



THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT OF SCHOOLS

EDUCATION CENSORED

SCHOOLS, DISCIPLINE, & CONTROL

STEREOTYPES

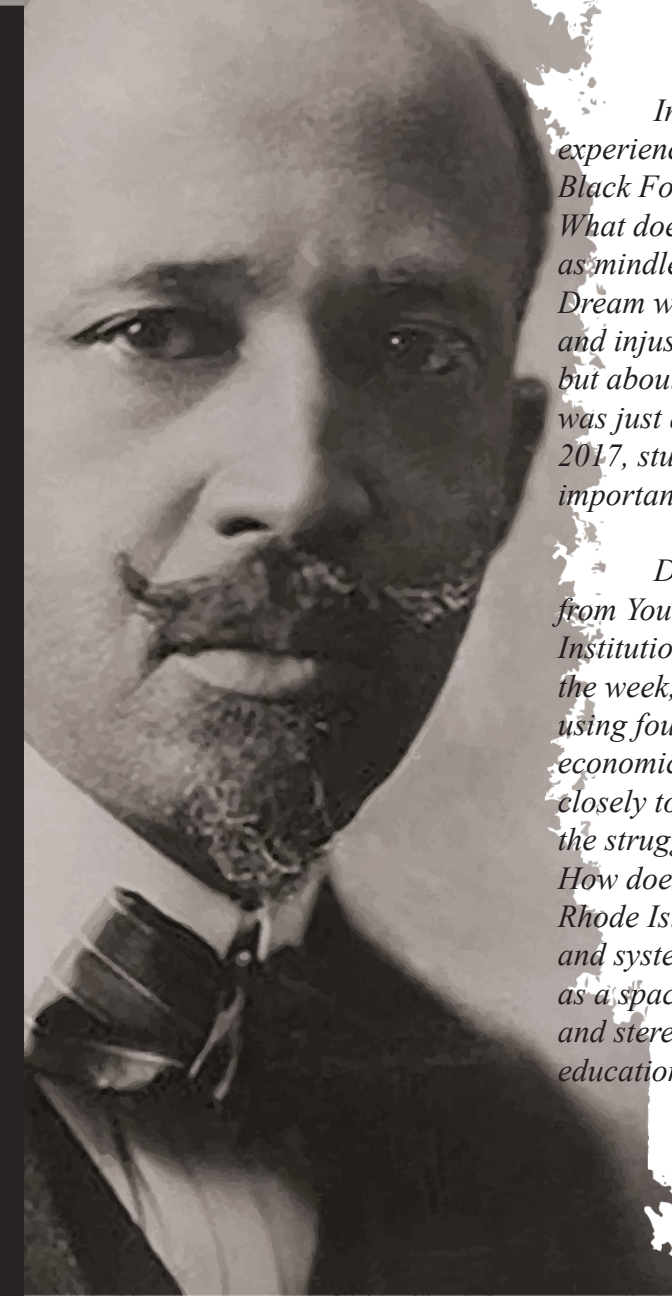
UNCOVERING THE INSTITUTION PRESENTS:

A DREAM DEFERRED

A PROJECT BY YOUTH IN ACTION AND BROWN UNIVERSITY'S CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF SLAVERY & JUSTICE



