

January 31, 2024

# RISING NUMBERS UNMET NEEDS

Immigrant Newcomers in  
Massachusetts High Schools



**ANNENBERG**  
BROWN UNIVERSITY



# Defining Newcomers

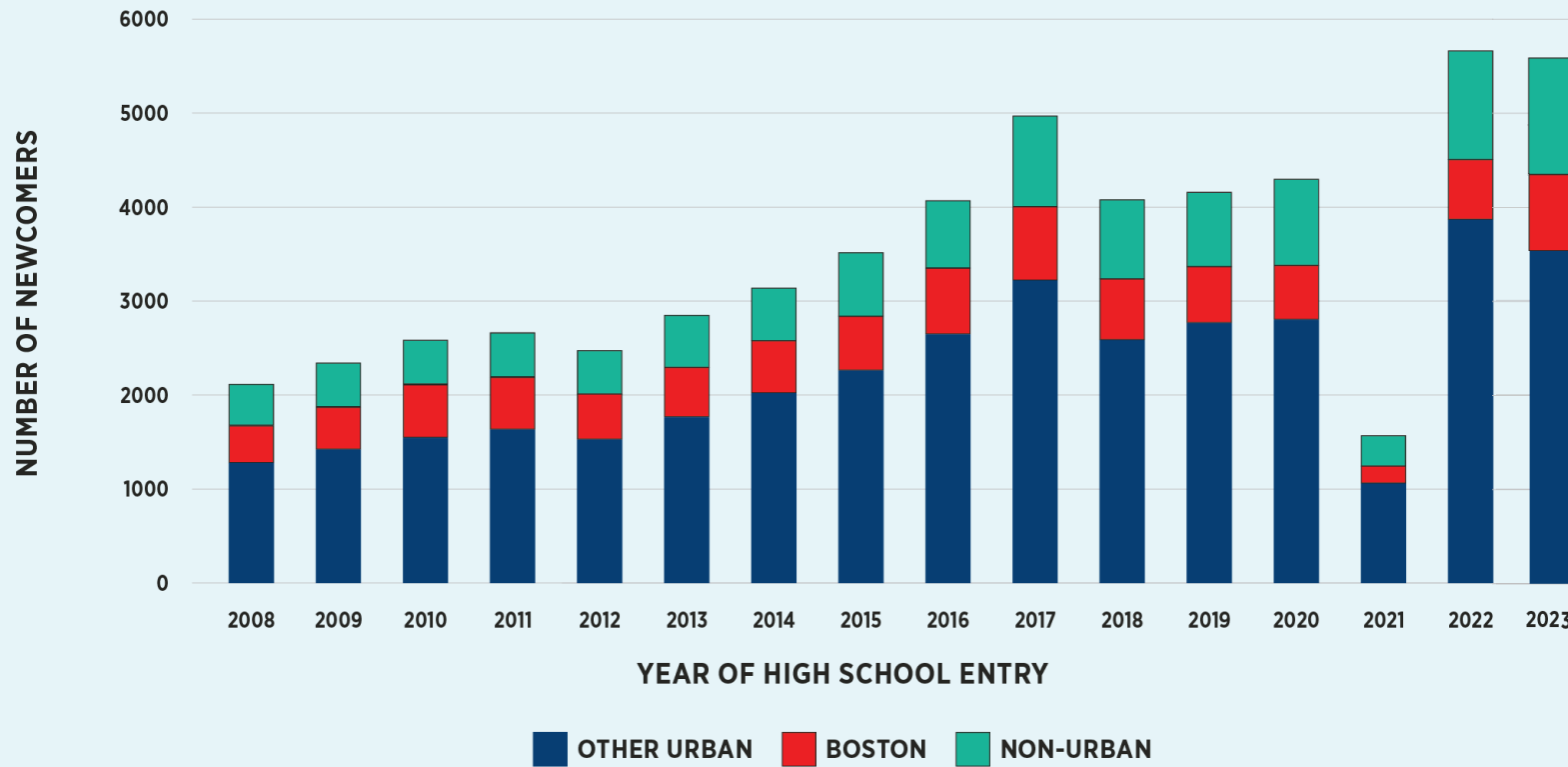
- English learners (ELs) in their **first 12 months of schooling in the U.S.** who entered a Massachusetts public school in the 2007-08 school year (hereafter, 2008) or later
- This report:
  - Newcomers **entering grades 9-12**
  - Newcomers 18 years of age or younger on September 1 of their entry year

