



Education Opportunities

This brief addresses the following areas:

- Additional descriptive data analysis regarding education opportunities and classroom experience in districts around the state
- District/charter system survey results regarding before/after school availability, any changes districts or charter systems would like to make regarding CTE and other educational opportunities, and any challenges they face doing so.

Variation in Education Opportunities and Classroom Experiences Across the State

Participation in CTE (measured by CTE completers) and AP courses (total courses divided by high school enrollment) varied between districts based upon district size, percent FRL and locale (urban/suburban vs. rural): small districts reported CTE completion at a higher rate than larger districts, but lower rates of AP courses. A similar pattern was noted for districts based upon FRL percentages (higher AP course rates, lower CTE completion rates in lower need districts, and the inverse in higher need districts). The most significant difference was between rural and urban/suburban districts and charter systems, with 8% of students being CTE completers in urban/suburban districts compared to 15% in rural districts, but only AP courses at a rate of 24% of students compared to 40% of students in urban/suburban districts.

In terms of classroom experience, class size and student-to-teacher ratios were lower in smaller districts, higher need districts and rural districts. At the same time, the highest need and smallest districts had: (1) a higher percentage of teachers new to the profession (novice teachers), (2) a lower percentage of teachers that were fully certified, (3) a lower percentage of teachers that had an advanced degree, and (4) fewer average years of teaching experience for teachers. Teacher salaries were also lower as need increased or size of district decreased. Comparing rural districts to urban/suburban districts, the education, certification, and experience of teachers were similar, but average salaries were very different, with an average teacher salary of \$44,992 in rural districts compared to \$52,149 in urban/suburban districts.

District Survey Responses

Extended learning time: based upon district and charter-system survey responses, districts are more likely to offer academic-focused vs. enrichment-based extended learning opportunities. About half of districts (49%) report having academic before/after school for most schools in their district and about a third of districts offered transportation for these programs in some of their schools. Looking at the percentage of districts that reported offering academic before/after school and summer school in most of their districts: higher need districts were more likely to offer both and larger districts were more likely to offer academic before/after school, but less likely to offer summer school. Districts, regardless of locale, offered before and

after school at a similar level, but rural districts were somewhat less likely to offer summer school.

CTE offerings: When asked if there were any changes that their district or charter system would like to make in the area of CTE, respondents reported the following:

Answer	%
Increase certifications	55%
Offer additional courses in current industry areas	52%
Increase participation	49%
Offer courses in other industry areas	34%
Provide CTE opportunities in earlier grades	34%
Have additional CTE courses at secondary career centers	33%
Access additional CTE courses through remote instruction	33%
Have additional CTE courses at postsecondary campuses	22%

The top challenges that respondents reported in making these changes included needing additional funding (65%), having specific technology (45%), equipment or materials (44%), having building capacity/needed facilities (41%), having schedule limitations, and finding staff certified to teach (40%).

District and charter system administrators were also asked if there were any additional educational opportunities they would like to offer their students (either expanding current opportunities or offering new opportunities). Respondents reported the following:

Answer	%
STEM courses	63%
Before/after school	57%
Computer science courses	55%
Concurrent enrollment courses	52%
Summer school	44%
Advanced courses (such as AP/IB)	26%

Less than a quarter of respondents also answered that they would like to offer additional arts courses (24%), additional courses through remote instruction (23%), additional foreign language courses (20%), or other electives (7%).

Challenges noted varied by change desired. For offering before/after school and summer school, the most frequently noted challenges were: providing transportation and needing additional funding (about $\frac{3}{4}$ of districts for each), as well as needing certified staff to teach (about $\frac{1}{3}$ of districts). Challenges related to STEM courses and computer science courses were similar including needing specific technology, equipment or materials, needing additional funding, having schedule limitations, having staff certified to teach and having building capacity/needed facilities (about 50-60% of districts reporting each). Districts also reported challenges related to offering concurrent enrollment opportunities such as additional funding, having schedule limitations, and having staff certified to teach (about 40-50% of districts reporting each).