

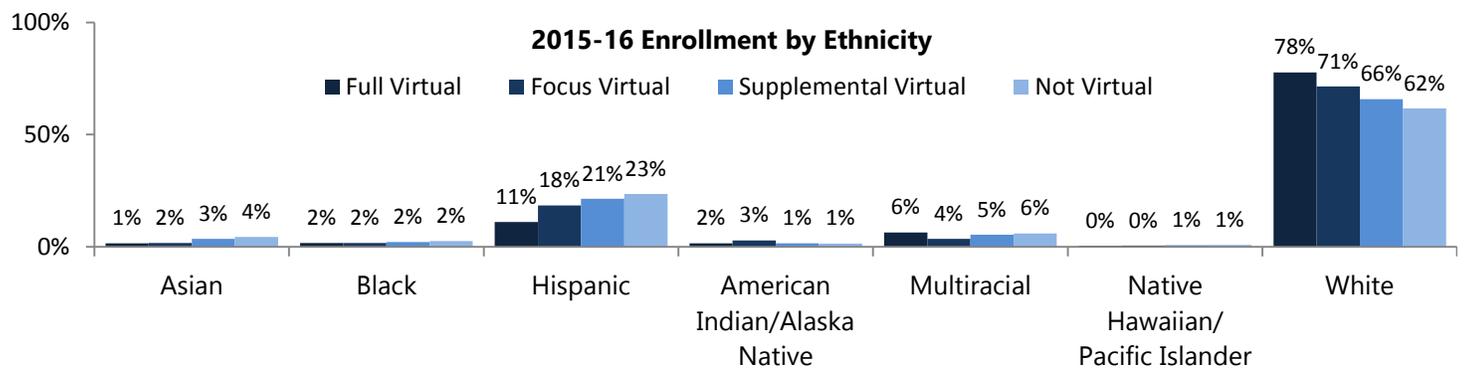
### Virtual School Enrollment and Population

In 2015-16, Oregon began formally collecting data on how much of a school's instruction was provided virtually. Schools were categorized as:

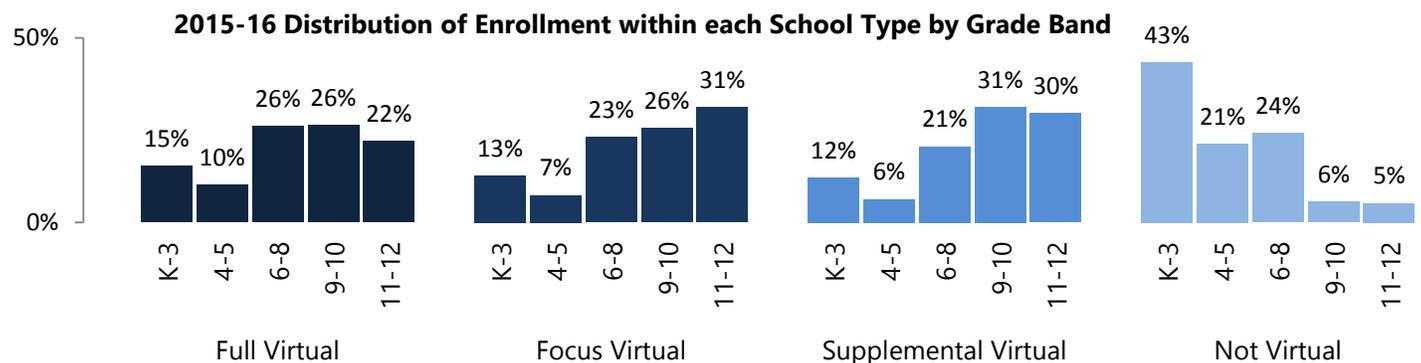
- Full Virtual (5 schools; 6,452 students): The school has no physical building where students meet with each other or with teachers, and all instruction is virtual.
- Focus Virtual (22 schools; 5,273 students): The school focuses on a systematic program of virtual instruction but includes some physical meetings among students or with teachers.
- Supplemental Virtual (401 schools; 205,169 students): The school offers virtual courses but virtual instruction is not the primary means of instruction.
- Not Virtual (811 schools; 343,441 students): The school does not offer any virtual instruction.

Schools identified as full or focus virtual enrolled about 2% of all K-12 students<sup>1</sup> and nearly 4% of high school students. Schools identified as supplemental virtual enrolled 37% of K-12 students, but nearly 75% of high school students.

Students in full or focus virtual schools were slightly more likely to be female, but substantially more likely to be white, than their peers in supplemental or not virtual schools.