A STUDY OF THE SCHOOL TO PRISON PIPELINE

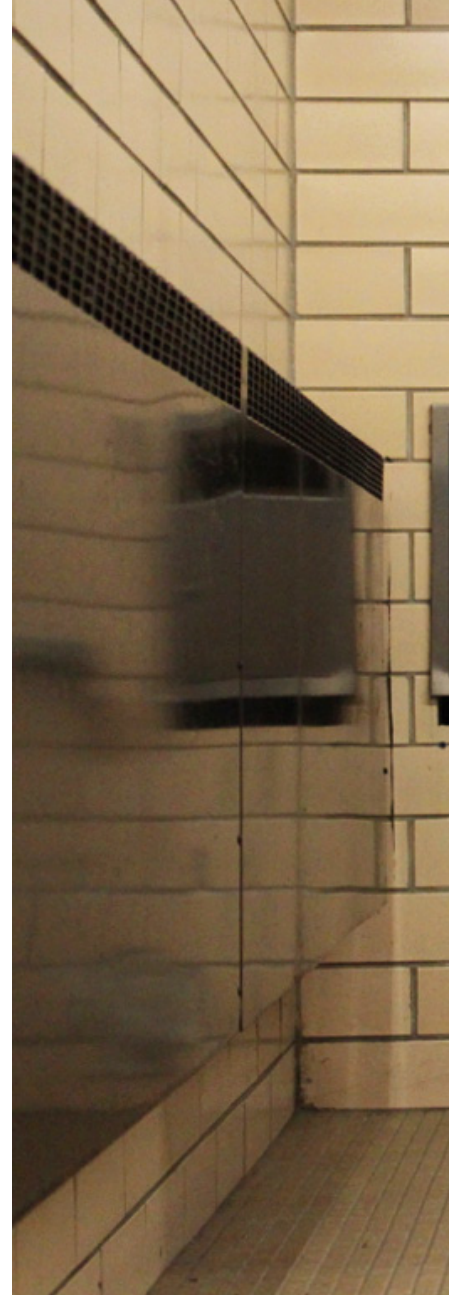


*In 1903 W.E.B. Du Bois was concerned with thinking through the Black experience and identity in America, both North and South. In his text, *Souls of Black Folk*, Du Bois posed the question, “how does it feel to be a problem?” What does it mean to have your body read visually as criminal, as negligible, as mindless? Today, a person of color cannot think about the American Dream without simultaneously thinking about the systems of discrimination and injustice that impede that dream. The “dream” is about not just physical but about about equal freedoms afforded to citizens. For Du Bois, education was just as much of an indicator of freedom as political and civil rights. In 2017, students are still trying to fully realize the American Dream but more importantly Du Bois’ dream of education liberation.*

During the the first week of August 2016, eleven high school students from Youth In Action moved onto Brown’s campus for a week of Uncovering the Institution, a program at the Center for the Study of Slavery & Justice. During the week, students engaged in discussions concerning the American Dream using four guiding pillars; optimism, individual liberty, freedom from fear and economic opportunity. For many of the students, the American Dream was closely to their education. Through the course of the week students considered the struggle between power and freedom that shapes the educational system. How does the school-to-prison pipeline impact students of color in the state of Rhode Island today? How might students of color exist and function in a society and system that that views them as a “problem”? We hope this exhibition serves as a space for reflection about how the built environment, discipline, curricula, and stereotypes continue to challenge young people of color in the state’s public education system.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT OF THE SCHOOL

