Which professional standards do you use to design your programs? How is the program aligned with UCONN's Educator Preparation Program Conceptual Framework?

The Department of Speech Language Hearing Sciences (SLHS) has developed the graduate program to be consistent with the Standards for Accreditation of Graduate Education Programs in Speech Language Pathology for the Council on Academic Accreditation. Graduate students seeking Connecticut School Certification in Speech Language Pathology complete NEAG requirements for coursework and student teaching. SLHS is also guided by the strategic plan developed by the faculty to align with the university and graduate school goals.

Mission

To provide an understanding of human communication disorders and their clinical management by emphasizing current evidence-based practice. Academic courses and clinical education experiences encourage a theoretical perspective and experimental orientation to develop an appreciation of current knowledge and future research needs.

General Information

SLHS focuses on studying the normal development of speech, language, and hearing as well as the understanding and clinical management of disorders in these processes. The SLHS program offers curricula leading to a Master of Arts (M.A.) degree in Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences. The program is typically completed in two years (for students with a Bachelor’s degree in SLHS) or three years (for students with a Bachelor’s degree in an area other than SLHS). Once admitted to the program, students choose either the thesis (Plan A) or non-thesis (Plan B) option. The M.A. program in speech-language pathology leads to clinical certification and is accredited by the American Speech-Language Hearing Association's (ASHA) Council on Academic Accreditation (CAA).

Knowledge and Skills for Certificate of Clinical Competency (CCC) in Speech Language Pathology

The M.A. in SLHS allows students to meet all academic and clinical practicum requirements for the ASHA Certificate of Clinical Competency and the State of Connecticut's requirements for licensure in speech-language pathology. The certification program typically requires two years of full-time graduate study beyond the pre-professional background. According to the Council for Clinical Certification (CFCC), students must obtain and demonstrate knowledge and skills in eight standard content areas: Statistics/Science (Standard III-A), Basic Human Communication and Swallowing (Standard III-B), Communication Disorders (Standard III-C/D), Ethical Conduct (Standard III-E), Research and Research Integration (Standard III-F), Contemporary Professional Issues (Standard III-G), Professional Credentials (Standard III-H), and Oral and Written Skills (Standard IV-B). The standards for knowledge and skills are achieved through the completion of
a minimum of 75 credit hours of course work in these eight content areas. The credit hours may be obtained through courses taken at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. In addition, students must obtain a minimum of 400 clock hours of supervised clinical practicum. At least 375 hours must be in direct client/patient contact and 25 hours in clinical observation (325 hours must be earned during enrollment in the graduate program). An intensive summer session of supervised clinical experience between the first and second year is required for completing the clinical clock hours requirement of the certification program.

Standards for Accreditation of Graduate Education Programs in Speech-Language Pathology

Effective January 1, 2008 | Last Updated January 1, 2014

Introduction

The Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA) of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) accredits graduate programs that prepare individuals to enter professional practice in audiology and/or speech-language pathology. The CAA was established by ASHA and is authorized to function autonomously in setting and implementing standards and awarding accreditation. The CAA is recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation and by the U.S. Secretary of Education as the accrediting agency for the accreditation and pre-accreditation (accreditation candidate) of education programs leading to the first professional or clinical degree at the master's or doctoral level and for the accreditation of these programs offered via distance education, throughout the United States.

The intention of accreditation is to promote excellence in educational preparation while assuring the public that graduates of accredited programs are educated in a core set of knowledge and skills required to qualify for state and national credentials for independent professional practice. Quality education can be achieved in a variety of ways, and the CAA wishes to support programs in the achievement of the highest quality possible. These standards identify basic elements that must exist in all accredited graduate education programs while allowing flexibility in the ways in which programs pursue excellence.

The CAA has identified the following six components as essential to quality education in the professions and has established its accreditation standards accordingly:

- administrative structure and governance
- faculty
- curriculum (academic and clinical education)
- students
- assessment
Accreditation Standards

The CAA has adopted the following standards as necessary conditions for accreditation of eligible graduate education programs. The CAA is responsible for evaluating the adequacy of an applicant program's efforts to satisfy each standard. Compliance with all standards represents the minimum requirement for accreditation, regardless of mode of delivery, including distance education. The CAA will evaluate programs to ensure that the program is equivalent across all modes of delivery and that students enrolled in distance education or other modes of education delivery are held to equivalent standards and afforded equivalent access to all courses, clinical practicum opportunities and supervision, advising, student support services, program resources, etc.