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## WE HIGHLIGHT SIX KEY FINDINGS:

- Over the past 15 years, the number of newcomers has nearly tripled and the population has changed dramatically.
- More districts are serving newcomers, but newcomers are concentrated in relatively few schools.
- The profiles of newcomers differ dramatically across districts.
- Most newcomers are not meeting growth targets for English language proficiency.
- The Commonwealth's competency determination (CD) policy disproportionately affects newcomers.
- High-school completion and college enrollment rates for newcomers are relatively low.

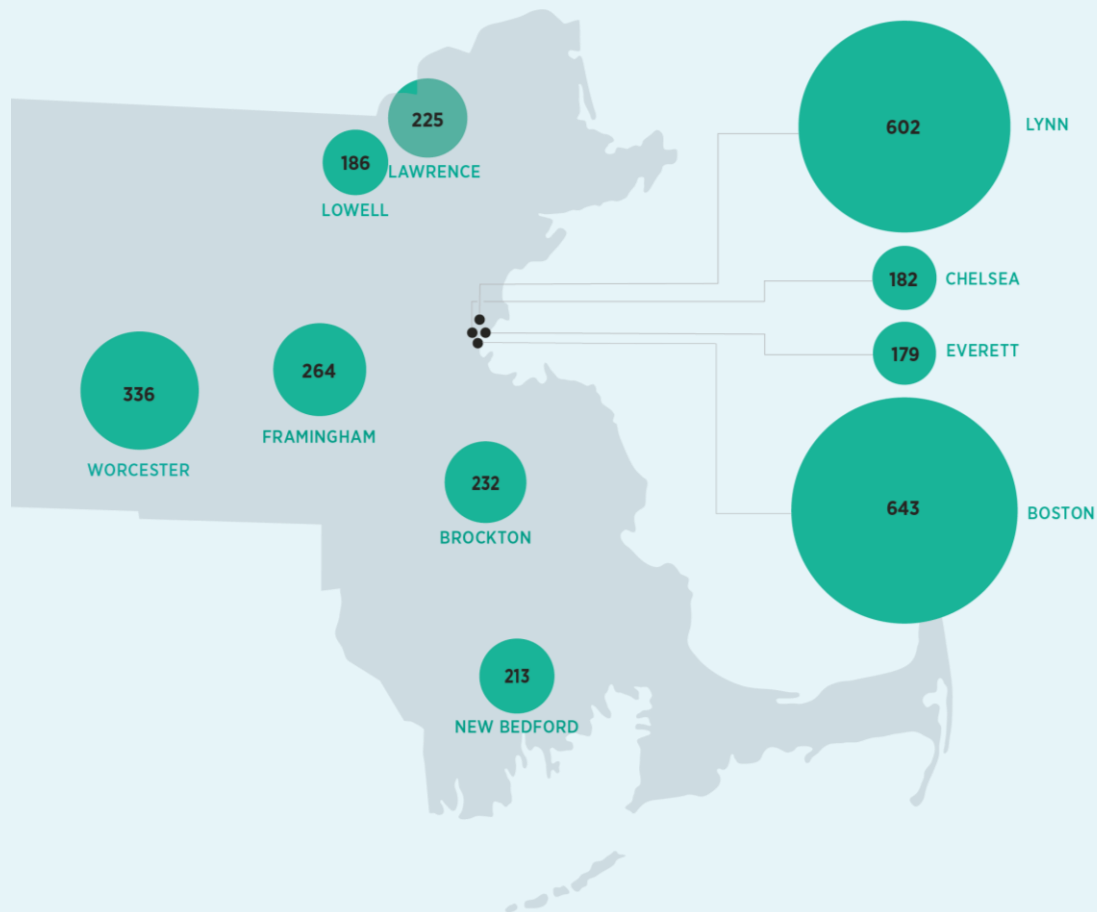
# The number of newcomers in Massachusetts has nearly tripled since 2008



NOTE Urban districts are those included in the Commonwealth's Urban Superintendents Network.

