

Measures of Schools and Students in White Mountains Regional School District

September 2024

Inequitable education funding in New Hampshire impacts reach beyond the taxpayer. Students' educational experiences can be drastically different all over the state. This paper presents information about the students in the White Mountains Regional School District and how they compare to the rest of the state.

Students and Student Characteristics

White Mountains Regional School District directly operates Lancaster Elementary School, Whitefield Elementary School, and White Mountains Regional High School. This district serves students from Preschool through the 12th grade.

Table 1 shows enrollment in October of the 2023-24 school year by grade, including postgraduate students, of which White Mountains Regional had one.

Table 1

White Mountains Regional Schools	Pre	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	PG	Totals
Lancaster Elementary School	28	27	34	41	36	38	26	40	34	47	0	0	0	0	0	351
White Mountains Regional High School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	111	77	99	71	1	359
Whitefield Elementary School	11	32	23	33	32	23	26	23	30	27	0	0	0	0	0	260

Table 2

	American Indian or Alaskan	Asian or Pacific Islander	Hispanic	Black Non-Hispanic	White Non-Hispanic	Multi Race	Total
White Mountains	0	11	28	2	893	36	970
Percentage	0.0%	1.1%	2.9%	0.2%	92.1%	3.7%	100.0%
State Total	306	5,117	14,242	3,400	135,903	6,034	165,002
Percentage	0.2%	3.1%	8.6%	2.1%	82.4%	3.7%	100.0%

Table 2 displays racial enrollments for students at White Mountains Regional as of October 2023.¹ There is less racial diversity among White Mountains Regional students than there is statewide. Only 8% of White Mountains Regional students are not white compared to 18% statewide.

¹ The totals in tables 1 and 2 differ but are what were reported by the NH Department of Education.

Of the 970 White Mountains Regional students in the 2023-24 school year, 225 were eligible for free/reduced lunch based on their family income being below the Federal Poverty Level. While 24.1% of students statewide were eligible, 23% of the students at White Mountains Regional were eligible.

Also in the 2022-23 school year, 112 students received special education services with an Individual Education Plan (IEP). This was 11% % of the 970 students, fewer than the statewide average of 19.7%.

Only 3 students were not native English speakers in 2023-24.

How Have Student Numbers Changed Over Recent Years in White Mountains Regional?

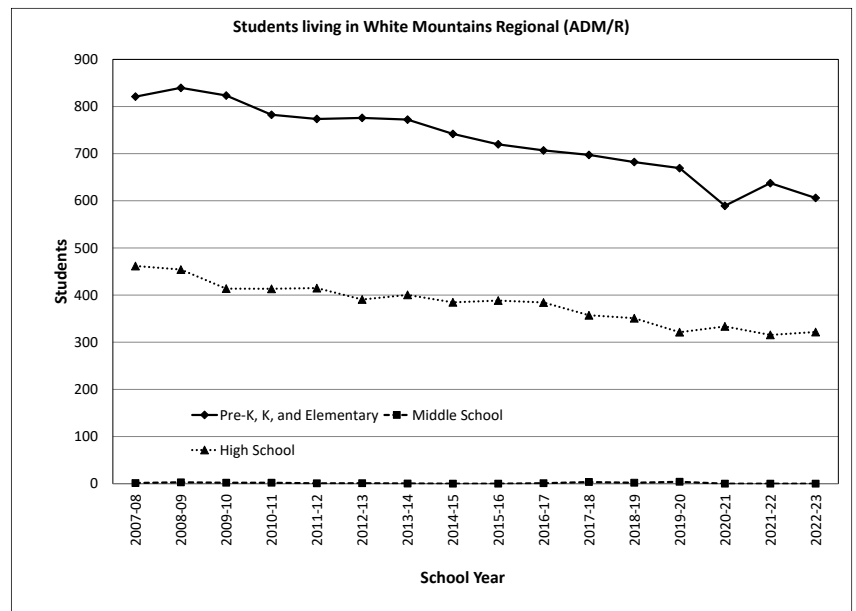
Average Daily Membership in Residence (ADM/R) is one way enrollment is measured. It measures the number of public school students living in the district over the school year.

