



2021 Student Mobility Memo

Governor's Office of Student Achievement
March 2022

Governor's Office of Student Achievement (GOSA) calculates student mobility rates for each Georgia public school and school district annually. The school student mobility rate is the percentage of students who entered or withdrew from the school during the school year, and the district student mobility rate is the percentage of students who entered or withdrew from a school within the district during the school year. GOSA calculates rates based on student entry and withdrawal as reported by schools, but it should be noted that schools may have had difficulty reporting student entry and withdrawal during periods of virtual instruction due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The analysis below includes a summary of student mobility rates for the 2020-2021 school year.

District Student Mobility Summary Statistics & Analysis¹

In general, the student mobility rates for school districts show a slight increase from 2020 to 2021, with the median rate increasing by 0.8 percentage points. As shown in Table 1 below, the lowest mobility rate for a district increased by 1.4 percentage points, and the highest mobility rate for a district increased by 25.1 percentage points. The average difference between 2020 and 2021 mobility rates for each district is 0.5 percentage points, with the greatest increase being Mitchell County (+25.1) and the greatest decrease being Baker County (-12.3). Out of all 180 districts, 140 (77.8%) have a 2021 student mobility rate that is within three percentage points of the previous year.

Table 1: District Student Mobility Rate Summary Statistics

	MEAN %	MEDIAN %	MIN %	MAX %
2020	12.1	11.4	3.3	29.7
2021	12.6	12.2	4.7	54.8
Difference	+0.5	+0.8	+1.4	+25.1

As shown in Figure 1 below, the distribution of district mobility rates for 2020 and 2021 shows a change, with more districts reporting higher student mobility rates. Fewer districts reported rates in the lowest two categories, up to 10.0%, while more districts reported rates from 10.0% up to 20.0%. Table 2 below displays the top and bottom five districts for student mobility rates in 2021. Four of the lowest five districts are city districts. City districts have a mean student mobility rate of 10.7%, compared to a mean rate of 12.9% for county districts.

¹ Although State Charter Schools are considered individual school districts, they are excluded from the district analysis due to their small size compared to traditional school districts. State schools and Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) schools are also excluded due to their small populations and lack of comparability to traditional school districts. These schools are included in the school-level analysis below.



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Figure 1: Frequency of District Student Mobility Rates, 2020 and 2021

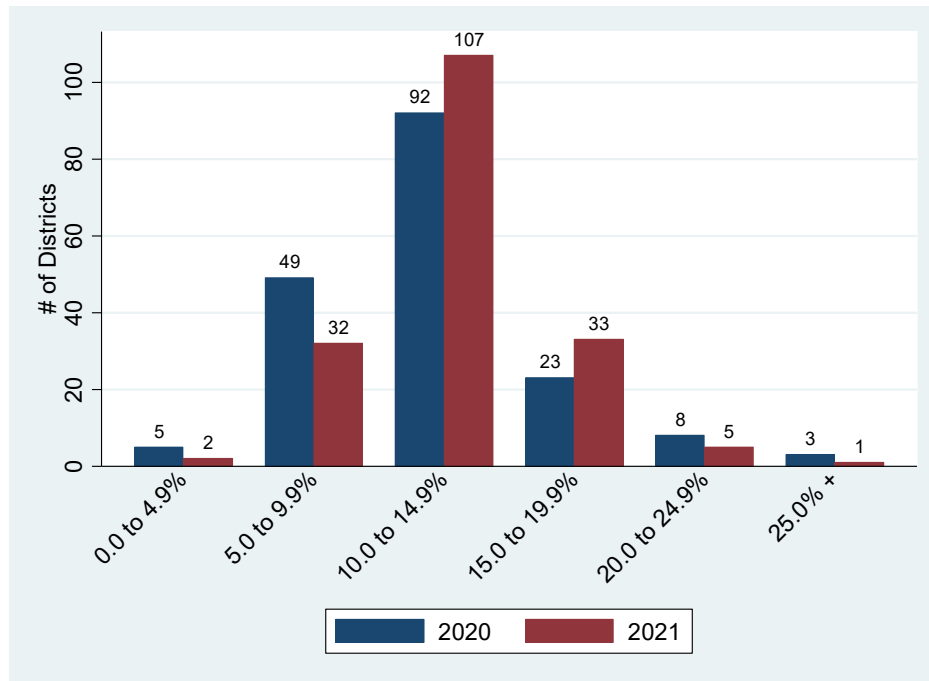


Table 2: Districts with Highest and Lowest 2021 Student Mobility Rates

Five Highest Districts	Mobility Rate	Five Lowest Districts	Mobility Rate
Mitchell County	54.8%	Bremen City	4.7%
Baker County	22.1%	Chickamauga City	4.7%
Valdosta City	21.7%	City Schools of Decatur	5.0%
Liberty County	21.3%	Clay County	5.0%
Richmond County	21.0%	Trion City	5.1%

