



**Mohammed Choudhury**  
State Superintendent of Schools

---

**TO:** Members of the State Board of Education  
**FROM:** Mohammed Choudhury  
**DATE:** September 28, 2021  
**SUBJECT:** Spotlight on Economically Disadvantaged

---

**PURPOSE:**

To update the State Board on the Economically Disadvantaged student group in Maryland.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

The eligibility for Free and Reduced Meals (FARMs) has been a student group in Maryland since 2001. With the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Maryland implemented a new Economically Disadvantaged student group. Topics presented at the Board meeting will include outcome data for the FARMs and Economically Disadvantaged student group, Community Eligibility Provision, and State initiatives to support Economically Disadvantaged students.

**ACTION:**

No action is necessary; for discussion only.

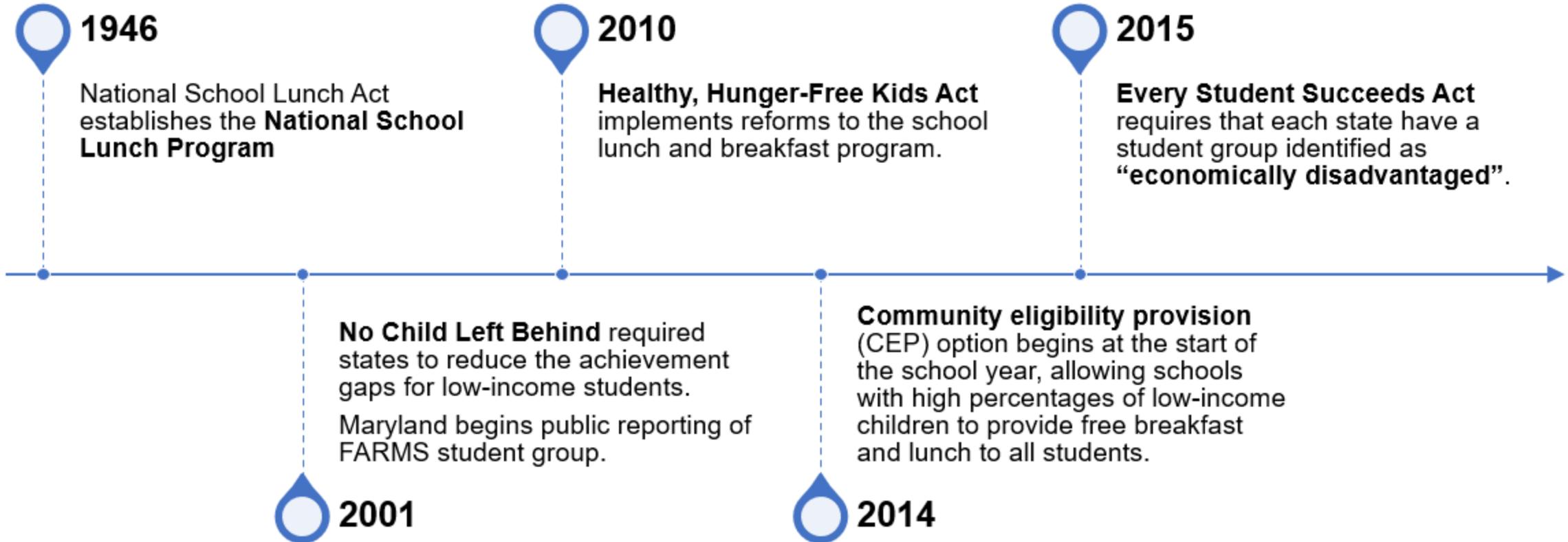


# Spotlight on Economically Disadvantaged Students

Maryland State Board of Education

September 28, 2021

# History of Economically Disadvantaged Student Group



- Free and Reduced Price Meals
- Community Eligibility Program
- Economically Disadvantaged
- Statewide Initiatives

# How are students determined eligible for free or reduced meals (FARMs)?



The U.S. Department of Agriculture makes annual adjustments to the Income Eligibility Guidelines used to determine eligibility for free or reduced-price meals based on the federal income poverty guidelines.

## A Family of Four

Federal Poverty Line - \$26,500

Free Lunch - \$34,450

Reduced Lunch - \$49,025

Students are determined as eligible for free or reduced price meals through:

### **Annual household applications**

Annual forms collect information from families on household size and family income.

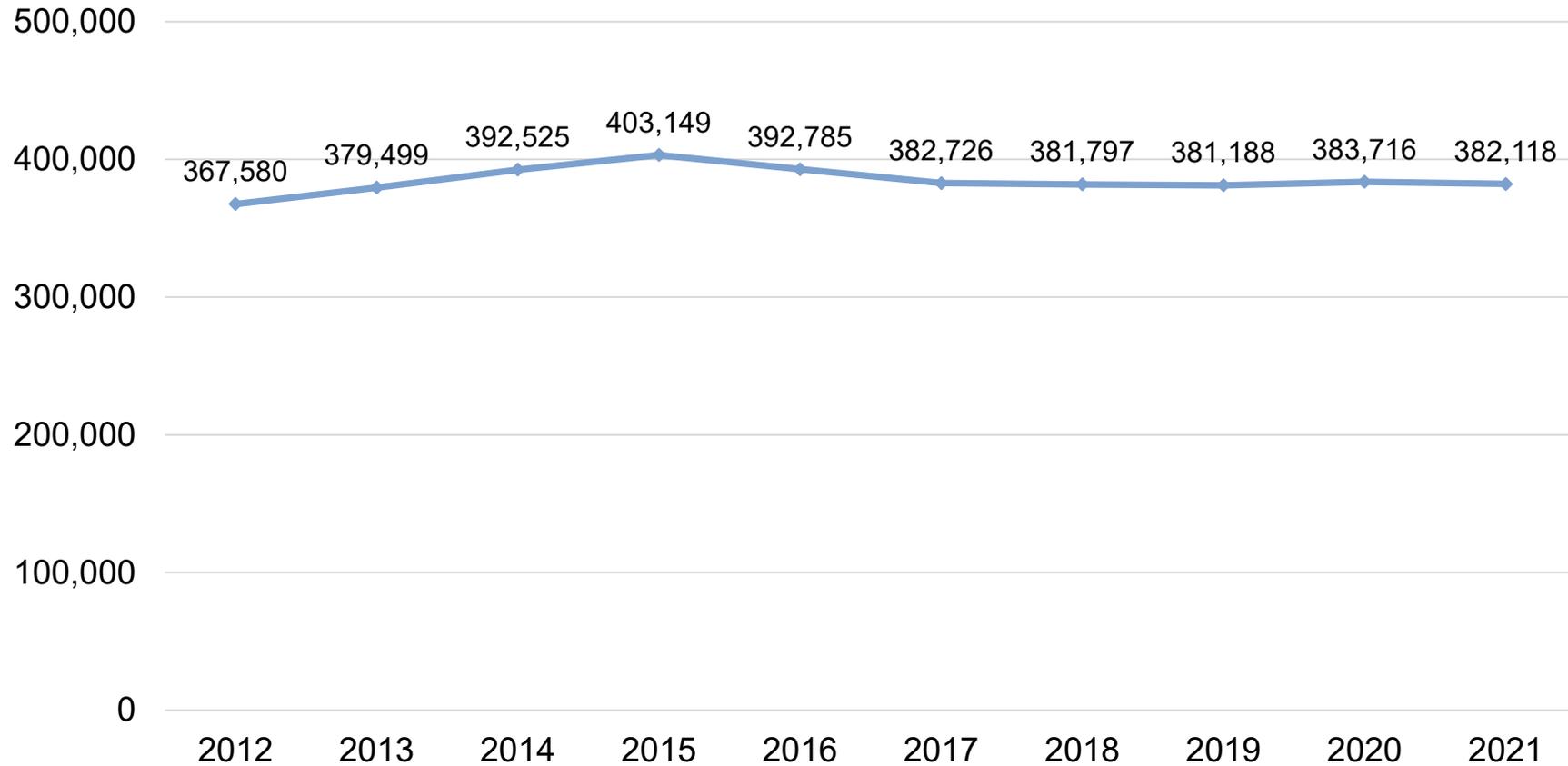
### **Direct Certification**

Eligible students are identified based on participation in programs such as the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), SNAP (Food Stamps), Foster Care, or status as a homeless student.