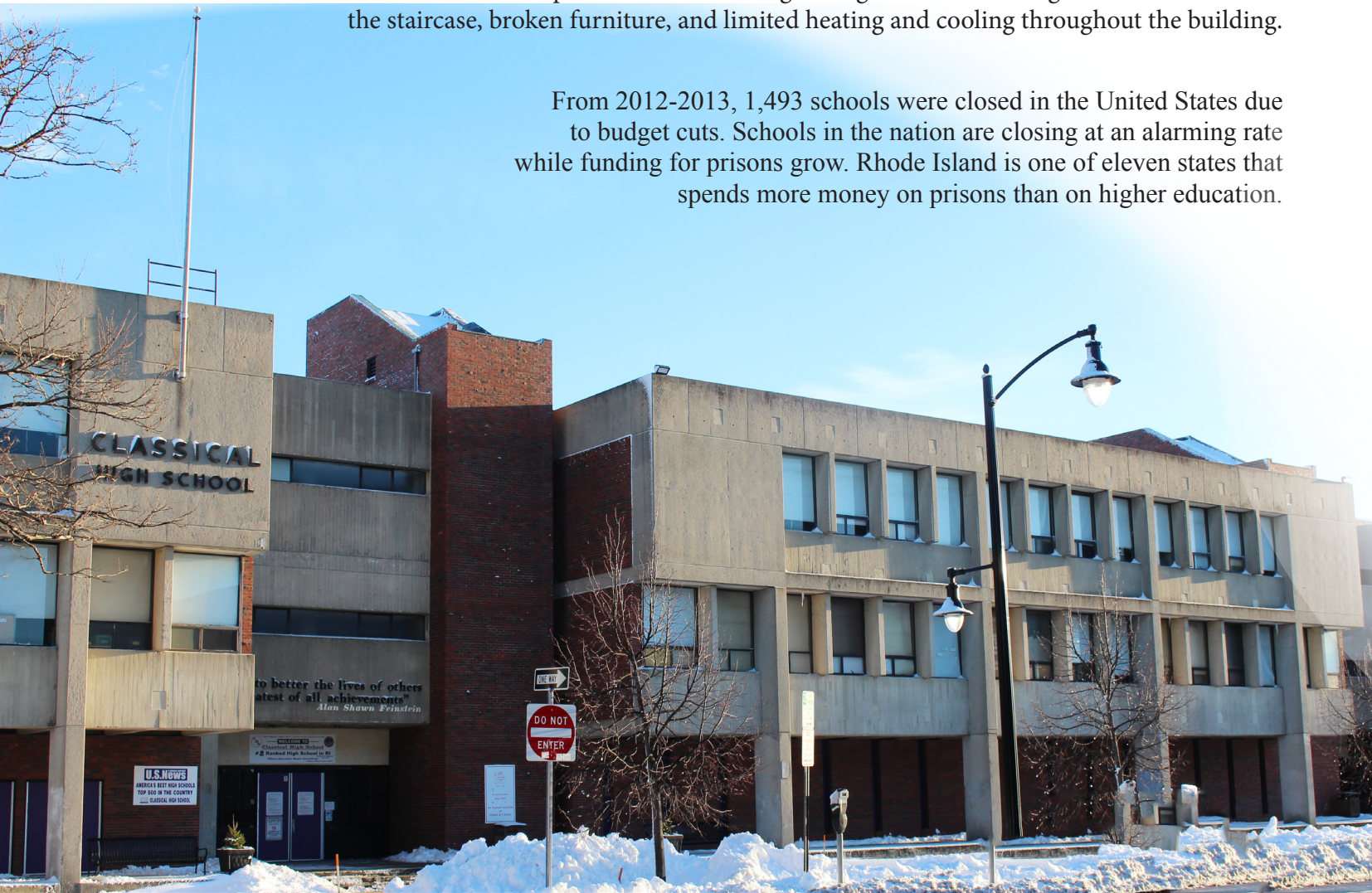
The role of structure and design in determining the boundaries of our freedoms and our bodies.





School facilities and buildings have a major impact on the education that students receive. In Providence educational institutions are in disrepair. There are missing ceiling tiles, leaks during rain storms, mold in the staircase, broken furniture, and limited heating and cooling throughout the building.

From 2012-2013, 1,493 schools were closed in the United States due to budget cuts. Schools in the nation are closing at an alarming rate while funding for prisons grow. Rhode Island is one of eleven states that spends more money on prisons than on higher education.



Classical High School, one of Rhode Island's most renowned public schools, was designed in a brutalist style of architecture. These raw concrete structures, made of cement emerged in the 1950s as the popular style of government and institutional buildings alike, including prisons. The cement walls make the classrooms very hot in the summer, and very cold in the winter. Some students describe the dimness of its exterior as a **“curious contradiction to the supposed brilliance of the roughly 1,200 students who walk its halls.”**



Without
knowledge
of our
history...

We
are like
a tree
without
roots

~~THE~~ STORY
MY Story
#OurSchoolsOurHistory

Story
of



EDUCATION CENSORED

Examining censorship and surveillance as tools of power and control

- **Consistently Deliver Consequences and Interventions**

Effective discipline will be implemented through effective partnerships with students, families and the community. Expectations and consequences for student conduct will reflect a balance between the responsibilities and rights of the individual and the responsibilities and rights of the school community. Providence Schools will maintain positive school environments that are conducive to effective and efficient learning and value the need of every student, family, and staff member to feel proud of, connected to and safe in their school.

Scope of Discipline

It is the responsibility of all school personnel to maintain student discipline before, during and after the school day in school buildings, on school premises, at other locations while attending school-sponsored activities, and while in transit to or from school.

