

# EDUCATION

## School Enrollment Trends

Total elementary and secondary school enrollment in New Hampshire declined to 188,450 students for the 2022-2023 academic year, as demographic changes in the state continued to decrease the size of the school-aged population. Since the 2018-2019 academic year, total enrollment declined 3.8 percent, approximately 7,500 students.

While it did not affect trends in total enrollment, the coronavirus pandemic did affect what type of schools New Hampshire students attended. Public school enrollment declined 4.7 percent from 2019-2020 to 2020-2021, while nonpublic and homeschool enrollment increased.

Homeschool enrollment increased 80 percent during the 2020-2021 academic year, but enrollment declined in each of the next two years, returning to pre-pandemic levels by 2022-2023. Nonpublic enrollment continued to grow in 2022-2023, although growth slowed from 4.2 percent (700 students) in 2021-2022 to 1.5 percent (260 students) in 2022-2023.

Education Freedom Accounts, which offer grants to New Hampshire students enrolled in nonpublic schools, likely contributed to the increase in nonpublic school enrollment. These grants provided eligible students with an average of \$5,255 in the 2023-2024 academic year. The number of students

receiving these grants has increased every year since were first offered in 2021, reaching 4,200 students in 2023-2024.<sup>1</sup>

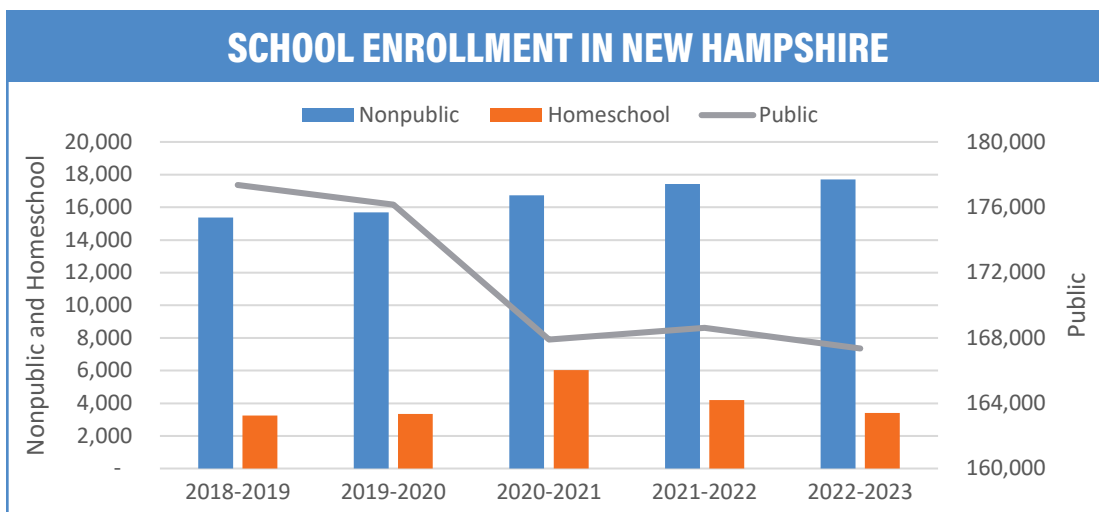
## Post-Pandemic SAT Scores Declined

New Hampshire high school students scored an average of 1034 on their SATs in during the 2022-2023 academic year, slightly above the U.S. average of 1028. New Hampshire students averaged 526 in evidence-based reading and writing, above the national average of 520, and 508 in math, equaling the national average. New Hampshire students scored slightly above average in evidence-based reading and writing every year since the 2018-19 academic year, while math scores have been essentially average over that time.

During the 2020-2021 academic year, SAT scores increased both in New Hampshire and nationwide. The increase was particularly large in evidence-based reading and writing, increasing nine points in New Hampshire and five nationwide. This increase was likely due to a 20 percentage point decline in the SAT participation rate during the coronavirus pandemic, both nationwide and in New Hampshire. It's likely that students who took the test that year were stronger academically and more likely to attend college than test takers in years with higher

participation rates.