# Maryland's FARMs Student Group Trend



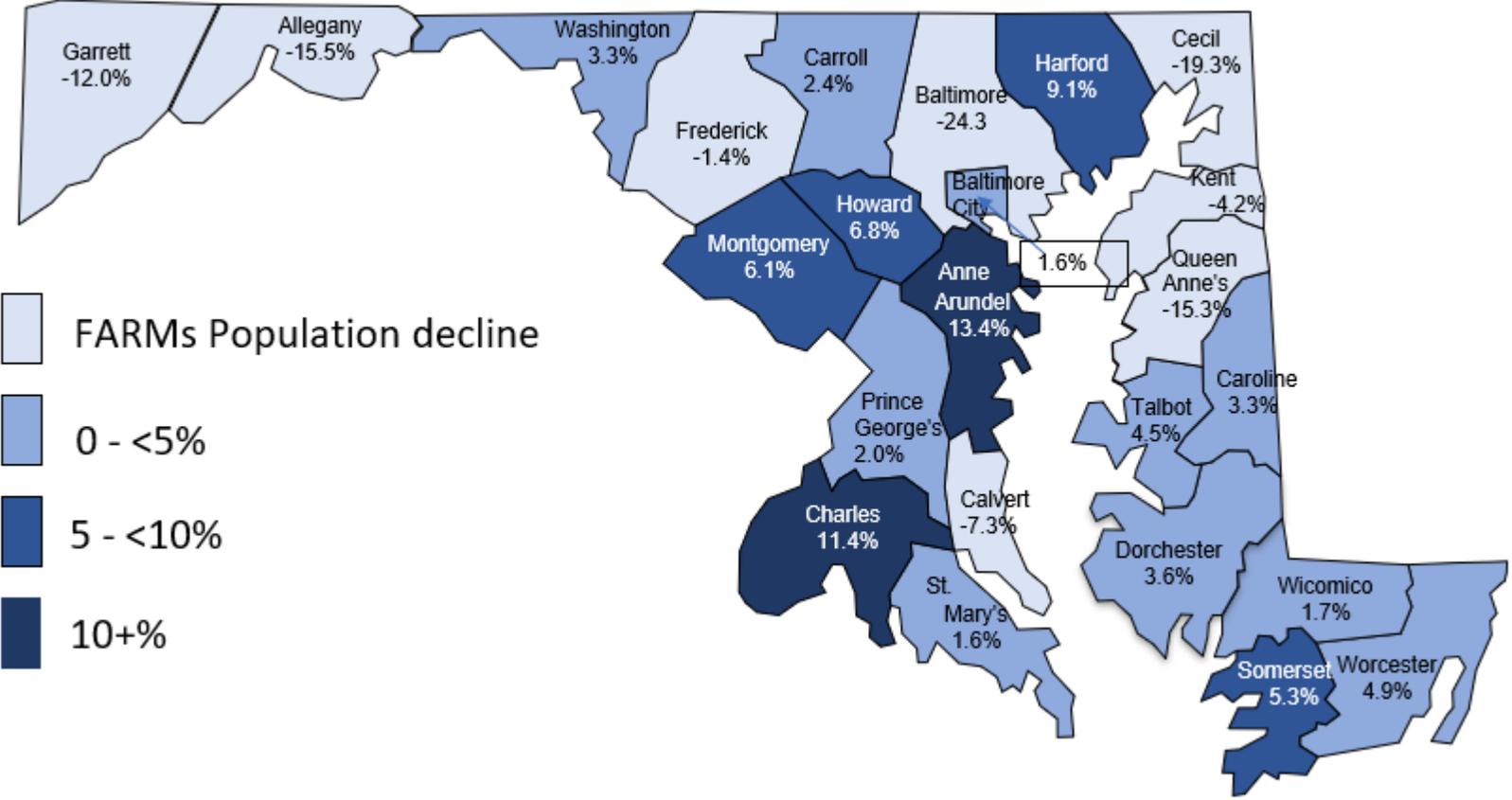
## Ten year trend of students eligible for FARMs



Year	Percent
2015-2016	44.5%
2016-2017	43.0%
2017-2018	42.6%
2018-2019	42.3%
2019-2020	42.1%
2020-2021	43.5%

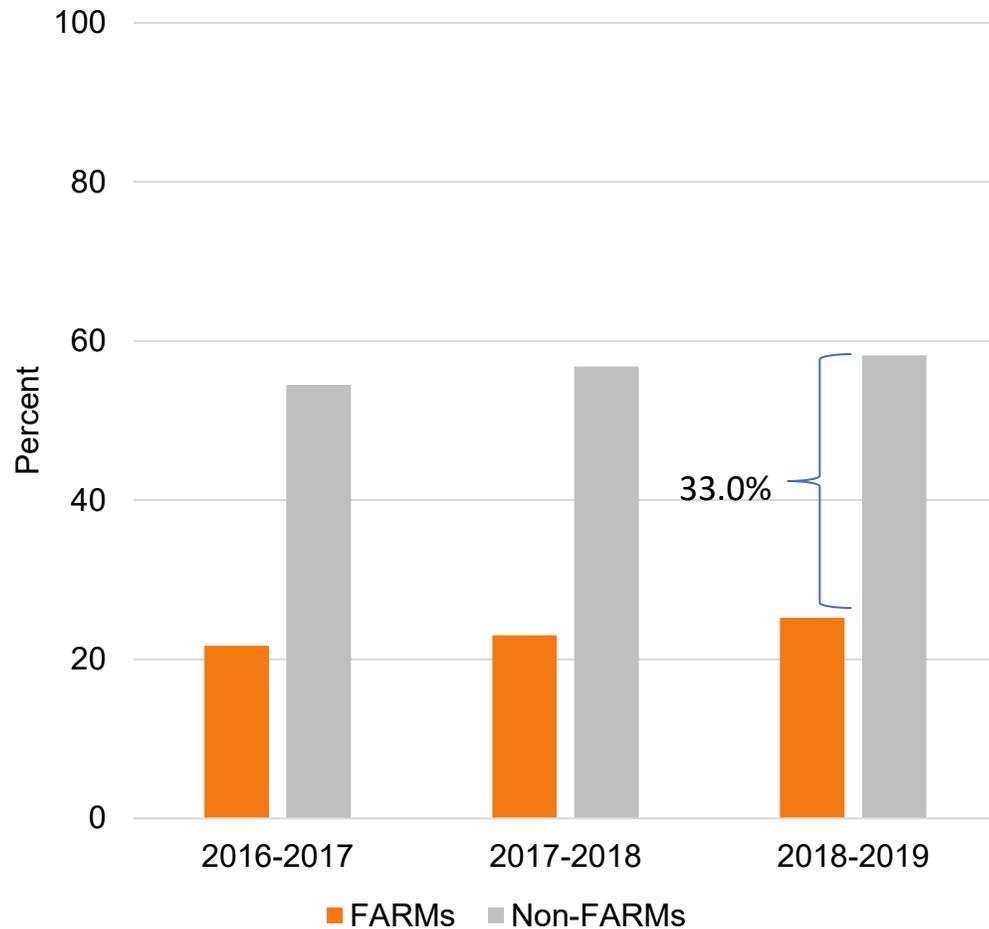
# What is the change in the FARMs population over the last 5 years?

