



Analysis: Public vs. Private Student Achievement

KASB says, “Low-income high school students often do as well or better in public schools. That may be true in a few isolated cases, especially where the private schools have very few low-income students and a handful of students can cause significant swings from one year to another. Hayden High School in Topeka, for example, only has 335 students in grades 9-12 (about 80 students in each grade) and just 9% are economically disadvantaged. Some years (like 2022), there aren’t enough students in the low-income category for results to be released. Bishop Miege in Johnson County doesn’t have enough low-income students to have reportable results for comparison to the public high schools.

But overall, low-income students in private schools that take the state assessment have better outcomes than their public school peers. In Wichita, for example, math proficiency at the two Catholic high schools is more than twice as high as the largest districts in Sedgwick County.

Low-Income Students 10th-Grade Math			
District / School	Below Grade Level	At Grade Level, Needs Remedial Training	Proficient
USD 259 Wichita	73%	22%	5%
USD 266 Maize	51%	37%	12%
USD 260 Derby	64%	28%	8%
Bishop Carroll ICT	28%	48%	24%
Kapaun Mt Carmel ICT	24%	46%	30%
USD 500 Kansas City	70%	26%	4%
Bishop Ward HS KCK	90%	10%	0%
Kansas Public Average	62%	29%	9%
Kansas City Diocese	83%	11%	6%
Wichita Diocese	26%	47%	27%
Salina Diocese	25%	31%	44%

Source: KSDE 2022 state assessment

Low-Income Students 10th-Grade ELA			
District / School	Below Grade Level	At Grade Level, Needs Remedial Training	Proficient
USD 259 Wichita	64%	27%	9%
USD 266 Maize	48%	34%	18%
USD 260 Derby	62%	25%	13%
Bishop Carroll ICT	17%	48%	34%
Kapaun Mt Carmel ICT	16%	51%	32%
USD 500 Kansas City	64%	26%	9%
Bishop Ward HS KCK	74%	23%	3%
Kansas Public Average	53%	33%	14%
Kansas City Diocese	69%	25%	6%
Wichita Diocese	17%	47%	37%
Salina Diocese	19%	63%	19%

Source: KSDE 2022 state assessment

KASB doesn’t show results for the other grade levels, perhaps because the differences are quite stark. Low-income students in private schools consistently outperform their public school peers, as shown in these examples of 4th-Grade English language arts and 8th-Grade math.

Low-Income Students 4th Grade ELA			
Grade Level	Below Grade Level	At Grade Level, Needs Remedial Training	Proficient
Public State Avg.	30%	44%	26%
Wichita Diocese	16%	42%	42%
KCK Diocese	18%	47%	35%
Salina Diocese	10%	51%	39%
Dodge City Diocese	24%	18%	59%
Lutheran Schools	11%	11%	78%

Source: KSDE 2022 state assessment

Low-Income Students 8th Grade Math			
Grade Level	Below Grade Level	At Grade Level, Needs Remedial Training	Proficient
Public State Avg.	65%	25%	10%
Wichita Diocese	39%	38%	24%
KCK Diocese	55%	22%	23%
Salina Diocese	40%	20%	40%
Dodge City Diocese	Results not available		
Lutheran Schools	21%	36%	43%

Source: KSDE 2022 state assessment