ADM/R has been in slow decline in New Hampshire in recent years, attributable to declining birth rates.

Between 2007-08 and 2022-23 students at White Mountains declined from 1,283 in 2008 to 927 in 2023, a 27.7% decline.

White Mountains Regional students in grades 6 through 8 attend one of the elementary schools, not a separate middle school. For that reason, Figure 1 shows no middle school students but includes them in the elementary school data.

Figure 1



What Sports Have Been Available to White Mountains Students?

Sports in NH High Schools 2021

Coed Unified Soccer
Girls Volleyball
Boys Volleyball
Girls Ice Hockey
Boys & Girls Nordic Skiing
Ski Jumping
Girls Gymnastics
Boys Wrestling
Ten-Pin Bowling
Unified Track
Boys Ice Hockey
Bass Fishing
Boys & Girls Cross Country
Field Hockey
Football
Boys & Girls Golf
Boys Soccer
Girls Soccer
Spirit
Boys Basketball
Girls Basketball
Boys & Girls Indoor Track
Boys & Girls Alpine Skiing
Swimming & Diving
Unified Basketball
Baseball
Softball
Boys Lacrosse
Girls Lacrosse
Outdoor Track
Girls Tennis
Boys Tennis
Unified Volleyball

The New Hampshire Interscholastic Athletic Association (NHIAA) organizes high school sports competitions in New Hampshire. Of the 33 sports listed by NHIAA for the school year 2019-20, 18 were available to students at White Mountains. The sports that were NOT available at White Mountains Regional High School were: Football, Coed Unified Soccer, Girls Volleyball, Boys Volleyball, Boys Ice Hockey, Ski Jumping, Swimming and Diving, Girls Gymnastics, Ten Pin Bowling, Boys Lacrosse, Girls Lacrosse, Unified Track, and Unified Volleyball.

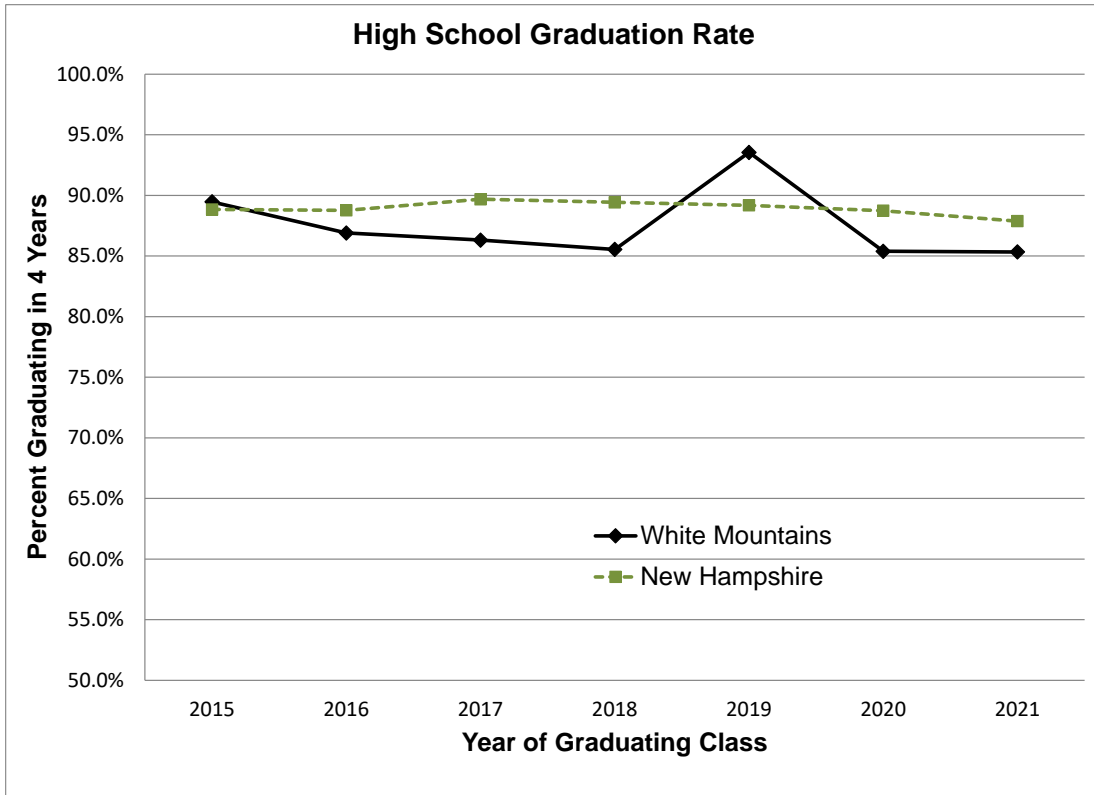
The number of sports available is strongly related to enrollment at a high school. Interscholastic sports available at any high school in any particular year will depend, of course, on the availability of coaches and whether enough students sign up.