## Percent change of students eligible for FARMs by Local School System

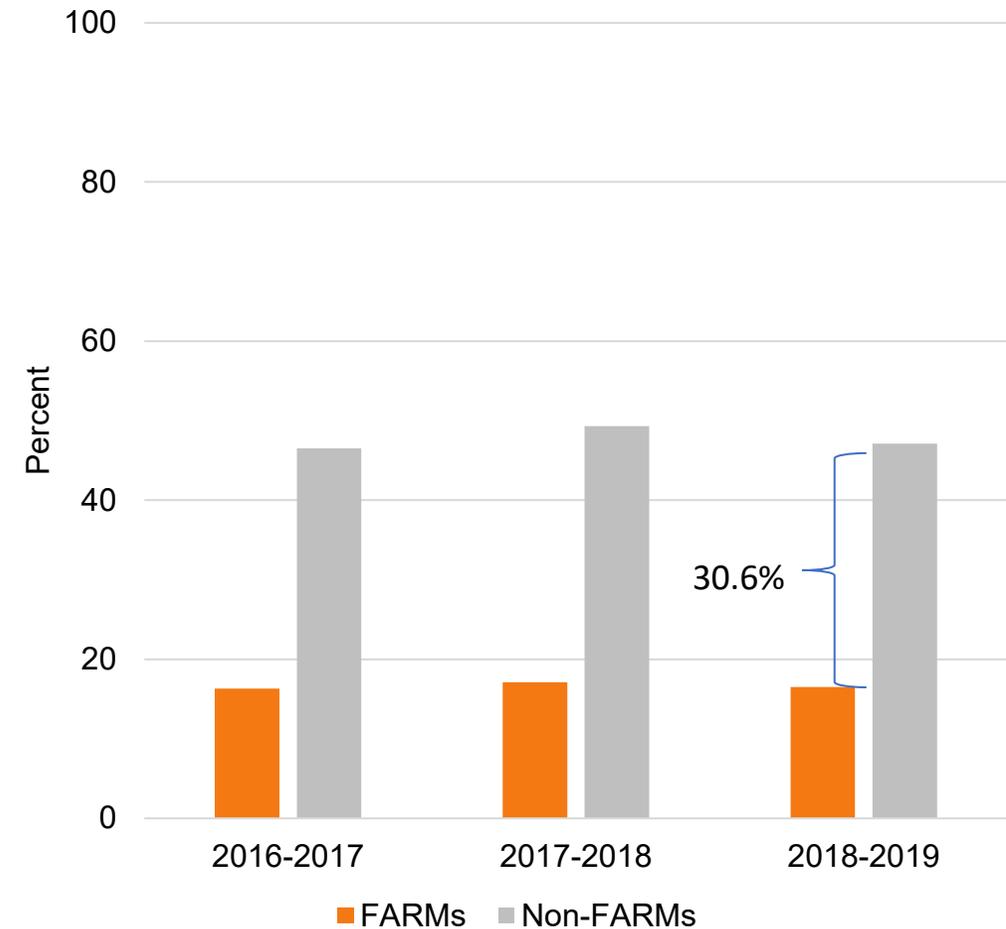


# How do students eligible for FARMs perform on grade 3-8 state assessments?

## English Language Arts Grade 3-8

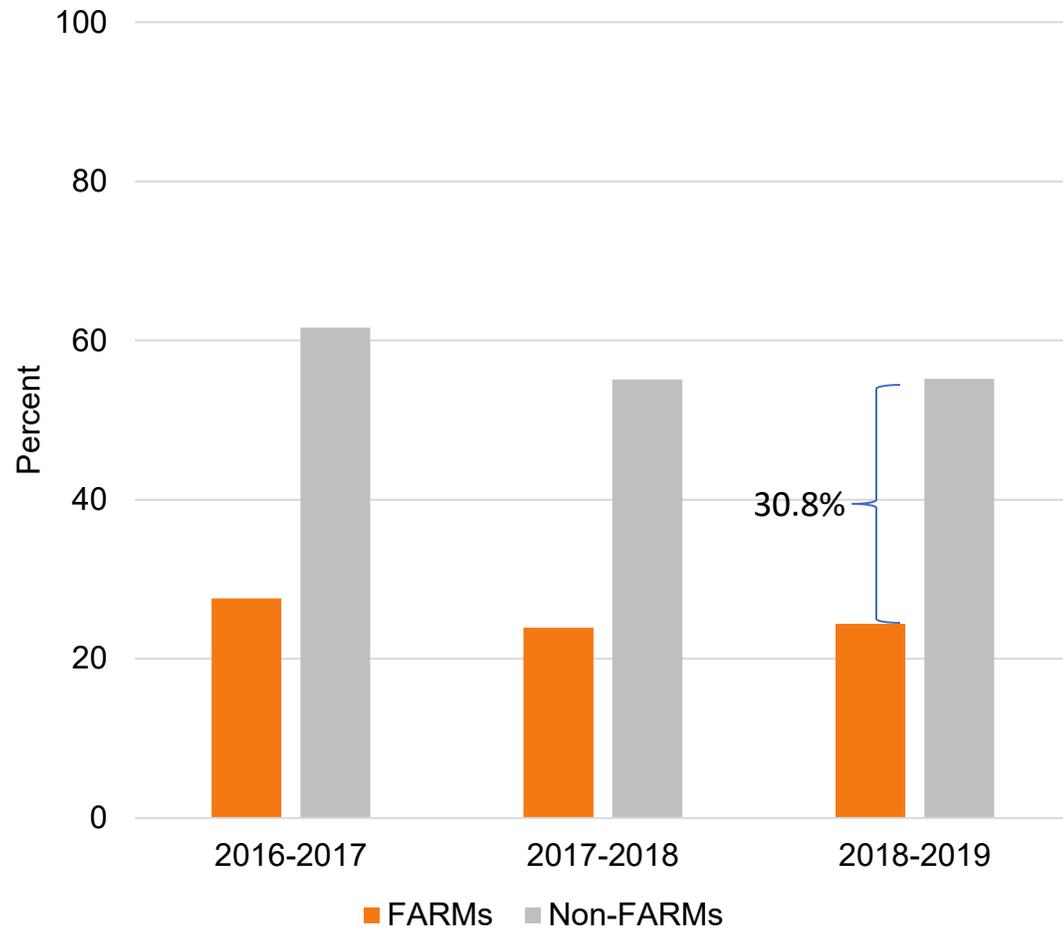


## Mathematics Grade 3-8

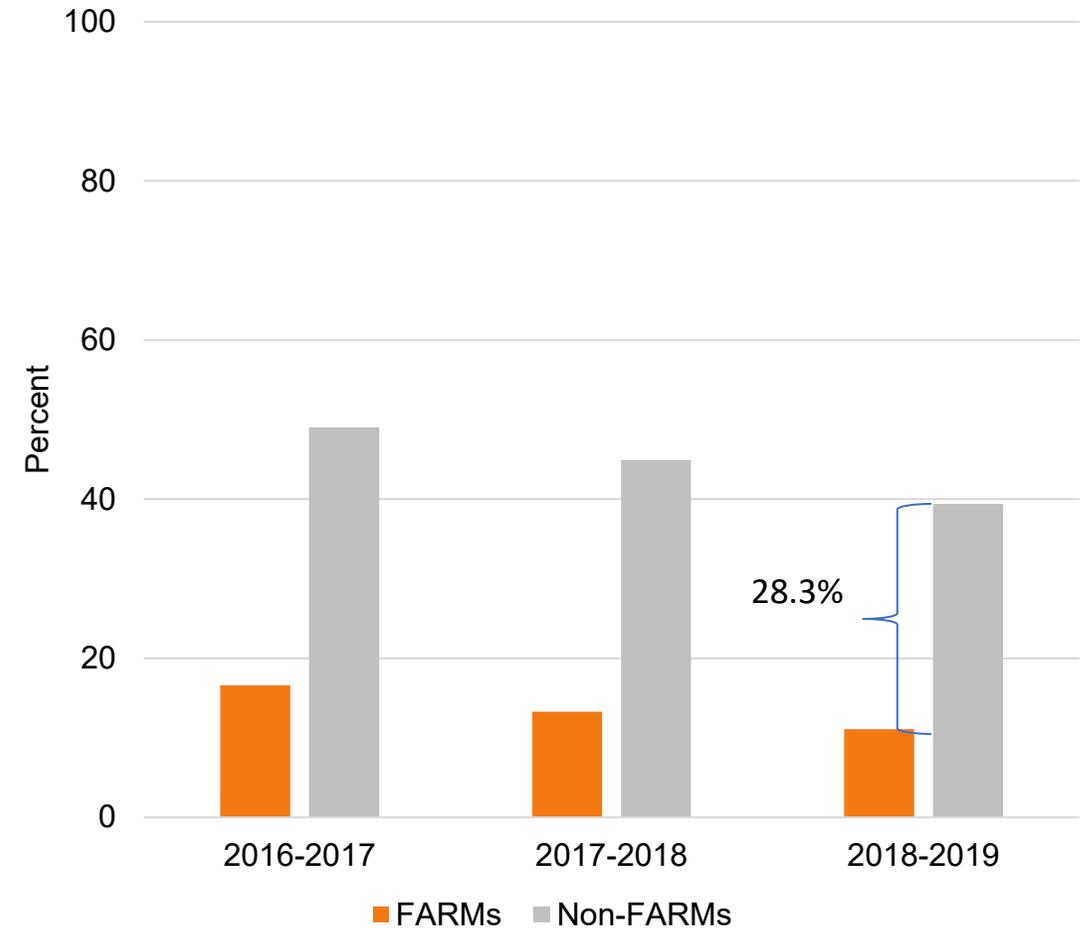


# How do students eligible for FARMs perform on high school state assessments?

## English 10



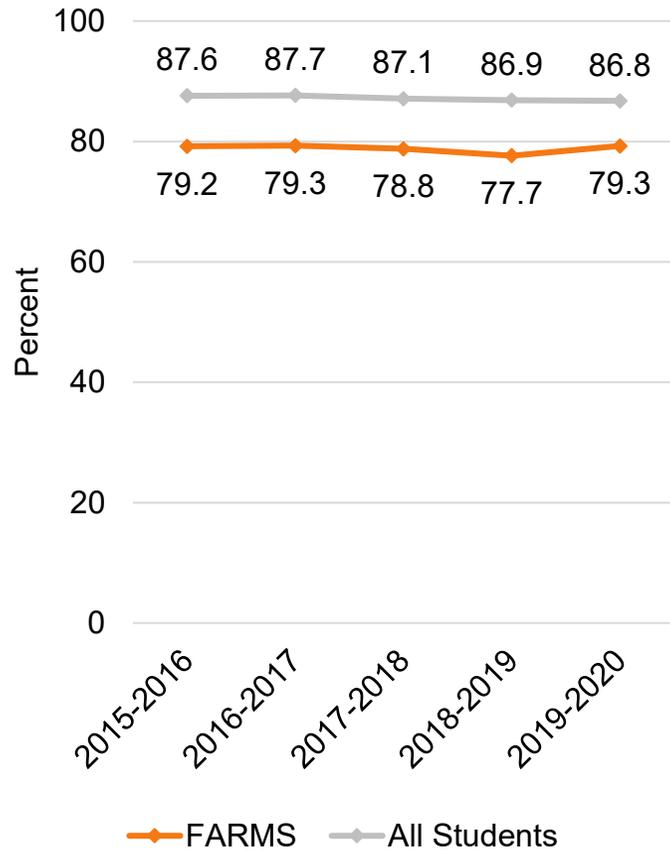
## Algebra 1



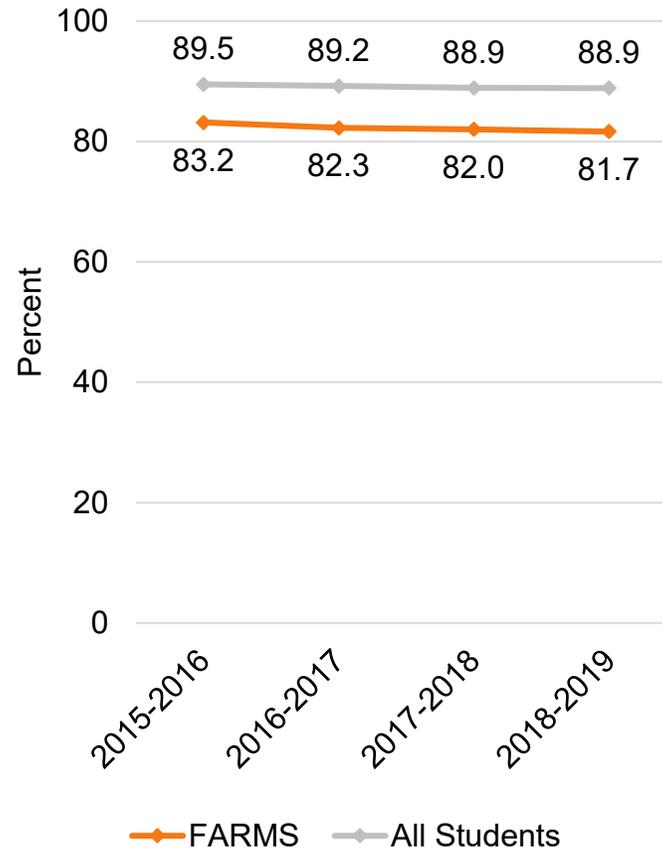
# Cohort Graduation & Dropout Rates



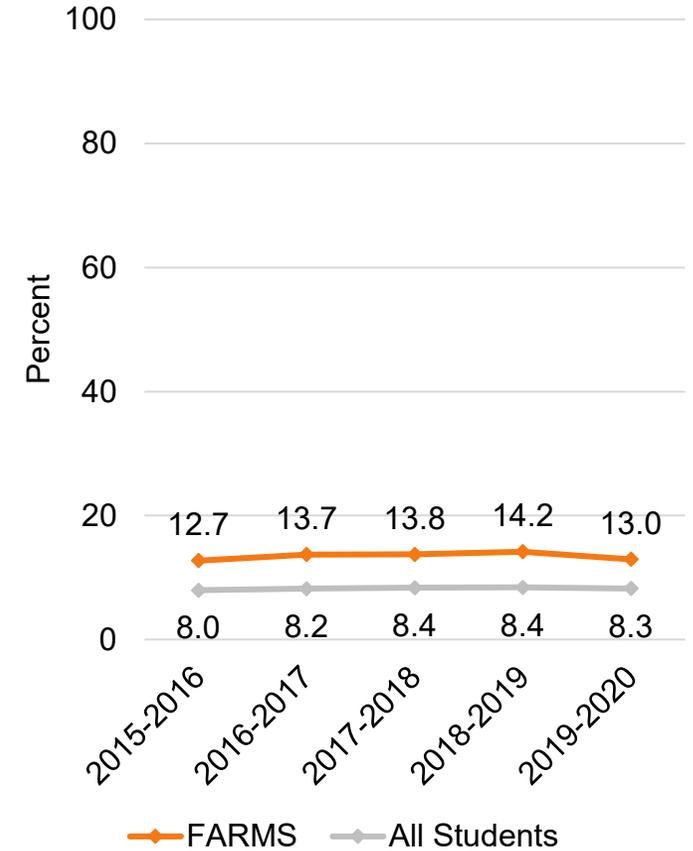
