attendance out of a 180-day school year.

Finally, Table 2 displays the percent of students who had one or more disciplinary infractions and the average number of disciplinary infractions per student during the 2012-13 academic year. There was an overall trend in the positive direction with a lower percentage of students in the three- or four-year group having at least one disciplinary infraction when compared to those in the one- or two-year group. Additionally, many of these differences were statistically significant.³³ Although statistical comparisons could not be made on the average number of disciplinary infractions per student, the data suggest a positive trend. Examining only students who had at least one disciplinary infraction, the number of disciplinary infractions per student was lower for three- and four-year participants than one- or two-year participants.

³³ The following differences were statistically significant: one- vs. three-year participants (9.9% vs. 4.7%, $z=3.09$, $p=0.002$); two- vs. three-year participants (11.1% vs. 4.7%, $z=3.57$, $p<0.001$); two- vs. four-year participants (11.1% vs. 5.6%, $z=2.36$, $p=.018$).

Table 2. Performance Indicator Data by Number of Years Attending an ASP

Performance Indicator	1-Year	2-Year	3-Year	4-Year		
	<i>Mean (SD)</i>	<i>Mean (SD)</i>	<i>Mean (SD)</i>	<i>Mean (SD)</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig</i>
Academic Proficiency (Percent Proficient)						
Reading	2.96 (1.37)	2.94 (1.34)	2.95 (1.30)	2.92 (1.41)	.058	.981
Math	3.08 (1.27)	3.08 (1.23)	3.18 (1.28)	3.19 (1.22)	.573	.633
Writing	3.16 (1.16)	3.22 (1.12)	3.26 (.98)	3.30 (1.07)	1.213	.303
Science	2.90 (1.31)	2.79 (1.26)	3.02 (1.12)	3.25 (1.24)	2.332	.073
School Day Attendance	95.2 (.05)	95.6 (.04)	96.0 (.04)	96.8 (.03)	12.519	.000
Disciplinary Infractions (Percent of Students)	9.9	11.1	4.7	5.6		
Disciplinary Infractions (Number of Incidents Per Student)	2.4	2.6	1.6	1.8		

Section 5: Discussion

This report offers observations and recommendations based on the overall evaluation results. The results of this evaluation indicate that, during the 2012-13 school year, the operation of Connecticut's ASPs was consistent with the After School Grant Program's purpose: to provide K-12 students with high-quality out-of-school enrichment opportunities that complement school day learning.

Meeting Students' and Families' Needs: Serving the Target Population

Program Capacity and Participation across Age Groups

As in prior years, the majority of ASP sites appeared to succeed in serving the number of students they planned to serve and in encouraging their participants to attend regularly. As noted in Section 1 of this report, the average daily attendance (ADA) across all 55 sites was 76 percent, which exceeds the 60 percent target set by the CSDE. The percent of registered students attending their after school site at least 30 days was 63.3. Although programs collectively were successful in serving the number of participants they expected to serve, there was variability in the degree to which sites were able to recruit participants and encourage their regular attendance. Attendance patterns across sites clearly indicate differences according to the primary age group served at the site. Sites serving elementary or elementary and middle school students had higher rates on all three measures of participant attendance, whereas sites serving middle and high school students had lower rates. In addition to these site level findings, analysis of individual-level program attendance data indicated differences between older students and younger students. There were few older students participating in programs, and older students, on average, attended their ASPs at a lower rate. However, it is important to note that for some indicators of attendance, both middle and high school students' participation showed improvement.

These findings are consistent with those reported in previous years. The constancy of these results indicates that sites serving older participants face unique challenges, and they may benefit from technical assistance and quality advising directed at these challenges. Improvement from the 2010-11 and 2011-12 academic years does indicate that some sites are being successful in recruiting and retaining these older students. It may be informative for sites to have additional opportunities to share their successes with one another. Other possible strategies might include allowing middle and high school programs to have greater flexibility in how they reach the program dosage requirements for ASPs, perhaps by creating a separate grant competition for programs that target older students.

Considering the Needs of English Language Learner Students and Families

Data on the demographics of 2012-13 ASP participants indicate that English Language Learners and students speaking a language other than English at home were underrepresented among ASP participants (compared to the population in the districts where programs were located). This pattern is similar to findings from the 2010-11 and 2011-12 ASP evaluation, indicating this is a consistent finding. These findings warrant further consideration of the after school service needs of diverse Connecticut students and families, particularly those students and families whose first language is Spanish or another language besides English. There was growth in the racial/ethnic populations served during the 2012-13 academic year; the number of Asian, Black/African American, and Hispanic students attending an ASP increased.

Performance Indicators: How Are ASP Participants Doing?

Overall proficiency rates for reading, math, writing, and science are variable for ASP participants, with students sometimes achieving proficiency at similar rates as the general population of students in the districts where the ASPs are located and at other times showing either higher or lower levels of proficiency. High school students taking the CAPT had higher proficiency rates on all four components of the test when compared to students in ASP districts. In most cases their scores were much more similar to those of the general school population in

Connecticut than elementary or middle school students. These findings should be interpreted with caution due to the small number of older students who participated in ASPs and the difficulty sites have in recruiting and retaining these students. It is certainly possible that sites are having a positive effect on participants' academic achievement as they progress through school. It is also possible, however, that among older students, those who are already more academically competent and engaged are more likely to participate in ASPs.

Findings in regard to ASP participants' school attendance rates were very positive and promising. Participants had significantly higher attendance rates than students in ASP districts and students statewide.

The findings for ASP participants' school day behavior also are positive and promising. Participants showed a rate of disciplinary infractions considerably lower than students in ASP districts and more similar to that of students statewide. Participation in ASPs may have positive effects on students' in-school behavior, perhaps through increasing their connection to or engagement in their school. It is also possible, however, that ASPs tend to recruit and retain students who already have a low rate of infractions.

Multi-Year Participants

Although the differences did not reach statistical significance, ASP participants who attended multiple years of ASP programming appear to be performing at a higher level on the CMT/CAPT, particularly on the Math, Writing, and Science portions of the exam. Multi-year participants also had a higher school day attendance rate and had a lower incidence and a smaller number of disciplinary infractions. However, it cannot be determined whether multi-year participants' improved performance was due to their increased participation or these students are characteristically different from other participants who choose to not participate for more than one year. In order for such conclusions to be made, evaluation data that include baseline measures, more than one measurement point, and data from a comparison group of similar students are needed.