The four districts with the highest student mobility rates are all located in southern region of the state. Figure 2 below shows a map of 2021 district student mobility rates. The districts with the highest mobility rates listed in Table 2 all have majority Black student populations.² Four of these districts also have student populations that are majority Directly Certified (DC) students (Liberty County has a DC rate of 38.5%).³

Conversely, four of the districts with the lowest mobility have majority White student populations and DC rates of 23.8% or lower. Clay County has a DC rate of 84.1% and a student population that is 97% Black, making it an outlier from the other districts with the lowest mobility rates.

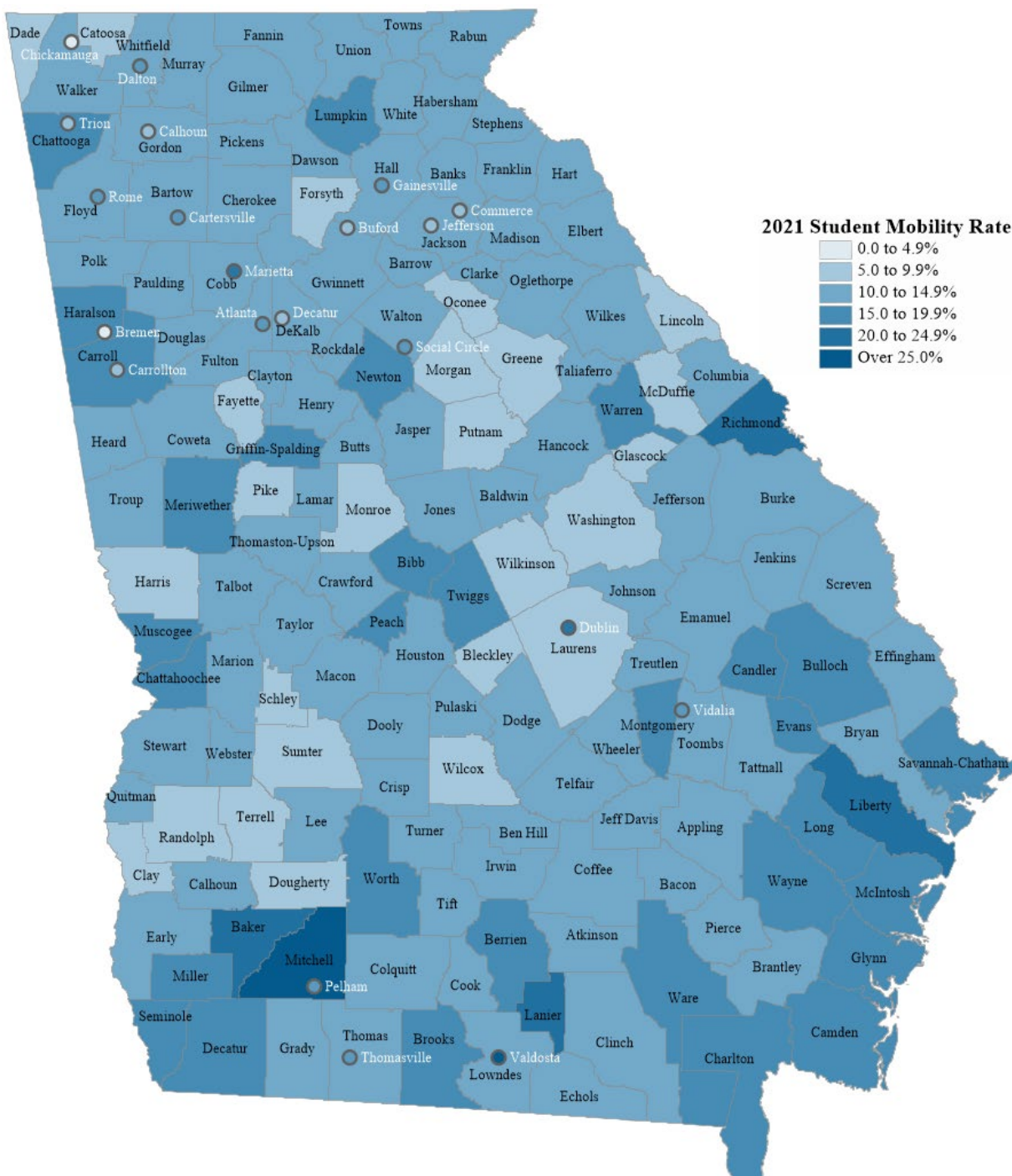
² The 2020-2021 “Enrollment by Subgroup Programs” dataset was used for demographic analysis. This dataset is available from GOSA’s [Downloadable Data webpage](#) and includes Full-time-equivalency (FTE) enrollment counts for school systems and schools disaggregated by subgroups.