# Newcomers are clustered in many large urban districts, but more districts are serving newcomers than ever before

## Counts of Newcomers Entering in 2022

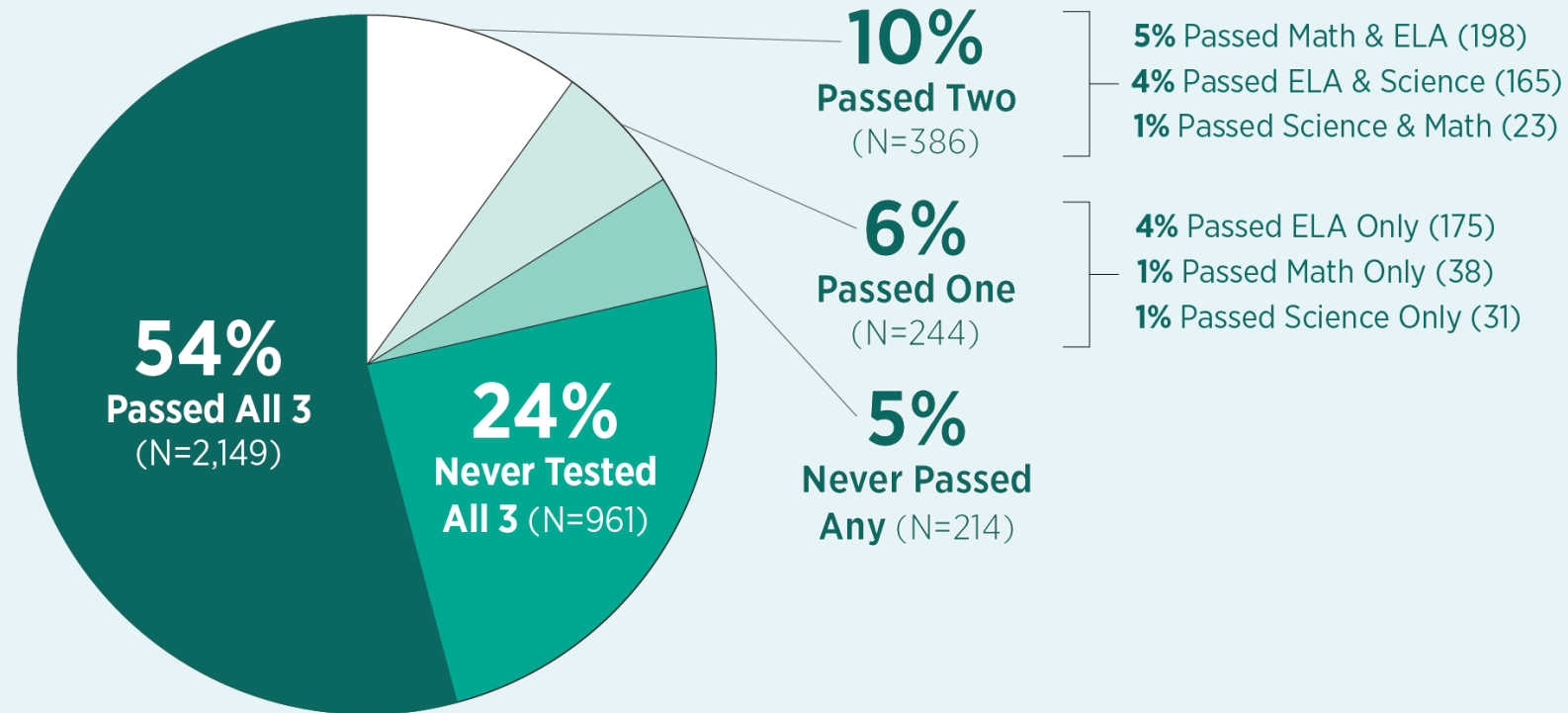


Most urban districts have seen very large increases since 2008 in the number of newcomers arriving each year.