Suspension

- If a student conducts himself in such a way that he infringes upon the rights of other students or certified staff members, or if he conducts himself in such a manner as to interfere or disrupt the learning process, or if he manages to conduct himself in such a manner as to present a real danger to the health and safety of other students and certified staff, then his presence in the school shall be deemed detrimental to the common good of the school and he shall be suspended according to school committee policy.
- In accordance with the Code of Conduct and the discretion of the school principal, a student may be denied the right to attend school classes or functions for a period not to exceed ten (10) school days. A suspension may be appealed to the principal. The student will continue to do assigned work during suspension. Parent/guardian can pick-up the work at the school during the period of suspension from the Guidance counselor.

Exclusion

In accordance with the Code of Conduct, at the discretion of the School Board, a student may be denied the right to attend school classes or functions for a period of ten (10) to one hundred eighty (180) school days. An appeal of an exclusion may be made to the superintendent, or his /her designee and then to the School Board.

The state's school department and administration at the local level also have great influence over the curriculum and dress codes - both serve to control and restrict the student body. Multicultural studies are often excluded from the curriculum, leaving out historical and cultural stories that reflect the student body makeup. In the state of Rhode Island, inmates who participate in the Petey Greene Program can register to take vocational training courses at the Community College of Rhode Island, however, not one law course is provided. The censoring of curricula is strategic in preparing young people for prison and keeping inmates in line. In our current racial climate, students organized and rallied in 2016 for ethnic studies to be included in the Providence Public School curriculum. Currently students and administration are working collaboratively to create courses that are culturally relevant to young people in the city.

The first dress code was implemented into school systems in 1969. As a result, schools gained the ability to limit student expression in an attempt to promote "a safe environment" and prevent interference with schoolwork and discipline. In Rhode Island schools, regulations say what type of clothing students wear affects their attitude toward themselves, others, and school in general. Students in the Providence Public School system receive a free planner, which includes a copy of the Code of Conduct. The dress code section of the handbook lays out what is considered appropriate attire for school, however, the 'distraction free' dress codes disproportionately targets young girls of color and students of the LGBTQ community.

Civil Disobedience

Essay #2
Oscar Wilde

What is the value of protest of civil disobedience in a democracy?
Oscar Wilde argues in support of it. He probably had his own agenda since he was banished in England by Queen Victoria and died in poverty and obscurity in France for the offense of being openly gay/homosexual. His particular situation may have given rise to his support for organized revolt against societal norms. I believe the important distinction to make in analyzing this supposition is the difference between organized and revolt.

The Black Lives Movement is now indelibly associated with the assassination of 5 Dallas police officers. The Black Lives Movement is born out of the perceived injustice associated with the police shootings of several black men and boys around the country over the last five years. Usually, Trayvon Martin's incident is cited as the igniting moment for the Movement. (This strikes me as peculiar since Trayvon was shot by an Hispanic civilian, not a white police officer) Most of the other eight cases