³ Direct Certification (DC) is the method that GOSA uses to measure student poverty. The district-level and school-level DC rates for 2020-2021 are available on GOSA’s [Downloadable Data webpage](#). A definition for DC students and more information is available on GOSA’s [Direct Certification webpage](#).



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Figure 2: Map of 2021 District Student Mobility Rates⁴



⁴ City districts are labeled in white, while county districts are labeled in black.



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School Student Mobility Summary Statistics & Analysis

Student mobility rates for schools show a much wider range than those for districts. While 2021 district mobility rates range from 4.7% to 54.8%, school mobility rates range from 0.8% to 1,028.6%. Contrary to the trend for district mobility rates, average school mobility rates show a slight decrease from 2020 to 2021, with the median rate decreasing by 0.2 percentage points. As shown in Table 3 below, the lowest mobility rate for a school increased by 0.3 percentage points, and the highest mobility rate for a school fell by 10,471.4 percentage points.⁵ The average difference between 2020 and 2021 for each school is -0.8 percentage points. The school with the greatest increase was Haralson County Rebel Academy (388.9 percentage points), and the school with the greatest decrease was Dooly County Prep Academy (-233.3 percentage points). Of the 2,265 schools with data available for both years, 1,682 (74.3%) have a 2021 student mobility rate that is within five percentage points of the previous year.

Table 3: School Student Mobility Rate Summary Statistics

	MEAN %	MEDIAN %	MIN %	MAX %
2020	25.1	13.0	0.5	11,500.0*
2021	19.0	12.8	0.8	1,028.6
Difference	-6.1	-0.2	+0.3	-10,471.4

Note. Out of 2,278 observations in 2020 and 2,283 observations in 2021, 2,265 matched.

*See Footnote 5 below.

Table 4 below shows the summary statistics for schools excluding Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) facilities, residential treatment centers (RTCs), and other schools on GOSA's 2019 Non-traditional List.⁶ These schools make up the majority of the top 10 decreases and top 10 increases from 2020 to 2021. These facilities serve alternative student populations, and many of them are designed to support students for temporary periods before students return to a different school, contributing to volatile mobility rates. These data may still include schools that serve alternative student populations but do not meet the criteria for GOSA's Non-traditional List.

Table 4: School Student Mobility Rate Summary Statistics, Excluding RTCs, DJJ Facilities & GOSA's Non-traditional List

	MEAN %	MEDIAN %	MIN %	MAX %
2020	20.9	12.8	0.5	11,500.0*
2021	14.4	12.6	0.8	335.7
Difference	-6.5	-0.2	+0.3	-11,164.3

Note. Out of 2,223 observations in 2020 and 2,230 observations in 2021, 2,213 matched.

*See Footnote 5 below.

⁵ Eagle's Landing Academy in Mitchell County had a 2020 student mobility rate of 11,500.0% in 2020. In all the available datasets for student mobility from 2012 to present, this is the highest school mobility rate reported. The next highest reported student mobility rate is the 2017 rate for Gwinnett County's International Transition Center at 2,200.0%.