### 4-year Cohort Graduation Rate



### 5-year Cohort Graduation Rate

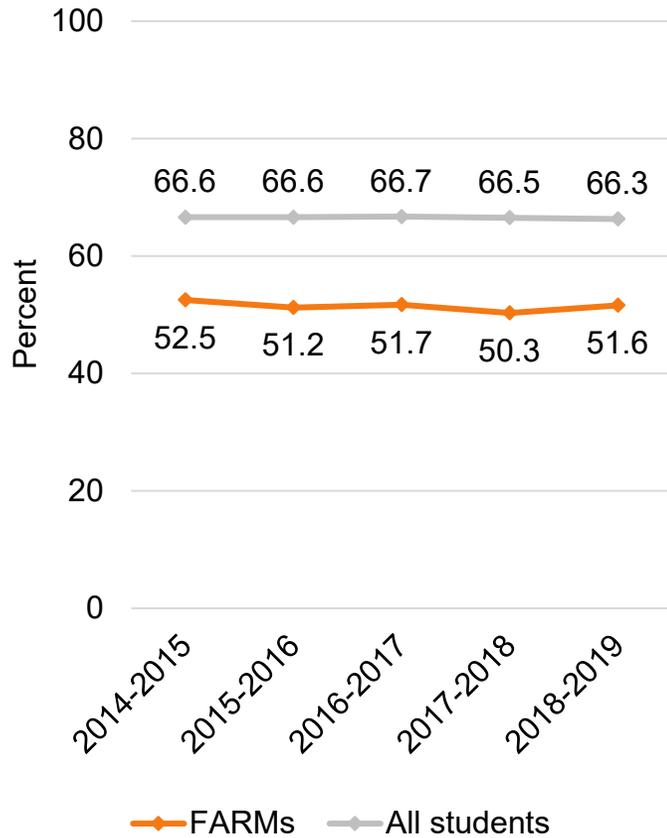


### Dropout Rate

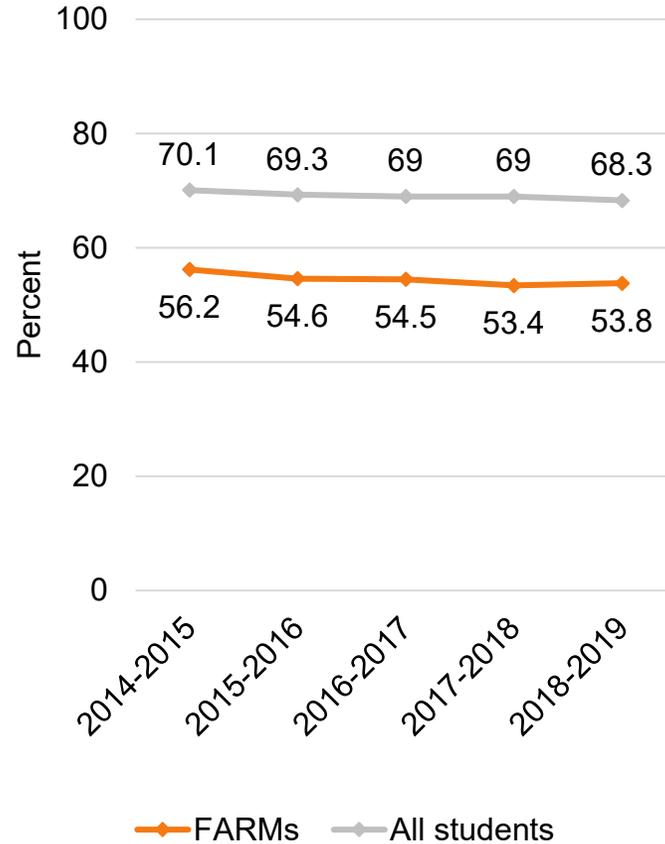


# College Enrollment

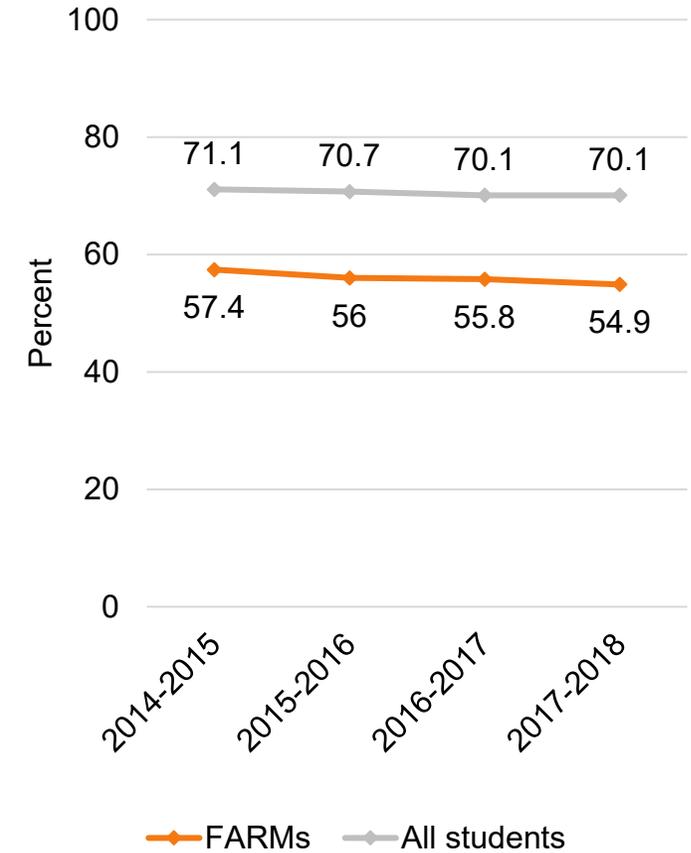
## 12 Month College Enrollment



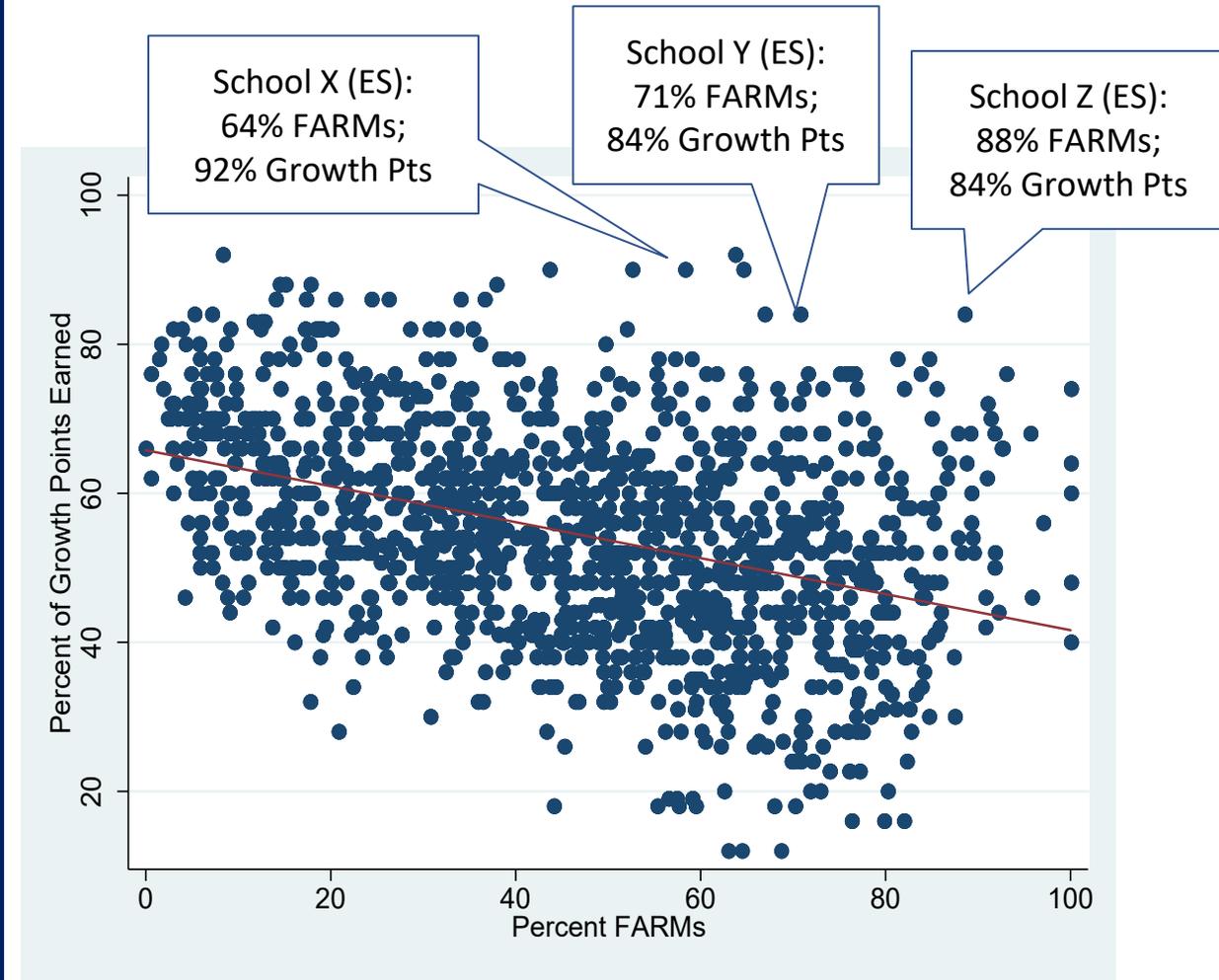
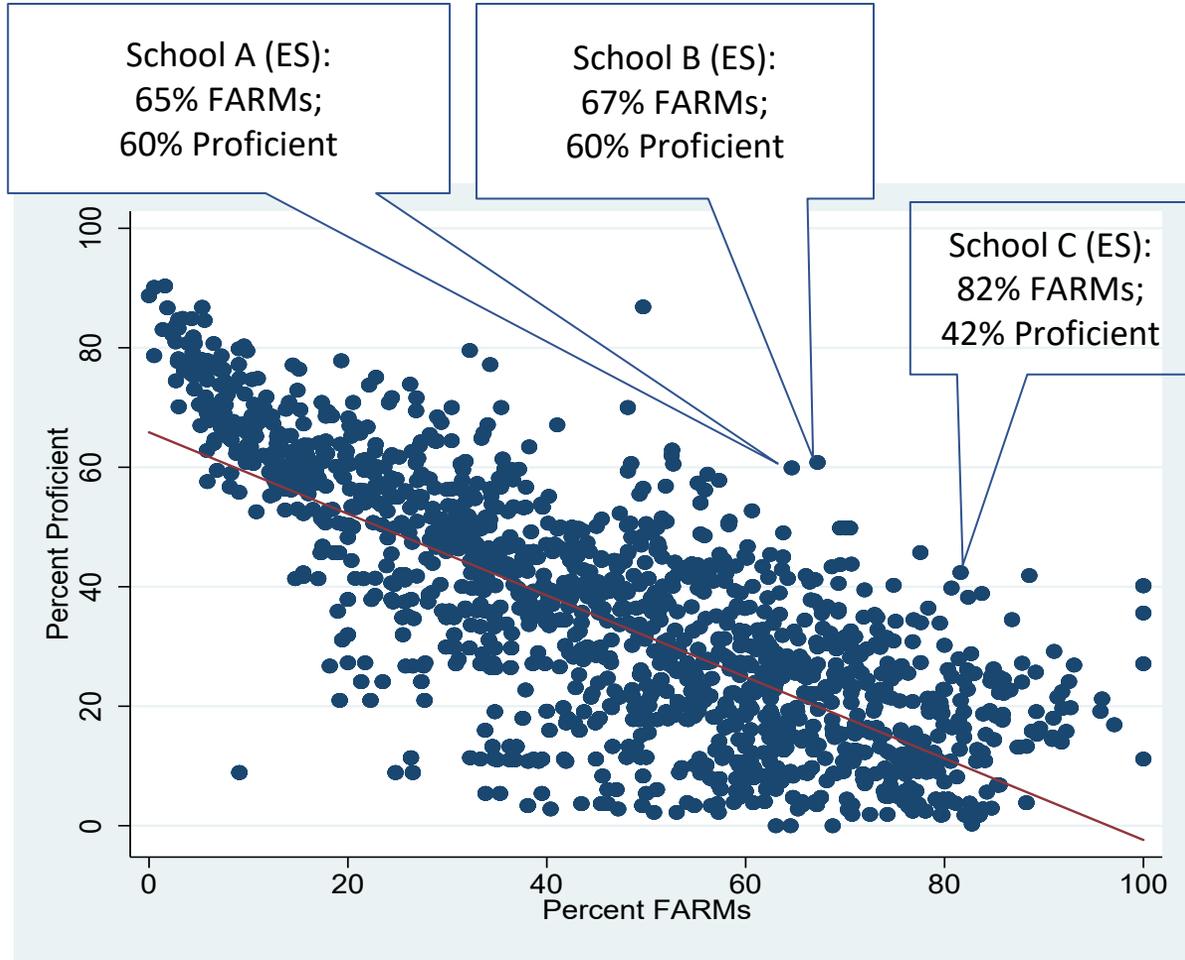
## 16 Month College Enrollment



## 24 Month College Enrollment

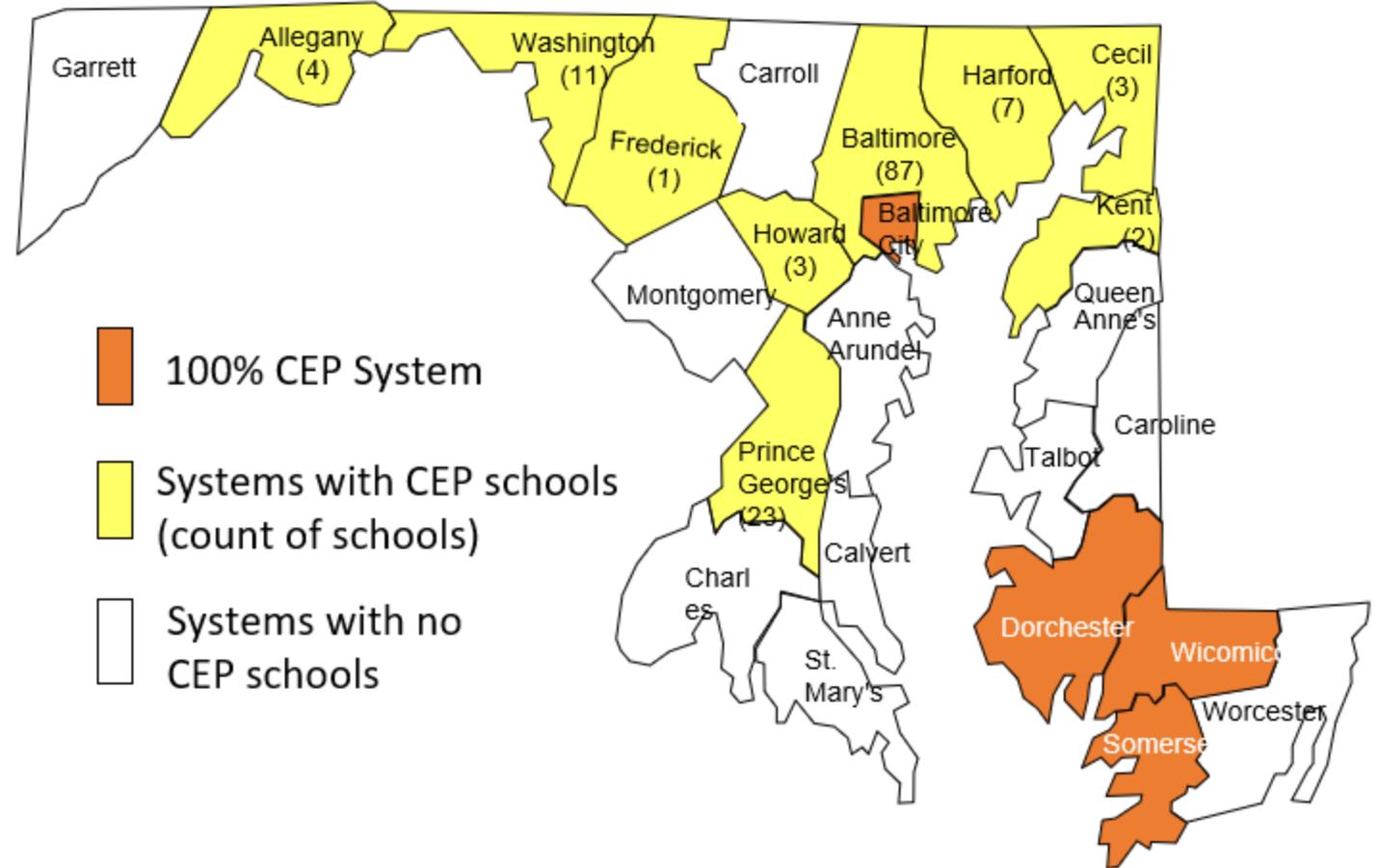


# School Level Percent FARMs eligibility by Percent Proficient



# Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)