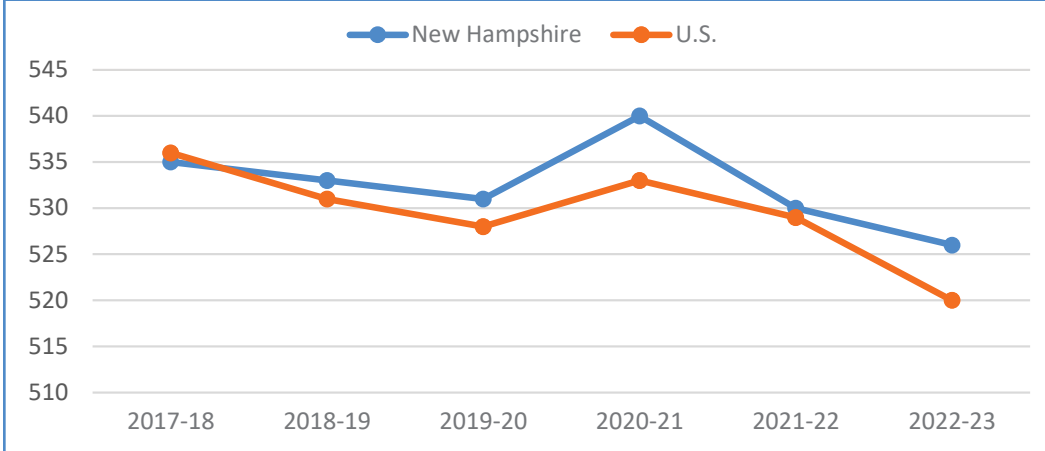
Participation rates increased during the 2021-2022 academic year, although they remained below pre-pandemic levels. SAT scores returned to pre-pandemic



Source: New Hampshire Department of Education

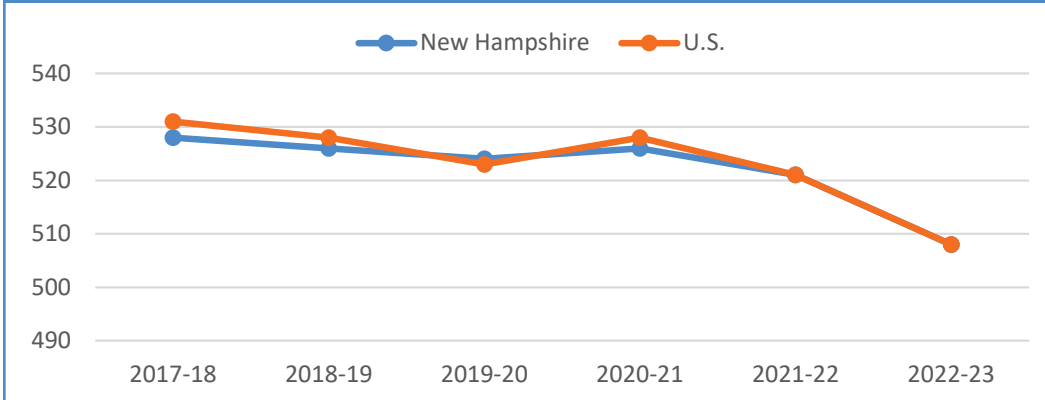
<sup>1</sup> New Hampshire Department of Education, "More than 4,000 students secure flexible learning options during third year of Education Freedom Accounts," October 19, 2023. <https://www.education.nh.gov/news-and-media/more-4000-students-secure-flexible-learning-options-during-third-year-education-freedom-accounts>.

### SAT EVIDENCE-BASED READING AND WRITING SCORES



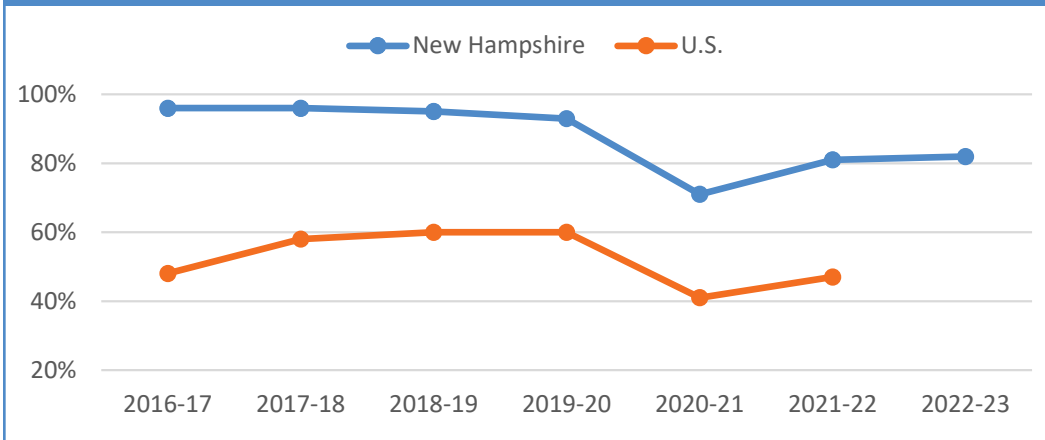
Source: National Center for Educational Statistics

### SAT MATH SCORES



Source: National Center for Educational Statistics

### PERCENTAGE OF HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS WHO TOOK THE SAT



Source: National Center for Educational Statistics

levels in 2021-2022, then declined again in 2022-2023, particularly in math, suggesting that students continued to face pandemic-related learning setbacks.<sup>2</sup>

## School Funding Lawsuits

In November 2023, rulings were issued in a pair of lawsuits that could have significant implications for the future of funding for New Hampshire's public school system. A judge in Rockingham County Superior Court ruled that the state is not meeting its obligation to provide students in the state with an adequate education.<sup>3</sup> The judge also ruled that the current iteration of the statewide education property tax (SWEPT) is unconstitutional. Both lawsuits will likely be appealed to the state Supreme Court.