Half of 2022 newcomers attended one of 14 high schools.

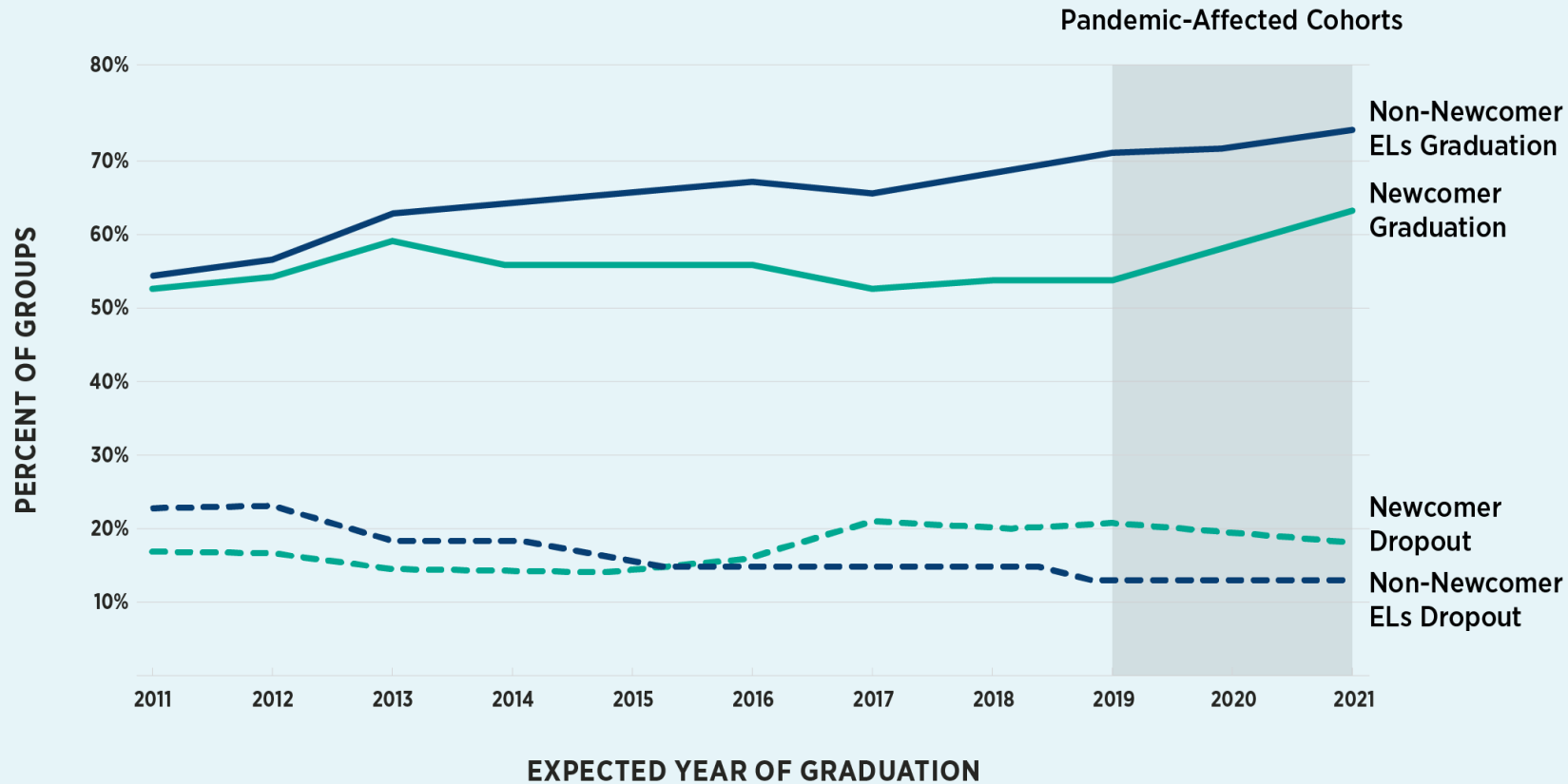
95 districts served at least 5 newcomers in 2022, compared to 59 in 2008.