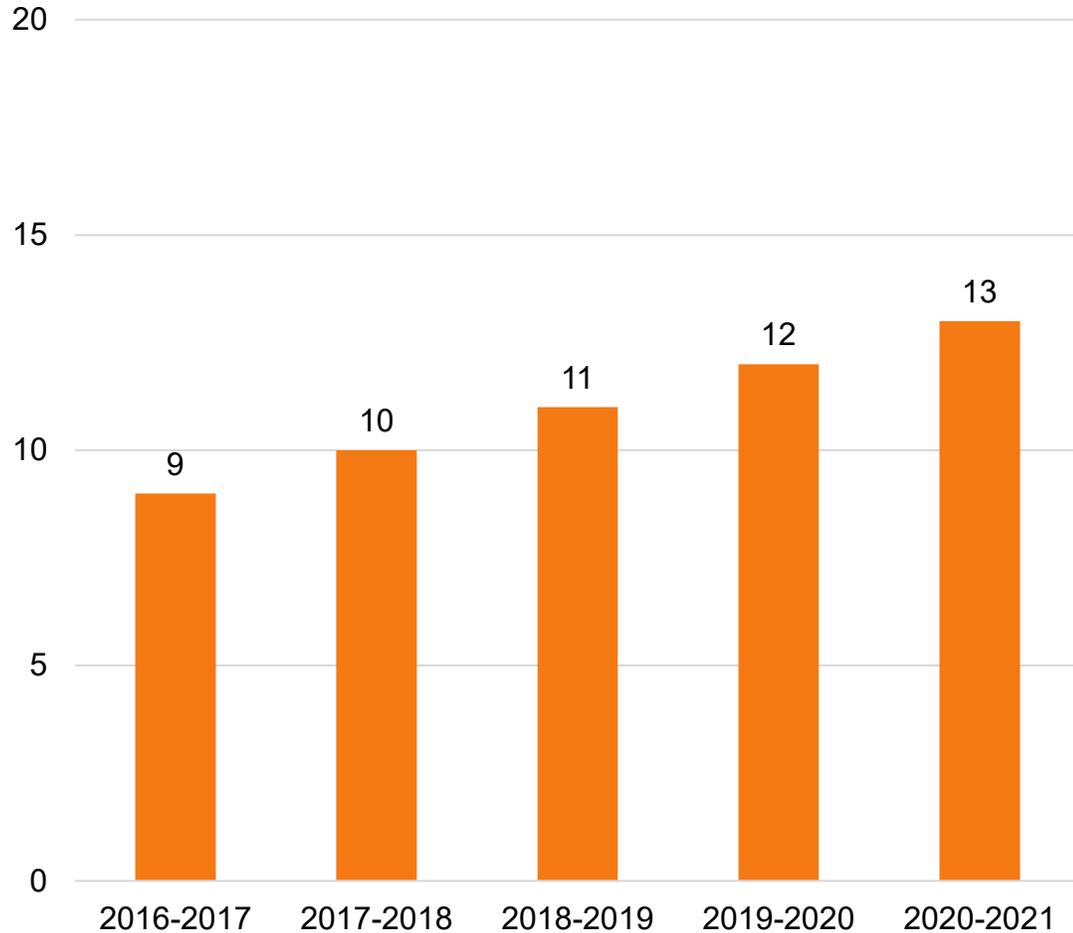
- The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) was authorized by Congress as a part of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010.
- CEP allows the highest poverty schools and systems to serve **breakfast and lunch at no cost to all enrolled students without collecting household applications.**
- Funding for participating schools and systems **based on student participation in programs** such as the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), SNAP (Food Stamps), Foster Care, or status as a homeless student.