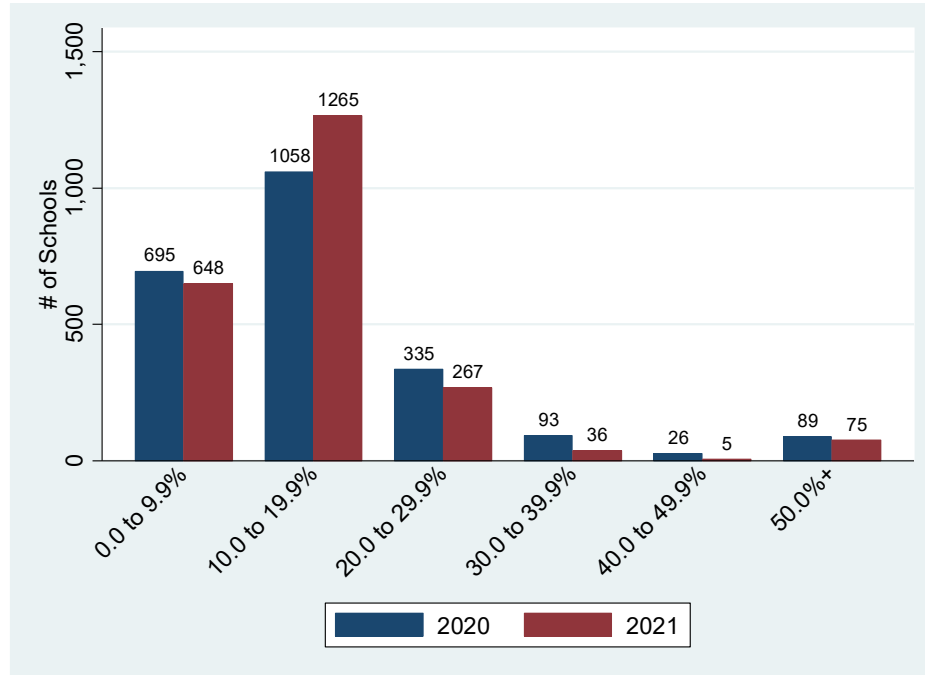
⁶ GOSA defines non-traditional schools as schools that exist for the distinct purpose of serving students who have unique instructional needs that are not adequately addressed in a traditional classroom setting. A full explanation can be found in [GOSA's Non-traditional School Definition](#).



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As shown in Figure 3 below, the distribution of school mobility rates for 2020 and 2021 shows a change. More schools reported rates in the category with rates from 10.0% up to 20.0%, while the number of schools in all other categories decreased.

Figure 3: Frequency of School Student Mobility Rates, 2020 and 2021



Note. The category “50.0%+” includes rates ranging from 50.0% to 11,500.0%. For the full list of school mobility rates, see the full datasets for 2020 and 2021 on GOSA’s [Downloadable Data webpage](#).

Tables 5 and 6 below show the schools with the lowest and highest 2021 mobility rates, respectively. Eight of the 10 schools with the lowest student mobility rates have student populations that are majority Black. Seven of the 10 schools with the highest student mobility rates are RTCs, and two are on GOSA’s Non-traditional List. The median mobility rate for RTCs is 277.8%, compared to the median rate for all schools at 12.8%. Table 7 below shows the schools with the highest mobility rates excluding RTCs and schools on GOSA’s Non-traditional List.

Table 5: 10 Schools with Lowest 2021 Student Mobility Rates

School	District	Mobility Rate
Richmond County Technical Career Magnet School	Richmond County	0.8
Woodville-Tompkins Technical and Career High School	Savannah-Chatham County	0.9
7 Pillars Career Academy	Clayton County	1.0
The Champion Theme Middle School	DeKalb County	1.3
Hapeville Charter Middle School	Fulton County	1.3
Robert A. Cross Middle Magnet	Dougherty County	1.3
Columbus High School	Muscogee County	1.5
KIPP West Atlanta Young Scholars Academy	Atlanta Public Schools	1.5
DeKalb Early College Academy	DeKalb County	1.6
DeKalb PATH Academy Charter School	DeKalb County	1.6

Table 6: 10 Schools with Highest 2021 Student Mobility Rates



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School	District	Mobility Rate
Lighthouse Care Center of Augusta*	Richmond County	1028.6
The Foundry**	Hall County	793.3
Haralson County Rebel Academy**	Haralson County	650.0
UHS of Laurel Heights*	DeKalb County	612.9
Hillside Conant School*	Atlanta Public Schools	591.7
UHS of Savannah Coastal Harbor Treatment Center*	Savannah-Chatham County	579.1
Georgia Baptist Children's Home and Family Ministries*	Fulton County	357.1
Wellspring Living*	Fulton County	350.0
The Hope Academy School	Troup County	335.7
Good Sheperd Therapeutic Center*	Meriwether County	316.7

*Denotes RTCs

**Denotes schools on GOSA's 2019 Non-traditional List

Table 7: 10 Schools with Highest 2021 Student Mobility Rates, Excluding RTCs and GOSA's Non-traditional List

School	District	Mobility Rate
The Hope Academy School	Troup County	335.7
Hurricane Transition Academy	Ben Hill County	303.7
Second Chance	Evans County	241.2
Worth County Achievement Center	Worth County	236.4
Telfair Alternative Preparation School	Telfair County	200.0
Mountain Education Charter High School	State Charter School	169.1
Foothills Charter High School	State Charter School	146.2
Coastal Plains Charter High School—Candler Campus	State Charter School	135.0
Skyview High School	Fulton County	115.2
Dooly County Prep Academy	Dooly County	100.0