# Only half of newcomers eventually exceed the minimum required score on all three high-school MCAS tests



Number and Percent of Newcomers Entering in 2016 Who Passed Each MCAS Test (N=3,954)

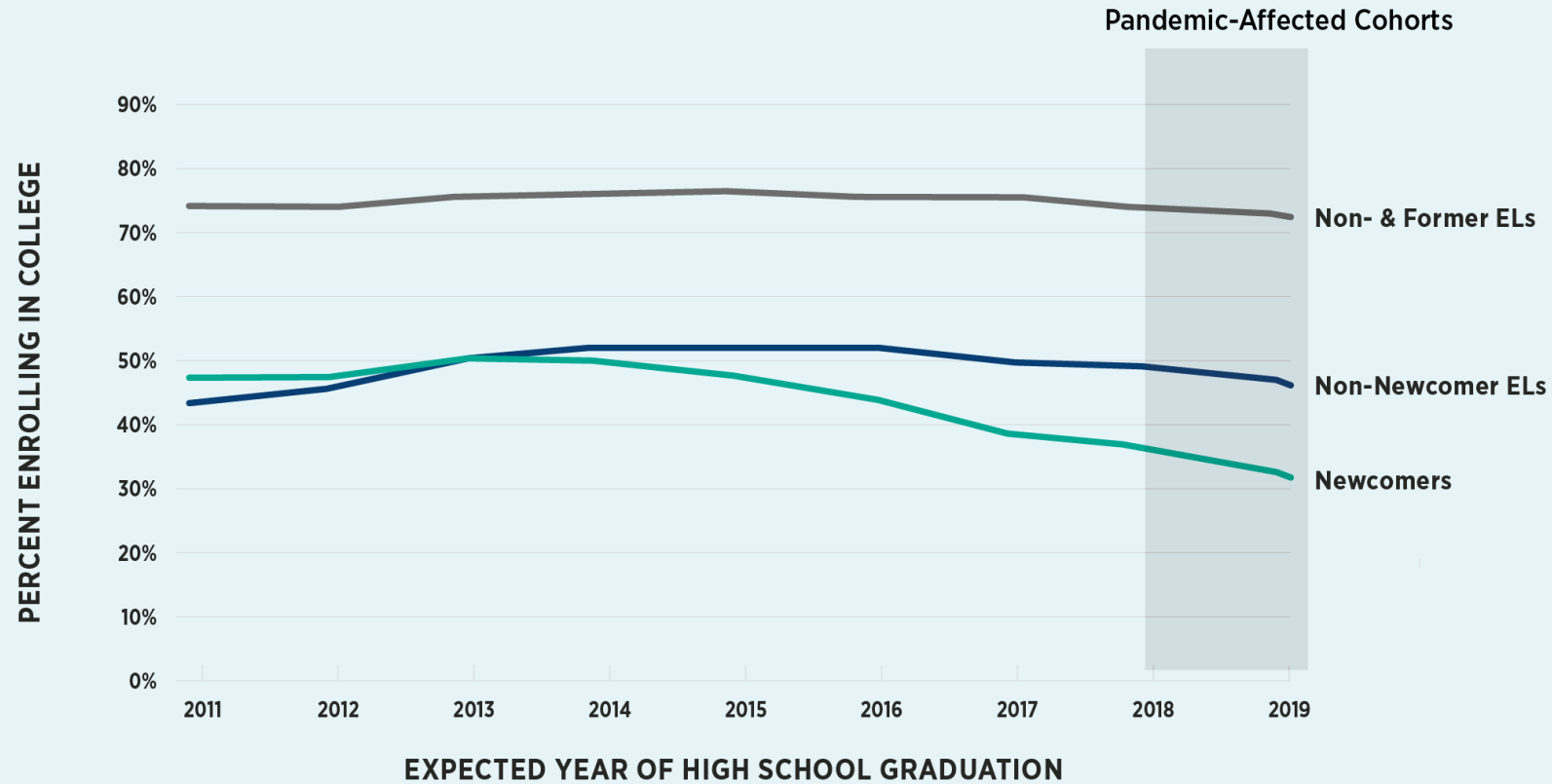
# Newcomers' high-school graduation rate remained under 60% until MCAS requirements were waived during the pandemic