What Has Been the High School Graduation Rate?

White Mountains Regional graduated 538 students in graduating classes from 2015 through 2021. The graduation rate over those seven years averaged 87.6%. This was slightly below the state average of 88.9%.

Ranking the 81 public high schools in New Hampshire with the highest graduation rate as (1) and the high school with the lowest graduation rate as (81), White Mountains ranked 52.

Figure 3



How Well Have White Mountains Students Done on the Annual SAT Exam?

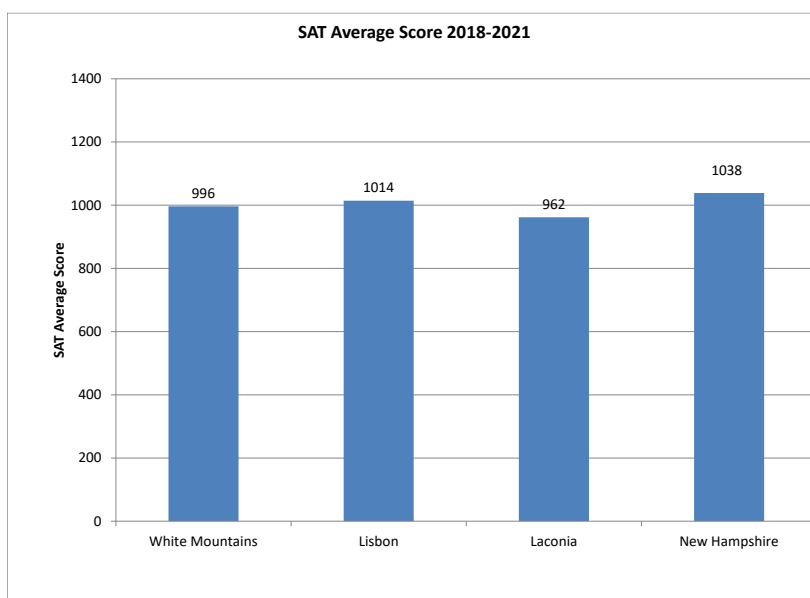
The standardized exam used by New Hampshire to measure student achievement in high school is the SAT of the College Board. There are two parts: Mathematics and Evidence-Based Reading and Writing. The possible range of combined scores is 400 to 1600.

Over the four years from 2018 through 2021, 306 White Mountain students took the SAT exams in the spring of their junior year. The average score of those students was 996 while the New Hampshire average was 1038.

Ranking the 79 public high schools for which data were available, the school with the highest average score as (1) and the lowest as (79), White Mountains ranked 53.

There were 337 students enrolled as juniors at White Mountains over the four years. As a percentage of enrollment, 9.2% of juniors were not tested, much better than the 12.2% statewide.

Figure 4



What Courses are Available for White Mountain Students?

Course availability is an important measure of a student’s educational opportunity. The Course of Studies documents for 2021-22 were collected from our public high schools. Counts of courses available in each subject area were compiled. Table 7 shows that White Mountains offers similar courses in all subject areas except for World Language as the average public high school in New Hampshire.