EDUCATION, DISCIPLINE, & CONTROL

When our bodies are under seige





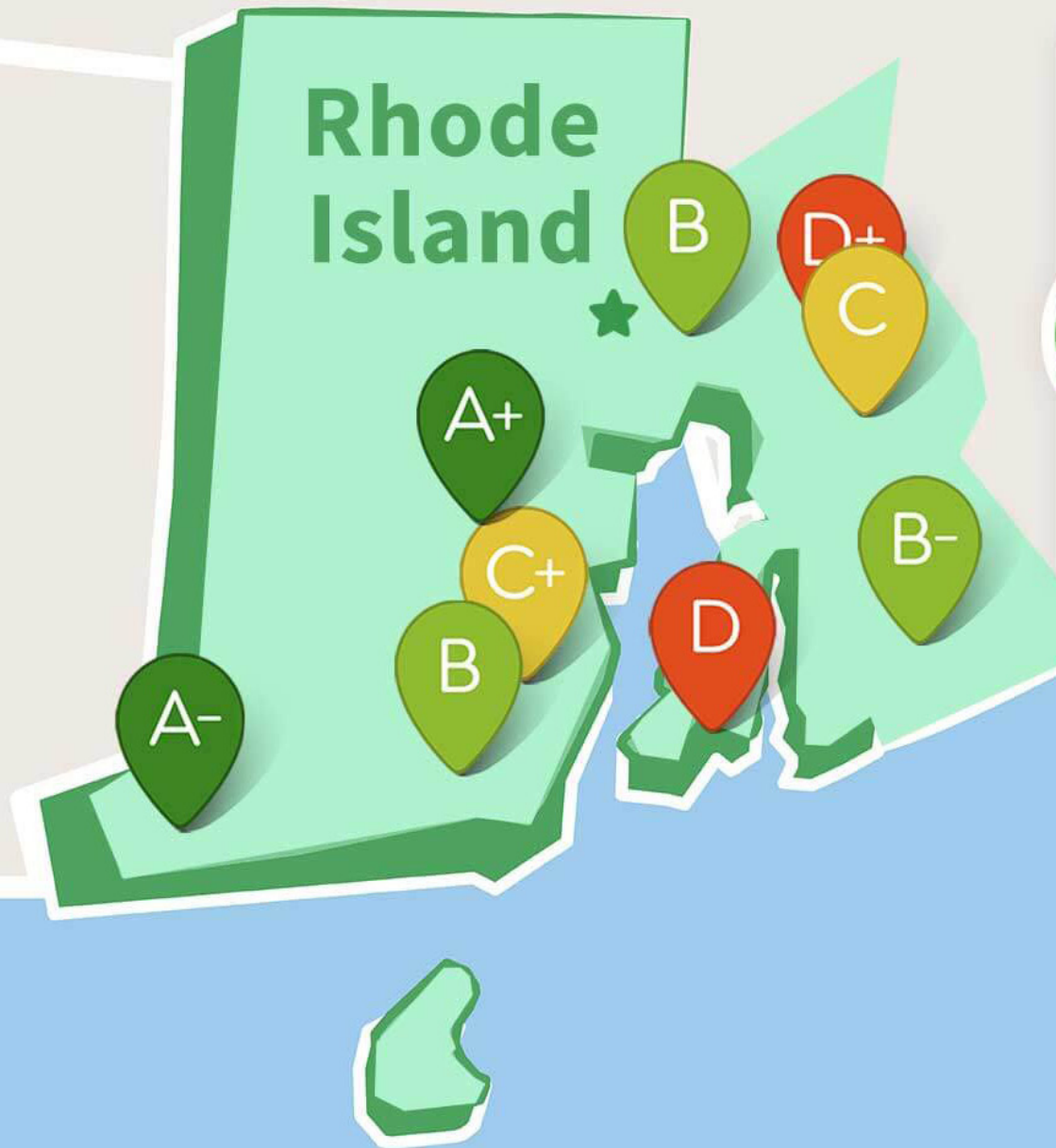
Identified from the start as a “problem”, students of color experience the public school system as a site of discipline and control. In some states, police officers have charged students as young as seven years old with “disrupting” the classroom environment. For minor offenses such as using a cell phone or having a temper tantrum in a kindergarten class, students have been handcuffed or even arrested. This type of labeling and discipline facilitates a pipeline into the juvenile “justice” system. In some Providence public schools, random locker checks have occurred. These checks create a sense of imprisonment in one’s own learning environment. Students become used to having their property searched, even though that violates their Fourth Amendment right.





Nationally, Black students make up 16% of the student body but experience suspension at a rate of 32-42% and an arrest rate of 31%. Out-of-school suspensions are used far too often in public schools, targeting students of color with subjective offenses. The American prison system practices an identical system of racial profiling, targeting Blacks, Southeast Asians, and Latinos. Black inmates make up 37% of the nation's prison population while only representing 12.2% of the population. Furthermore, a majority White administration in both institutions sends a particular message to young people about race and power. In the American prison system, 71% of prison guards are White, this compares to the 61% of White teachers in Rhode Island schools.

