



Understanding K–12 Education Since the Pandemic Onset: The Interactive K–12 Enrollment Explorer

A policymaker tool from the COVID-19 and Equity in Education Initiative (CEE)

Although public K–12 student enrollment dropped by 3% nationwide in 2020–21 (NCES, 2021)¹ compared with 2019–20, the school year that marks the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the patterns differ for specific areas and types of schools. To better contextualize these shifts, a COVID-19 and Equity in Education (CEE) Enrollment Explorer was developed to help policymakers and educators examine enrollment trends by a range of school, community, and student characteristics.

The CEE Enrollment Explorer allows users to examine state, regional-, district-, community-, and school-level shifts in student enrollment before and after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic (March 2020) in selected states. It includes data from school year 2016–17 through 2021–22. Users can investigate shifts in enrollment by school type (e.g., charter or traditional schools), school level (e.g., elementary, middle, high), school locale (e.g., urban, rural), and community-reported COVID-19 cases. Within each of these categories, users can study shifts in enrollment of student groups, including Black, Latino, and White students as well as students who are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (FRPL). Altogether, the interactive CEE Enrollment Explorer aims to paint a more detailed picture of public K–12 student enrollment.

CEE Enrollment Explorer—California

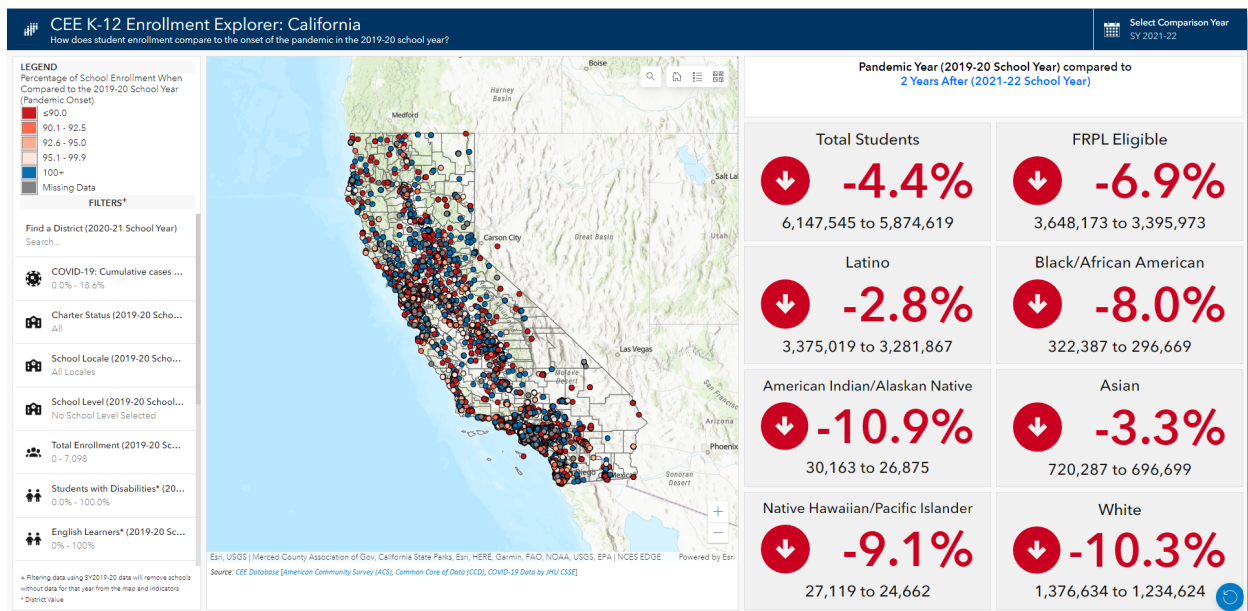
The [COVID-19 and Equity in Education](#) (CEE) initiative recently released the [CEE Enrollment Explorer—California](#), which captures the public K–12 student enrollment in California before and after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The CEE initiative is investigating how states, districts, and communities—especially those with higher percentages of Black and Latino students and/or students experiencing poverty—responded to the COVID-19 pandemic. Using data from the CEE initiative’s [longitudinal database](#), the new CEE Enrollment Explorer—California allows users to explore how student enrollment within individual schools, districts, and regions shifted across several characteristics.

Key Features

The CEE Enrollment Explorer—California is currently available (see Exhibit 1), and new state explorers will be available soon for Florida, New York, Tennessee, Texas, and Washington. The CEE Enrollment Explorer tool enables users to:

- examine three school years before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic (SY 2016–17, 2017–18, and 2018–19) and two years after its onset (SY 2020–21 and 2021–22);
- map enrollment shifts in regions, districts, communities, and individual schools;
- review changes by school type (e.g., charter/traditional), school level (e.g., elementary, middle, high school), and percentage of reported COVID-19 cases; and
- investigate shifts in enrollment by percentages of students in schools and characteristics of students, including student groups (e.g., English Learners, students with disabilities), student race/ethnicity (e.g., Black, Latino, Asian, American Indian/Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, White), students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (FRPL), and many more.