Under the existing funding model, the state provides school districts with at least \$4,100 per student per year, with local funding (primarily property taxes) paying for additional school funding. During the 2021-2022 academic year, per capita cost per pupil was \$21,534, with state funding accounting for approximately 20 percent of total spending. The judge ruled that \$4,100 per student was inadequate; the state legislature is responsible for determining a new base adequacy rate, and which the judge ruled must be at least \$7,356 per student.

Approximately 40 percent of the state's contribution to school funding is raised by SWEPT. SWEPT is a property tax, and while it is technically a state tax, the tax is collected by municipalities. In some municipalities, mostly towns with high property values, money raised by SWEPT exceeds what the state would disburse to the local school district in adequate education grants. These towns are allowed to keep excess money raised by SWEPT. Under the judge's ruling, towns will no longer keep surplus funds, and will be required to deposit them in the state education trust fund, helping fund adequate education grants for towns that did not raise surplus SWEPT taxes.

If these rulings stand, education funding in New Hampshire will change substantially in the near future. The state's contribution to per capita education funding will increase by at least 80 percent, depending on how the state legislature determines the new per capita funding rate. The share paid by towns would likely decrease by a similar amount, at least overall, leaving total educational funding more or less the same. But changes to SWEPT would result in municipalities with high property values paying a larger share than they had in the past, and slightly decreasing the share paid by towns that did not raise surplus SWEPT funds.

– Greg David

<sup>2</sup> While the pandemic is the primary reason for a decline in the percentage of high school students taking the SAT, many colleges and universities have also stopped requiring standardized test scores for admission. Participation rates are unlikely to return to pre-pandemic levels.

<sup>3</sup> Ethan Dewitt, "In sweeping order, court holds NH school funding model is unconstitutionally low," New Hampshire Bulletin, November 20, 2023. <https://newhampshirebulletin.com/2023/11/20/in-sweeping-order-court-holds-nh-school-funding-model-is-unconstitutionally-low/>.

<b>FALL ENROLLMENTS, NEW HAMPSHIRE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS</b>	<b>2018-19</b>	<b>2019-20</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2021-22</b>	<b>2022-23</b>
Total public school enrollments (includes preschool)	177,365	176,168	167,909	168,620	167,357
Total nonpublic school enrollments	15,380	15,681	16,735	17,436	17,697
Total, all elementary and secondary enrollments	192,745	191,849	184,644	186,056	185,054
Annual percent change, all enrollments	-0.3%	-0.5%	-3.8%	0.8%	-0.5%
First grade enrollments, total public	12,351	12,501	11,675	11,754	12,099
First grade nonpublic enrollments	632	625	760	861	820
Total first grade enrollments	12,983	13,126	12,435	12,615	12,919
Annual percent change, first grade all enrollments	-2.7%	1.1%	-5.3%	1.4%	2.4%
Twelfth grade enrollments, total public	13,073	13,187	13,131	12,880	12,479
Twelfth grade nonpublic enrollments	1,919	2,005	1,995	1,923	1,964
Total twelfth grade enrollments	14,992	15,192	15,126	14,803	14,443
Annual percent change, twelfth grade all enrollments	-1.1%	1.3%	-0.4%	-2.1%	-2.4%

Source: New Hampshire Department of Education, ELMI Analysis. Last Update 10/23/2023

<b>SCHOLASTIC ASSESSMENT TEST</b>	<b>2018-19</b>	<b>2019-20</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2021-22</b>	<b>2022-23</b>
<b>SAT Scores of College-Bound Seniors<sup>a</sup></b>					
Evidence-Based Reading and Writing (formerly Critical Reading)					
New Hampshire	533	531	540	530	526
United States	531	528	533	529	520
Math					
New Hampshire	526	524	526	521	508
United States	528	523	528	521	508
Percent of high school graduates taking the SAT					
New Hampshire	95.0%	93.0%	71.0%	81.0%	82.0%
United States	60.0%	60.0%	41.0%	47.0%	

Source: The College Board and National Center for Educational Statistics. Last Update 10/23/2023

<sup>a</sup> Reflects mean score for all graduates from an academic year who took the SAT at any point during high school. If a student took the SAT more than once, only the most recent result is included in mean score.