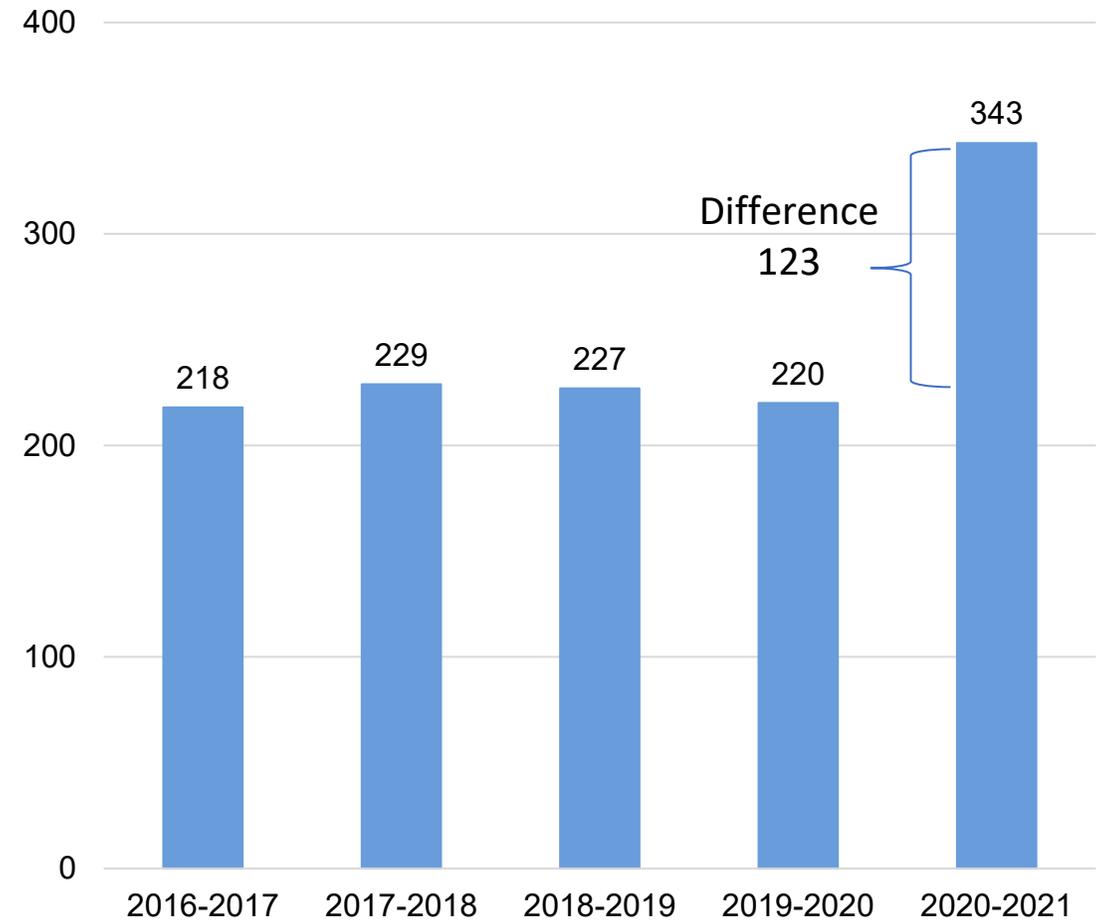
# Community Eligibility Program Trend



### Count of Local School Systems with at least one CEP School



### Count of CEP Schools in Maryland

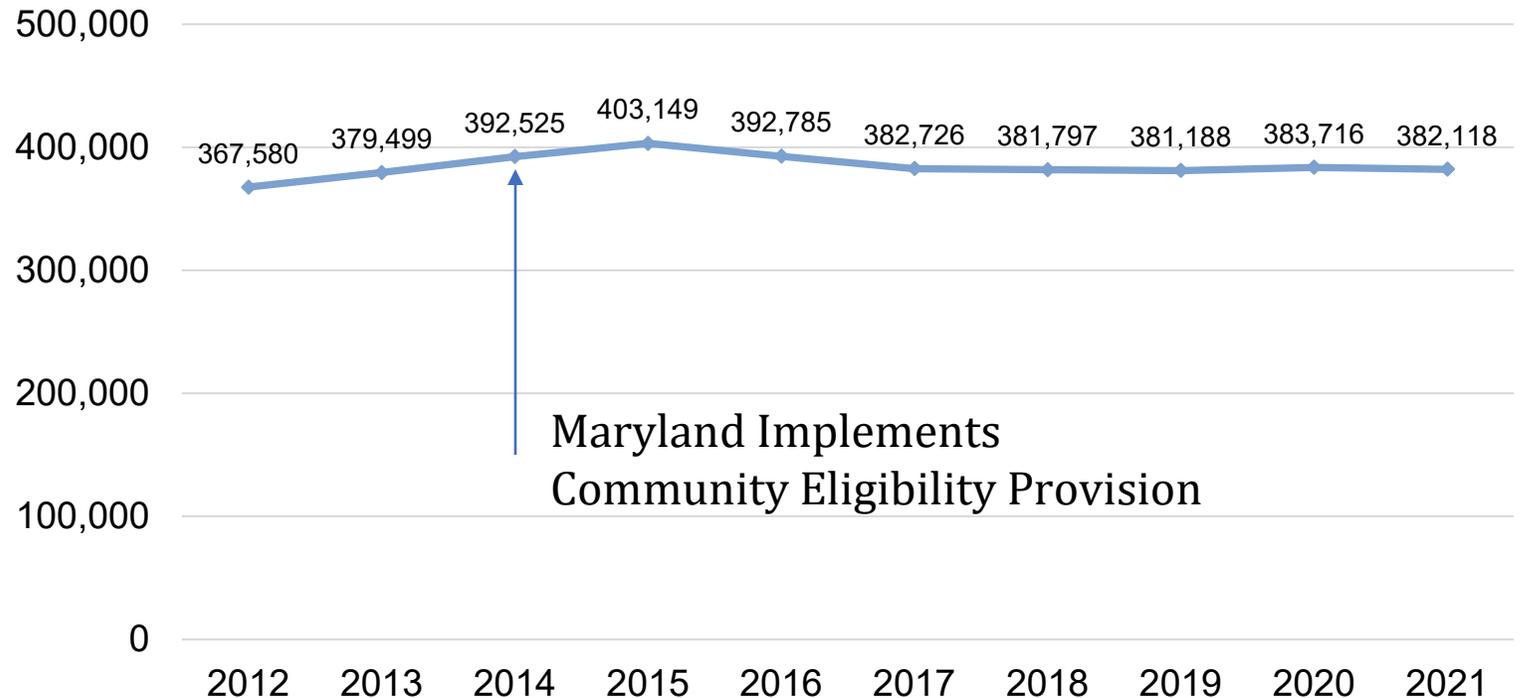


# Redefining Economically Disadvantaged



Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) local school systems and schools are not required to collect household forms.

The measure of FARMs no longer is a uniform state wide measure.



# Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA): Defining Economically Disadvantaged



## Definition

Students are **identified as eligible for Economically Disadvantaged based on direct certification** as approved by the US Department of Agriculture for the state of Maryland. A school would identify a student as Economically Disadvantaged if the student meets at least one of the following criteria:

### Confirmed participation in:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP);
- Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF); or
- Foster Child

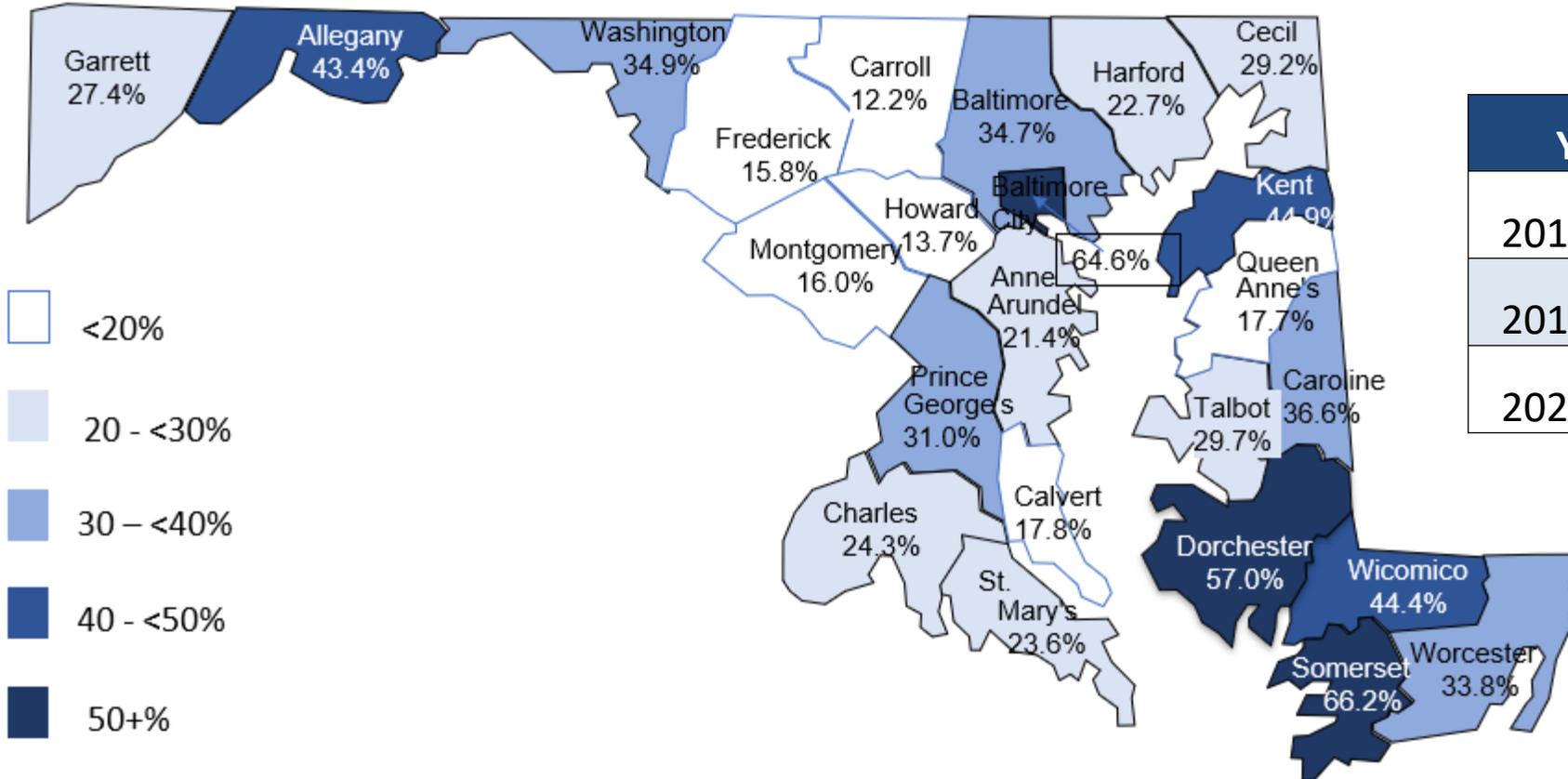
### Participation in the following programs:

- Experiencing homelessness and on the local Homeless Liaison's List;
- Migrant youth;
- Runaway;
- Non applicant approved by local officials; or
- Head Start.

Students identified as eligible for free and reduced meals by only a household form are not included in the Economically Disadvantaged student group.

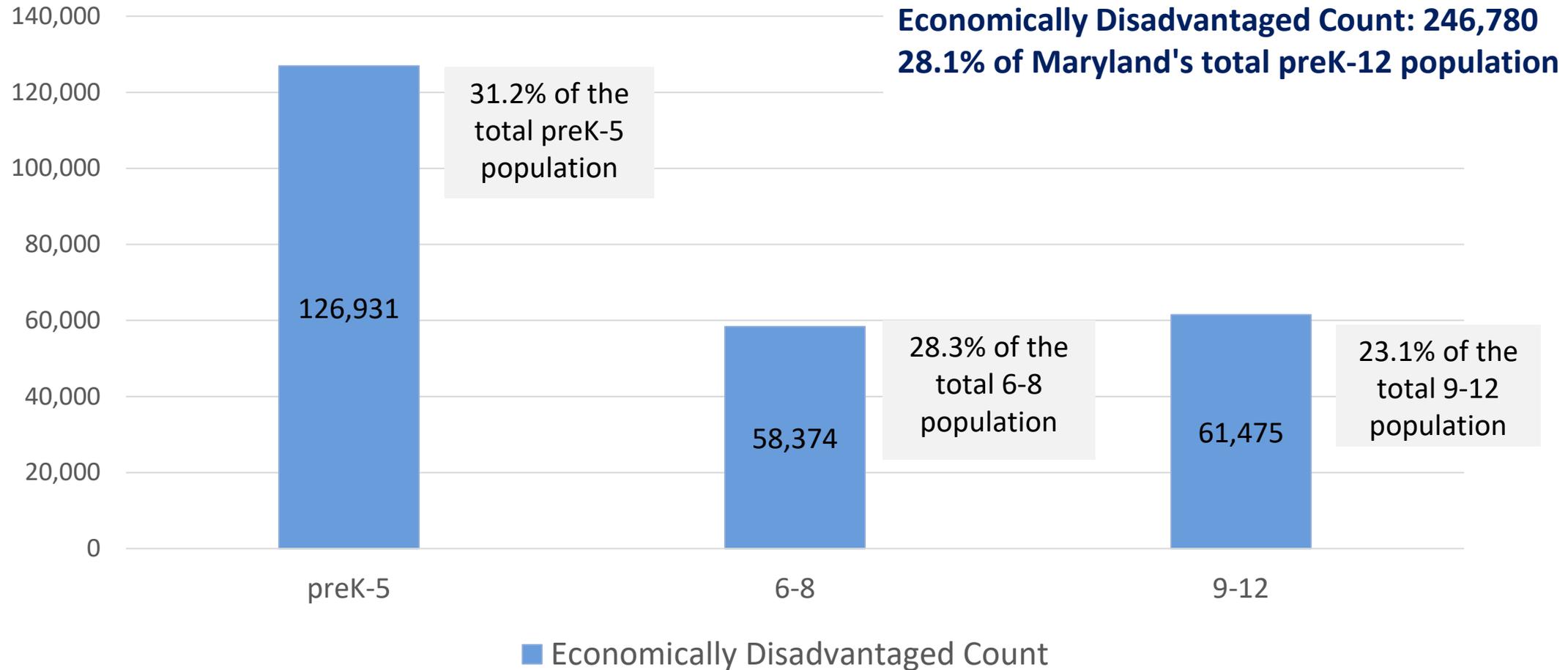
# Where are Economically Disadvantaged students in Maryland, 2020-2021?

## Percent of Economically Disadvantaged students by Local School System



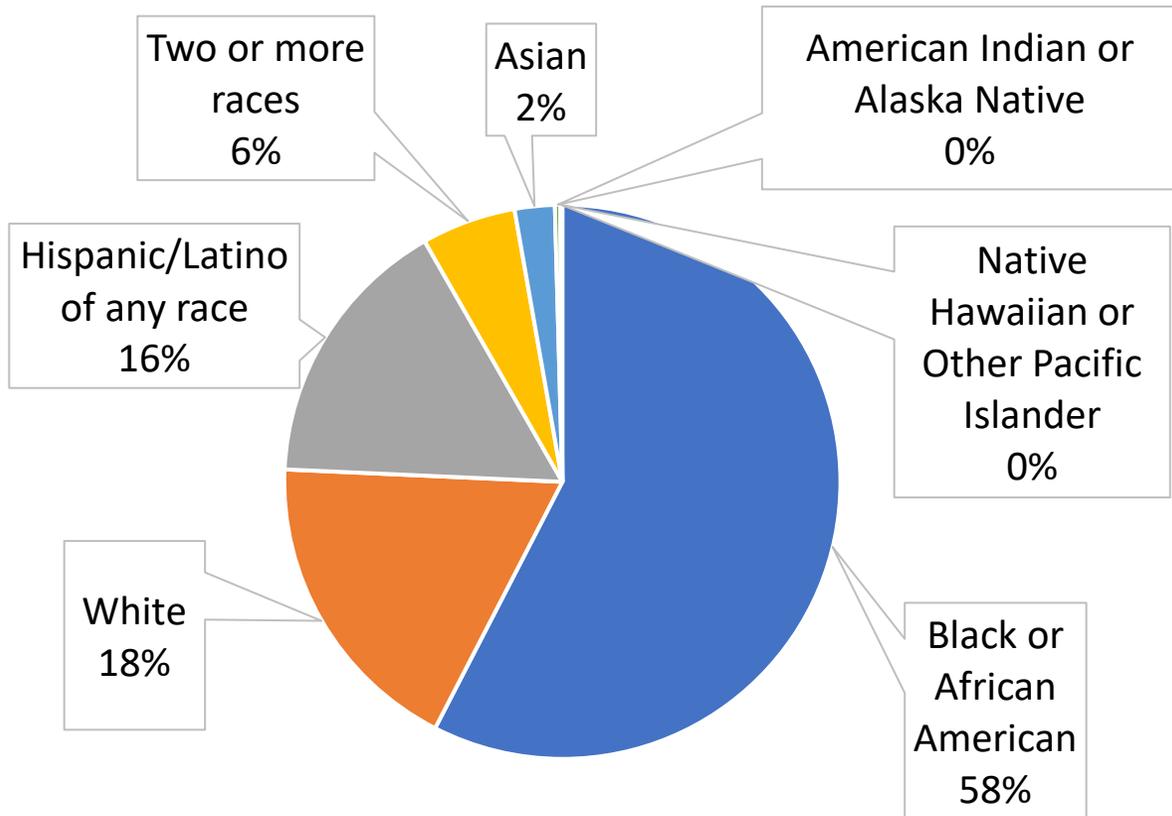
Year	Count	Percent
2018-2019	201,501	22.4%
2019-2020	205,908	22.6%
2020-2021	246,780	28.1%