Rhode Island



The logo is a white rectangular stamp with a green border and a scalloped edge. It features the text "2017 Best SCHOOLS" in a bold, black, sans-serif font. Below this, there is a green circle containing a white letter "N", followed by three green wavy lines. At the bottom, the word "NICHE" is written in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

2017 Best
SCHOOLS



NICHE

STEREOTYPES

When reputation and reality are working against one another and in the wake young people are branded with a stereotype that can determine their future

HIGH SCHOOL REPORT CARD 2015

School Rank	Teacher-student ratio (2012/13)	Per-pupil spending (2012/13)	AP Exams (2013/14)		NECAP (2013/14)				SAT Exams (2013/14)			Graduation rate, by percent (2013/14)
			Number of students at college-level mastery	Percentage of scores at college-level mastery	Percent at/above proficiency, Grade II math	Percent at/above proficiency, Grade II reading	Percent at/above proficiency, Grade II science	Percent at/above proficiency, Grade II writing	Average score, math	Average score, reading	Average score, writing	
1. Barrington HS	1:12	\$14,217	492	90%	79%	98%	68%	82%	588	578	566	94%
2. Classical HS	1:21	\$16,909	530	46%	55%	100%	39%	85%	531	541	519	96.6%
3. Portsmouth HS	1:13	\$14,981	364	76%	63%	94%	58%	81%	542	537	505	96.9%
4. East Greenwich HS	1:15	\$14,987	254	82%	71%	95%	57%	85%	598	576	582	96.1%
5. North Kingstown Sr HS	1:14	\$15,070	280	80%	59%	93%	55%	76%	544	547	531	89%
6. South Kingstown HS	1:11	\$18,035	228	85%	60%	88%	56%	81%	554	550	533	91.5%
7. Lincoln Sr HS	1:17	\$16,683	211	71%	53%	93%	43%	75%	533	521	502	90.2%
8. Cumberland HS	1:18	\$12,278	194	54%	46%	88%	42%	70%	499	501	486	87.5%
9. Charlot HS	1:15	\$16,499	153	60%	51%	95%	37%	72%	512	516	501	92.3%
10. Narragansett HS	1:15	\$19,169	96	85%	66%	97%	61%	71%	528	518	510	88.5%
11. Mt. Hope HS	1:16	\$15,322	93	53%	42%	96%	39%	88%	495	510	510	86.8%
12. Exeter/West Greenwich HS	1:10	\$19,754	65	89%	58%	87%	41%	72%	522	537	516	92%
13. Ponagansett HS	1:11	\$16,243	77	59%	52%	90%	25%	71%	513	520	503	94.3%
14. Middletown HS	1:15	\$15,460	71	49%	60%	93%	44%	92%	535	515	505	86.1%
15. North Smithfield HS	1:12	\$14,051	72	71%	53%	96%	52%	84%	526	513	503	90.8%
16. Coventry HS	1:12	\$13,999	104	61%	37%	93%	42%	77%	477	483	476	84.9%
17. Toll Gate HS	1:12	\$17,685	63	53%	34%	88%	18%	80%	494	507	503	81.5%
18. Westerly HS	1:10	\$18,933	68	66%	56%	92%	34%	69%	501	498	490	90.5%
19. Burrillville HS	1:13	\$13,543	72	78%	42%	87%	31%	76%	483	475	471	79%
20. Scituate HS	1:12	\$14,296	33	73%	55%	93%	34%	74%	519	518	505	91.4%
21. Cranston East HS *	1:15	\$14,353	66	62%	24%	83%	20%	72%	481	486	470	82.3%
22. Cranston West HS	1:16	\$14,353	60	52%	35%	88%	35%	63%	486	488	478	94.8%
23. Pilgrim HS	1:11	\$17,685	61	48%	33%	86%	13%	66%	468	495	481	83.1%
24. Tiverton HS	1:10	\$16,413	44	51%	29%	91%	28%	76%	499	498	483	93.9%
25. Smithfield Sr HS	1:13	\$14,948	31	57%	48%	92%	39%	58%	516	500	491	88.3%
26. East Providence HS	1:13	\$14,363	72	39%	31%	82%	45%	65%	463	465	449	79.6%
27. North Providence HS	1:10	\$14,982	NA	NA	39%	90%	30%	85%	472	470	464	92%
28. Veterans Memorial HS	1:10	\$17,685	39	46%	35%	85%	22%	68%	481	485	463	79.8%
29. Davies Career/Tech School	1:12	NA	NA	NA	35%	93%	27%	73%	481	463	432	81.4%
30. Rogers HS	1:15	\$19,770	41	36%	25%	80%	22%	58%	465	483	460	72.7%
31. Woonsocket HS *	1:24	\$13,134	35	27%	21%	71%	15%	51%	461	454	435	59.5%
32. West Warwick Sr HS	1:12	\$15,633	26	54%	32%	83%	19%	75%	453	458	449	82.2%
33. Beacon Charter HS for the Arts	1:13	NA	NA	NA	24%	96%	17%	94%	422	477	449	92.9%
34. Tolman Sr HS *	1:10	\$13,478	45	24%	17%	75%	17%	59%	424	426	409	78.8%
35. Johnston Sr HS	1:12	\$17,321	18	41%	24%	81%	22%	64%	448	448	443	88.5%
36. Blackstone Acad Charter School	1:13	NA	NA	NA	35%	91%	15%	73%	455	438	431	82.9%
37. Walsh Sch Perform/Visual Arts	1:08	NA	1	9%	39%	98%	24%	96%	436	451	443	91.9%
38. Times2 Academy *	1:17	NA	7	64%	11%	92%	18%	95%	420	405	448	78.1%
39. Central Falls HS	1:13	\$17,982	20	15%	12%	53%	15%	35%	425	394	404	72%
40. The Met School	1:12	NA	NA	NA	17%	67%	3%	40%	412	412	390	86.7%
41. Shea Sr HS	1:10	\$13,478	15	21%	15%	61%	11%	54%	410	394	379	88.1%
42. Paul Cuffee School	1:12	NA	NA	NA	12%	67%	5%	35%	395	383	388	91.5%
43. Academy for Career Exploration	1:15	NA	NA	NA	12%	76%	10%	69%	373	375	386	88.4%
44. E-Cubed Academy	1:14	\$16,909	6	15%	3%	73%	1%	68%	364	371	374	78.5%
45. Providence Career/Tech Acad	1:11	\$16,909	5	22%	5%	56%	3%	38%	366	356	349	77.3%
46. Dr. Jorge Alvarez HS *	1:17	\$16,909	8	10%	5%	50%	5%	41%	356	359	345	70.5%
47. Hope High School	1:14	\$16,909	7	6%	3%	51%	3%	33%	352	358	345	71.7%
48. William B. Cooley Sr HS	1:18	\$16,909	3	7%	6%	51%	2%	41%	367	345	348	71.9%
49. Central HS	1:17	\$16,909	2	3%	6%	52%	3%	41%	358	349	349	56.3%
50. Mt. Pleasant HS	1:13	\$16,909	9	12%	5%	38%	1%	22%	353	340	328	56.4%