<b>GRADUATES, NEW HAMPSHIRE PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND PUBLIC ACADEMIES</b>	<b>2018-19</b>	<b>2019-20</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2021-22</b>	<b>2022-23</b>
Total number of graduates (standard and non-standard diplomas, and GED)	13,301	13,179	12,951	12,729	12,792
Annual percent change	-1.6%	-0.9%	-1.7%	-1.7%	0.5%

Postsecondary Intentions of Graduates					
Entering a four-year college or university	52.3%	50.8%	51.8%	49.4%	49.6%
Entering a postsecondary instruction other than four-year	19.9%	20.2%	16.4%	16.0%	15.6%
Not entering a postsecondary institution:					
Enlisting in the Armed Forces	3.3%	3.0%	2.7%	2.3%	1.8%
Employment	17.9%	17.9%	18.3%	20.9%	24.2%
All other	6.7%	8.1%	10.9%	11.4%	8.7%

Source: New Hampshire Department of Education, ELMI Analysis. Last Update 10/23/2023

<b>NEW HAMPSHIRE SCHOOL DISTRICT EXPENDITURES AND REVENUE</b>	<b>2018-19</b>	<b>2019-20</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2021-22</b>	<b>2022-23</b>
Current operating expenses, elementary and secondary schools <sup>b</sup> (\$ millions of current dollars)	\$3,004.3	\$3,054.0	\$3,181.3	\$3,356.0	\$3,494.7
Annual percent change	2.4%	1.7%	4.2%	5.5%	4.1%
Average daily membership, public elementary and secondary schools	165,130	163,597	156,081	155,847	154,089
Annual percent change	-0.7%	-0.9%	-4.6%	-0.1%	-1.1%
Cost per pupil, current operating expenses <sup>b</sup> (current dollars)	\$18,194.00	\$18,668.00	\$20,383.00	\$21,534.00	\$22,680.00
Annual percent change	3.1%	2.6%	9.2%	5.6%	5.3%

Average salary of teachers, public elementary and secondary schools (in current dollars)	\$59,198	\$59,624	\$61,849	\$62,695	\$63,926
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Total net revenue (\$ millions of current dollars)	\$3,239.5	\$3,355.5	\$3,539.4	\$3,640.1	\$3,802.1
Annual percent change	2.3%	3.6%	5.5%	2.8%	4.5%

Percent of total school district revenues from:					
State funds	31.2%	31.4%	30.9%	29.4%	28.3%
Local and other funds	63.7%	63.8%	62.0%	61.7%	62.9%
Federal funds	5.1%	4.8%	7.1%	8.9%	8.7%

<sup>b</sup> Includes tuition and transportation

Source: New Hampshire Department of Education, ELMI Analysis. Last Update 1/8/2024

NEW HAMPSHIRE POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Fall enrollments, public and private degree-granting institutions (students age 18 years and over)	149,184	160,750	169,412	188,447	198,460
By attendance status:					
Full-time students	68,251	72,697	75,319	81,827	83,616
Part-time students	80,933	88,046	94,019	106,620	114,844
By gender:					
Male	57,797	61,200	64,105	71,305	75,129
Female	91,387	99,543	105,233	117,142	123,331
Degrees conferred by public and private degree-granting institutions in NH					
Degree Awarded: <sup>c</sup>	31,389	33,554	33,990	39,283	
Associate's degrees	4,190	4,566	5,077	5,087	
Bachelor's degrees	17,198	19,005	20,273	23,335	
Graduate degrees, including doctorates	10,001	9,982	8,640	10,861	
By selected academic majors, Associate's and higher degrees: <sup>c</sup>					
Biological and Biomedical Sciences	630	644	674	715	721
Business, Management, Marketing, and Support	8,979	9,869	9,744	12,008	12,559
Communication and Journalism	926	920	990	1,022	1,021
Computer and Information Sciences and Support Services	2,053	1,703	1,819	2,628	3,327
Education	1,505	1,468	1,289	1,315	1,416
Engineering and Engineering Technologies	975	992	939	859	823
English Language and Literature	1,397	1,403	1,312	1,478	1,485
Health Professions and Clinical Sciences	4,253	4,944	5,188	5,697	5,804
Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies and Humanities	2,023	2,188	2,480	2,650	2,649
Natural Resources and Conservation	444	555	636	612	661
Parks, Recreation, Leisure and Fitness Studies	630	628	534	564	594
Psychology	2,107	2,242	2,373	2,945	3,439
Security and Protective Services	1,053	1,327	1,376	1,774	1,972
Social Sciences	1,118	1,208	1,125	1,217	1,137
Visual and Performing Arts	684	759	884	913	1,076
<sup>c</sup> Data exclude awards for second majors, awards for postsecondary study of less than two years, and post-baccalaureate and post-master's certificates.					
Source: National Center for Educational Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System. Last Update 1/8/2024					
Prepared by: New Hampshire Employment Security, Economic and Labor Market Information Bureau					
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