## High-School Outcomes of English Learners One Year After Their Expected Graduation

NOTE Newcomers expected to graduate in 2019 were only impacted by the pandemic if they remained enrolled through the spring of 2020, therefore becoming eligible for the waiver of the testing requirement.

# College enrollments of newcomers have declined steeply, both before and during the pandemic



## College Enrollment of High-School Students Within 3 Years After Expected Graduation



# The profiles of newcomers differ dramatically across districts

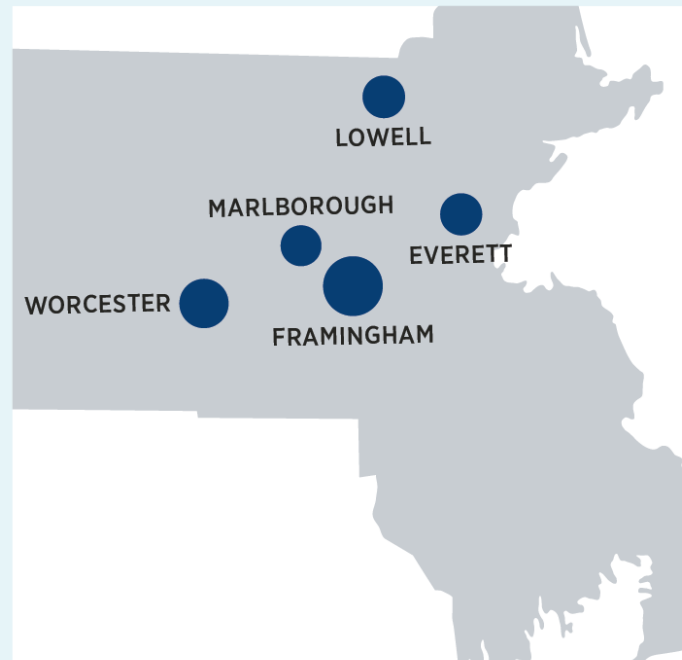
## Spanish/Northern Triangle

(34% in 2022, 15% this fall)



## Portuguese/Brazil

(26% in 2022, 10% this fall)



## Creole/Haiti

(3% in 2022, 10% this fall)



## Large differences by language/country group underline the need for customized supports and interventions

<b>Spanish/ Northern Triangle</b>	<b>Creole/ Haiti</b>
92% at lowest level of English proficiency	43% at lowest level of English proficiency
26% retained in 9 <sup>th</sup> grade	11% retained in 9 <sup>th</sup> grade
39% dropped out	6% dropped out
37% graduated	78% graduated
22% of grads to college	82% of grads to college

## Key takeaways

- Patterns in where newcomers come from and where they enroll are very dynamic, even within a short window of time
- Newcomers continue to be concentrated in urban districts, but more districts are enrolling newcomers than ever before
- The profiles of newcomers differ dramatically across districts, underlining the need for customized supports and interventions
- High-school completion and college enrollment rates of newcomers are relatively low

Call to Action!

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Immigrants in a Changing Region**



**Join our Workgroup!**



**Register Today!**