Chart Definitions: NECAP: New England Common Assessment Program standardized state testing, used to determine reading, math, science and writing proficiency as required by the federal No Child Left Behind Act. SAT: The Scholastic Aptitude Test, required for most colleges and universities. The maximum score in each category is 800. AP: Advanced Placement, an advanced course and rigorous exam for which high school students can receive college credit. * Schools that have improved the most academically since 2013. For ranking methodology, see [rimonthly.org/0915_methods](#)

Stereotypes are mapped onto young people even before they enter the school's doors. According to the 2017 Best School Districts in Rhode Island ranking, the Barrington Public school district is ranked number one, while Providence Public Schools lag behind as twenty-fifth in the state. While Barrington received an A in academics and a C- in diversity, Providence Public Schools were given the same grades in reverse. This lower rating led to increasing demands to pass standardized testing on top of an already demanding workload for many students. Rankings such as the one above creates a more negative reputation for Providence Public Schools, leaving very little room for optimism among students and teachers. Over time high schools in the city have been given nicknames such as "Hope for the Hopeless" (Hope High School) and "Central for the Mental" (Central High School), stigmatizing any student that attends and graduates from those schools. These conditions help to create a situation where many students think that failure is inevitable.



The school to prison pipeline is directly related to zero tolerance policies that thrive in failing, segregated and inadequately resourced schools, resulting in students of color being more vulnerable to dropping out. The quickest and most common solution to dealing with the “problem” student is to remove them from class. A simple visit to the principal’s office has been replaced with direct arrest in the school and or police reporting and tracking. This growing pattern of punishing students instead of educating them makes it nearly impossible for students to receive a quality education on equal terms. In the era of mass incarceration we must ask ourselves, how did we allow the line between schools and the legal system to become blurred and what new American Dream do young people imagine today?