# Grade Span of Economically Disadvantaged Students, 2020-2021

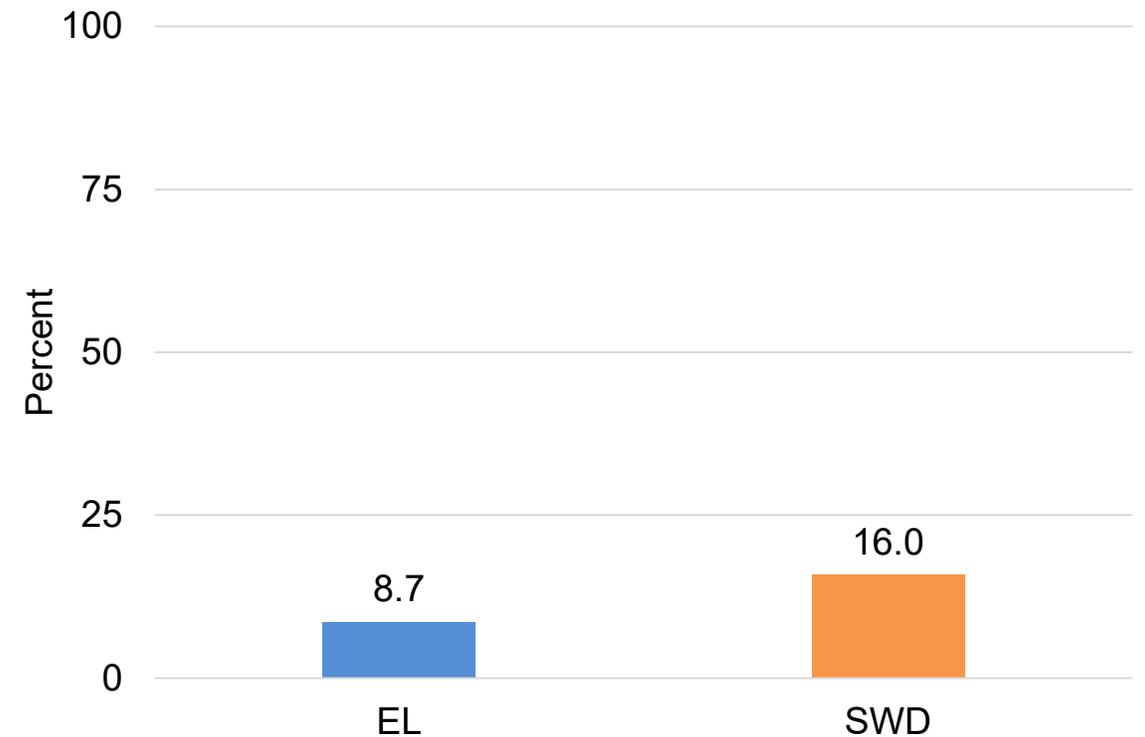


# Economically Disadvantaged Students by Race/Ethnicity and Special Services, 2020-2021

### Economically Disadvantaged Students Disaggregated by Race and Ethnicity



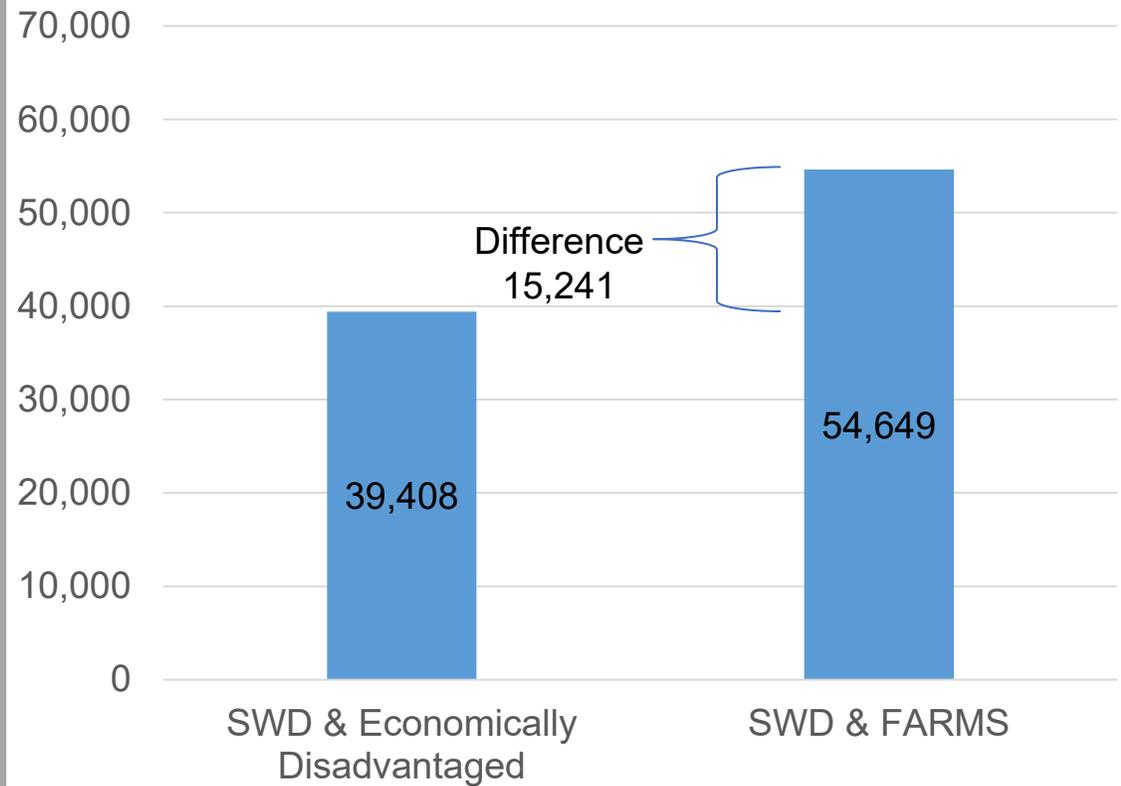
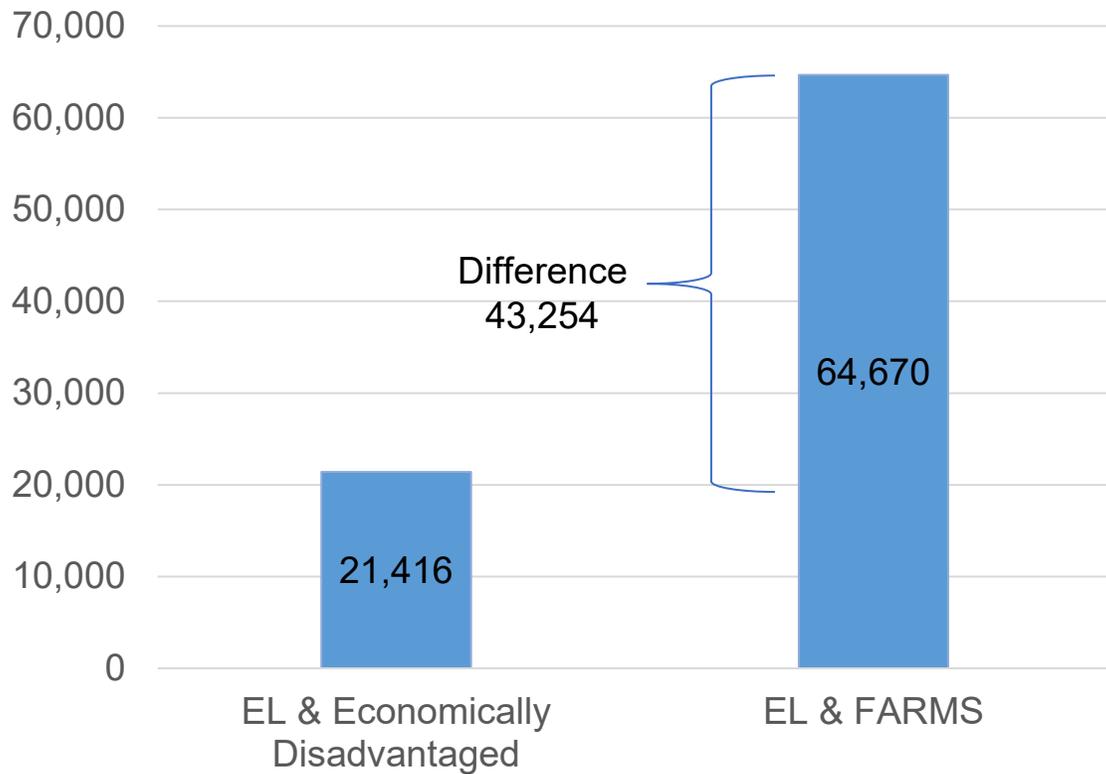
### Percentage of Economically Disadvantaged Students by Special Services Student Group



# Special Service Counts by FARMs & Economically Disadvantaged, 2020-2021



Student Group	Count
Economically Disadvantaged	246,780
FARMs	382,118



# State Initiatives: Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer (P-EBT)



- Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) is part of the U.S. government response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Children who would have received free or reduced-price meals under the National School Lunch Act if their schools were not closed or operating with reduced hours are eligible to receive P-EBT benefits.
- Eligible children directly receive money on EBT cards to help make up for these lost meals.
- The MSDE with the MD Department of Human Services secured approval from the USDA to operate the P-EBT Program for School Years 2019-2020 and 2020-2021.

**P-EBT Benefits Issued to  
Maryland Students to Date:  
\$733,555,877**

# State Initiatives: Community Schools



## Personnel Grants

	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022
Local Schools Systems with Eligible Schools	13	15	17
Schools - 80% poverty	206	212	169
Schools - 75% poverty	-	50	-
Schools - 70% poverty	-	-	115
Eligible in Prior Year	-	-	16

Each eligible school must **employ a Community Schools Coordinator**, and ensure adequate coverage by a health care practitioner during school hours, including extended day and extended year programs.

Each eligible school **must complete a needs assessment** by the end of the first year, and develop an implementation plan by the end of the second year.

Schools receive **personnel grants based on poverty threshold**. Schools no longer at the poverty threshold will continue to receive personnel grants for two years.