Students in full or focus virtual schools were about as likely as their supplemental or not virtual peers to be identified as special education, but were significantly less likely (less than 2%, compared to more than 7% of other students) to be identified as Talented and Gifted. They were also less likely to have ever been eligible for services for English learners (9% of virtual students, compared to 23% of other students).



<sup>1</sup> Excluding students attending private placements, district-level programs, or other educational settings on which virtual status data was not collected.

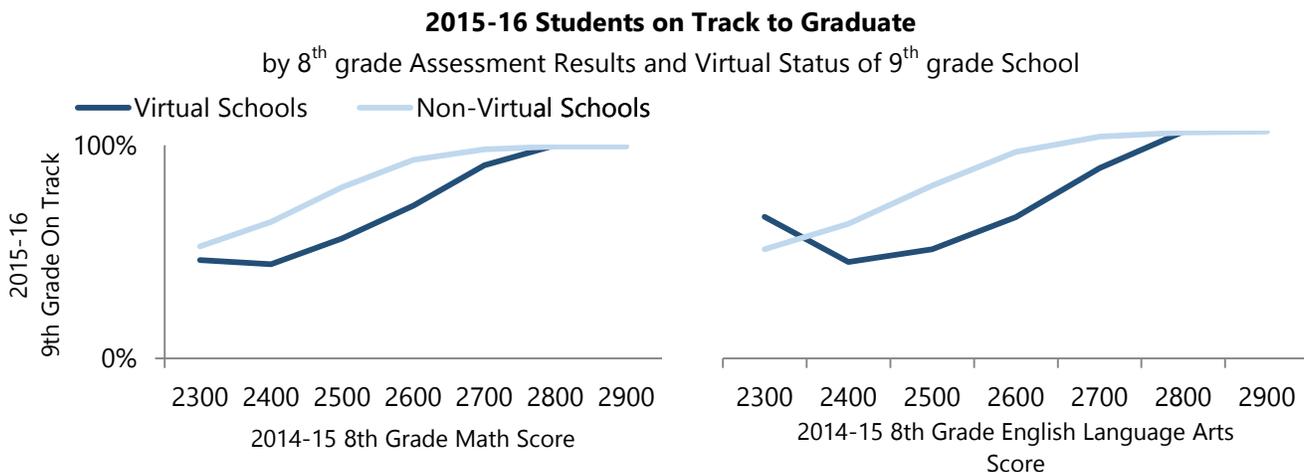
**Virtual School<sup>2</sup> Outcomes**

It is sometimes said that virtual schools often serve disadvantaged students who are not good fits for regular schools, and therefore it is inappropriate to compare virtual and non-virtual schools on outcomes. In order to create more fair comparisons, we have looked at virtual school data controlling for certain student characteristics. It is important to note, however, that many measures that we use to identify disadvantaged students, such as regular attendance<sup>3</sup> or eligibility for lunch at no cost<sup>4</sup>, have significantly different definitions when applied to virtual schools than they do when applied to non-virtual schools. It is therefore not possible to completely control for all of the population differences.

Students in virtual schools were between 10 and 30 percentage points less likely to be on track to graduate at the end of their 9<sup>th</sup> grade year, even when limiting the pool of students to regular attenders. Among students who were regular attenders for two years in a row, and attended a non-virtual school for 9<sup>th</sup> grade, more than 90% were on-track to graduate, compared to only 74% of those who attended fully virtual schools.

	% 9th Graders On Track to Graduate in 2015-16		
	All Students	Regular Attenders in 2015-16	Regular Attenders in 2014-15 and 2015-16
Full Virtual	55.9	68.3	73.8
Focus Virtual	60.8	72.1	78.7
Supplemental Virtual	84.3	91.1	92.2
Not Virtual	85.9	91.5	92.7

Among students with the same 8<sup>th</sup> grade scores, those attending virtual schools were up to 30 percentage points less likely to be on track by the end of 9<sup>th</sup> grade than students who attended non-virtual schools<sup>5</sup>.



<sup>2</sup> Including Full and Focus virtual schools as “Virtual Schools” and Supplemental or Not virtual schools as “Non-Virtual Schools.”

<sup>3</sup> Full-time virtual education students are counted as present for the full week provided that they check in with a teacher twice during that week. Non-virtual students must attend more than half the morning and more than half the afternoon of every day in the week in order to be counted as present for the entire week.

<sup>4</sup> Not all schools participate in the national school lunch program.

<sup>5</sup> Measure includes only students who were enrolled in the same district for a full academic year in their first year of high school. Highly mobile students and students who left the district before the first school day in May are not included. Students whose 8<sup>th</sup> grade scores were very high are also excluded, as too few of these students attended virtual schools for meaningful comparisons.