Table 7

	World Languages	Advanced Placement	English Electives	Math courses	Social Study Electives	Computer Technologies	Career Tech	Arts / Performing Arts	Science Elective
White Mountains	4	11	8	12	9	0	48	16	14
State Average	14	9	11	17	10	6	26	23	13

The availability of courses is tied to several factors. The size of a school plays a large role. Larger schools have economies of scale, more teachers, and a student population with more diverse interests. Other factors include transportation and teacher licensure.

What Have Advanced Placement Results Been at White Mountains Regional?

The College Board offers Advanced Placement (AP) exams in 38 subjects every May. The exams are the culmination of students' participation in Advanced Placement courses in their high school. Those courses follow a standard syllabus and use nationally standard materials. There is no requirement for New Hampshire high schools to offer any AP courses, or for students to take an AP course. Those who do take an AP course do not have to take the exam at the end of the year.

One purpose of the AP courses and their exams is to allow students to get college credit in advance of entering college, thus potentially skipping certain introductory college courses. Among students who desire to attend a four-year college after graduation, there is considerable incentive to take AP courses and their associated exams.

The College Board grades each test on a scale from 1 to 5. Most colleges grant advanced credit to students whose score is a 3, 4, or 5. A few highly selective colleges may not accept scores of 3 or 4.

Table 8 lists the results of AP tests over the four years 2018-2021.

Table 8

	3 Year Exam Takers	3 Year Exams	3 Year Scores of 3,4, or 5	Takers as % of Enrollment	Exams per Taker	Scored 3+ as % of Exams	Scored 3+ per 100 enrollment
White Mountains	171	321	153	16.1%	1.88	47.66%	14.41
State	22,966	36,355	25,108	10.62%	1.58	69.06%	11.61

White Mountains students were more likely to take AP tests but less likely to be successful in the exams than the statewide averages. During this period 16.1% of White Mountains students took at least one AP test, higher than the statewide average of 10.6%. Of the AP exams taken, 47.66% resulted in a score of 3-5, lower than the statewide average of 69.1%.

How Likely Are Students from White Mountains Regional to Apply, Earn Admittance, and Enroll at The University of New Hampshire?

The University of New Hampshire (UNH) is the flagship of New Hampshire's public higher education institutions. It is very common for seniors who are considering attending college to apply to UNH.

The UNH Admissions Office provided counts of applications, admissions, and enrollments from each New Hampshire public high school for freshman years 2017 through 2021. By aggregating data over five years, the need to suppress small numbers was greatly reduced, and year-to-year variations were smoothed, especially for smaller high schools. For comparisons among high schools of greatly varying sizes, senior year enrollments are used as the base for calculating what percentage of a school’s students have applied, been admitted, and finally enrolled at UNH.

Students who plan to attend college after graduating from high school often apply to as many as 8 to 10 colleges. Thus, even when accepted to UNH, a vast majority of students will choose to go elsewhere, and a much smaller number will enroll. Understanding this, UNH (and other colleges and universities) offer admission to many more applicants than they could accept.

On average over the five years 2017-2021, 28.8% of senior-year students of New Hampshire’s public schools applied for admission to UNH. Of White Mountains’ 416 seniors, 81 (19.5%) applied to UNH. Statewide 24.4% of the high school seniors were admitted and 7.5% chose to enroll at UNH after high school. Among the 81 White Mountain seniors 82.7% were admitted to UNH and 4.6% did enroll, slightly below state averages in both instances.

Table 9

	2017-2021 UNH Applications	2017-2021 UNH Admissions	2017-2021 UNH Enrollment	Applications as % of Enrollment	Admissions as % of Applications	Enrollment as % of 5 Year Senior Enrollment
White Mountains	81	67	19	19.5%	82.7%	4.6%
State	18,455	15,653	5,101	27.1%	83.9%	7.5%

As seen, student opportunities and experiences are vastly different around the state.

Note: Data used in this report are taken from reports, spreadsheets, and websites of the NH Department of Education, the University of New Hampshire, the College Board, and the New Hampshire Interscholastic Athletic Association. Graduation requirements and number of courses offered were collected from Programs of Study from 79 of the 81 New Hampshire public high schools.