Exhibit 1. Screenshot From CEE Enrollment Explorer—California

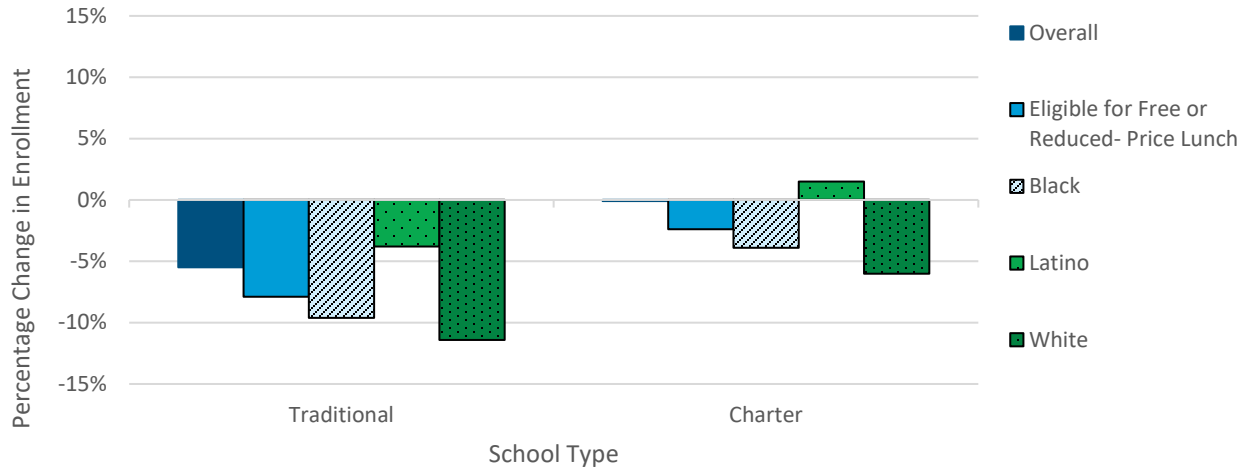


Relevant Findings

Following are examples of relevant findings from the CEE Enrollment Explorer—California:

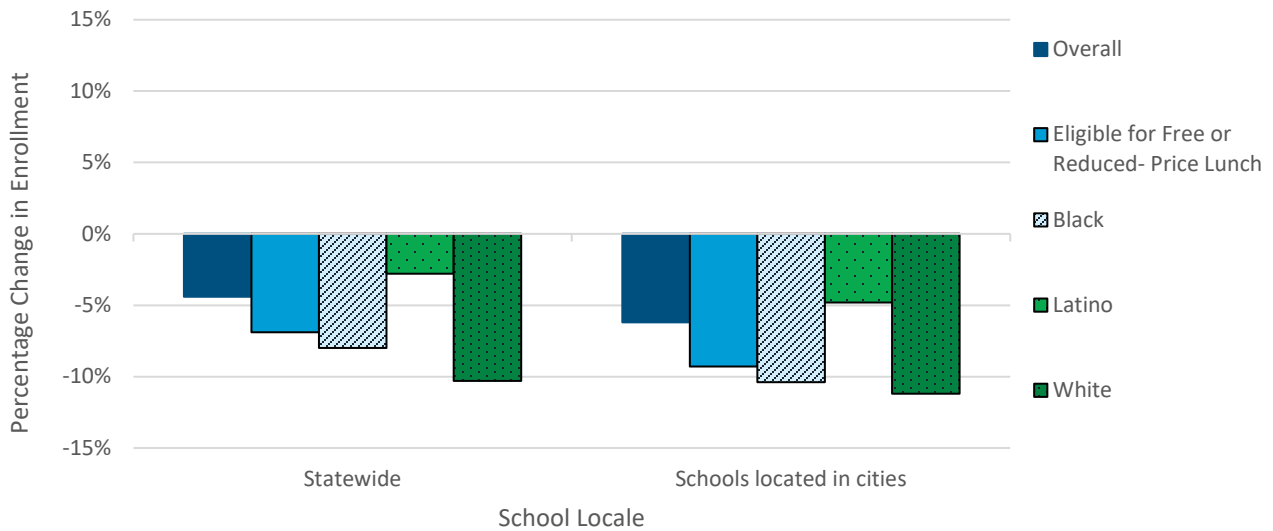
- In 2021–22, student enrollment in California declined in both traditional and charter schools compared with the COVID-19 pandemic onset in 2019–20. However, the decline was smaller in charter schools, both overall and for specific student groups (Exhibit 2).

Exhibit 2. California Percentage Change in Enrollment Between the Pandemic Onset (2019-20) and the 2021-22 School Year, by School Type and Student Group



- In SY 2021–22, California schools located in cities experienced a 6.2% decline in enrollment since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic (SY 2019–20), larger than the 4.4% decline in enrollment statewide (Exhibit 2).
- In SY 2021–22, California schools reported declines in enrollment since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic among students who were eligible for FRPL, Black students, Latino students, and White students. In that same time frame, the declines were greater for schools located in cities than statewide (Exhibit 3).

Exhibit 3. California Percentage Change in Enrollment Between the Pandemic Onset (2019-20) and 2021-22 School Year, by School Locale and Student Group



RELATED RESOURCES

COVID-19 longitudinal database: <https://cee.airprojects.org/>

Related Projects

Link back to [COVID-19 and Equity in Education: Longitudinal Deep Dive](#).

Endnote

¹ National Center for Education Statistics. (2021, June 28). *Nation's public school enrollment dropped 3 percent in 2021*. https://nces.ed.gov/whatsnew/press_releases/06_28_2021.asp



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