Standard 1.0 Administrative Structure and Governance

1.1 The applicant institution of higher education holds regional accreditation.

1.2 The program's mission and goals are consistent with CAA standards for entry into professional practice (3.1A and/or 3.1B) and with the mission of the institution.

1.3 The program develops and implements a long-term strategic plan.

1.4 The program's faculty has authority and responsibility for the program.

1.5 The individual responsible for the program(s) of professional education seeking accreditation holds a graduate degree with a major emphasis in speech-language pathology, in audiology, or in speech, language, and hearing science and holds a full-time appointment in the institution. The individual effectively leads and administers the program(s).

1.6 Students, faculty, staff, and persons served in the program's clinics are treated in a nondiscriminatory manner—that is, without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national or ethnic origin, disability, age, sexual orientation, genetic information, citizenship, or status as a covered veteran. The institution and program comply with all applicable laws, regulations, and executive orders pertaining thereto.

1.7 The program provides information about the program and the institution to students and to the public that is current, accurate, and readily available.

Standard 2.0 Faculty

2.1 All faculty members, including all individuals providing clinical education, are qualified and competent by virtue of their education, experience, and professional credentials to provide academic and clinical education assigned by the program.
2.2 The number of full-time doctoral-level faculty in speech-language pathology, audiology, and speech, language, and hearing sciences and other full- and part-time faculty is sufficient to meet the teaching, research, and service needs of the program and the expectations of the institution. The institution provides stable support and resources for the program's faculty.

2.3 Faculty members maintain continuing competence.

Standard 3.0B Curriculum (Academic and Clinical Education) in Speech-Language Pathology

3.1B The curriculum (academic and clinical education) is consistent with the mission and goals of the program and prepares students in the full breadth and depth of the scope of practice in speech-language pathology.

3.2B Academic and clinical education reflects current knowledge, skills, technology, and scope of practice. The curriculum is regularly reviewed and updated. The diversity of society is reflected throughout the curriculum.

3.3B The scientific and research foundations of the profession are evident in the curriculum.

3.4B The academic and clinical curricula reflect an appropriate sequence of learning experiences.

3.5B Clinical supervision is commensurate with the clinical knowledge and skills of each student, and clinical procedures ensure that the welfare of each person served by students is protected, in accord with recognized standards of ethical practice and relevant federal and state regulations.

3.6B Clinical education obtained in external placements is governed by agreements between the program and the external facility and is monitored by program faculty.

3.7B The clinical education component of the curriculum provides students with access to a client/patient base that is sufficient to achieve the program's stated mission and goals and includes a variety of clinical settings, client/patient populations, and age groups.

Standard 4.0 Students

4.1 The program criteria for accepting students for graduate study in audiology and/or speech-language pathology meet or exceed the institutional policy for admission to graduate study.

4.2 The program makes reasonable adaptations in curriculum, policies, and procedures to accommodate differences among individual students.

4.3 Students are informed about the program's policies and procedures, degree requirements, requirements for professional credentialing, and ethical practice. Students are informed about documented complaint processes.
4.4 Students receive advising on a regular basis that pertains to both academic and clinical performance and progress. Students also are provided information about student support services.

4.5 The program must adhere to its institutional policies and procedures to verify that a student who registers for a distance education course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the program and receives the academic credit.

Standard 5.0 Assessment

5.1 The program conducts ongoing and systematic formative and summative assessments of the performance of its current students.

5.2 The program documents student progress toward completion of the graduate degree and professional credentialing requirements and makes this information available to assist students in qualifying for certification and licensure.

5.3 The program conducts regular and ongoing assessments of program effectiveness and uses the results for continuous improvement.

5.4 The program regularly evaluates all faculty members and faculty uses the results for continuous improvement.

Standard 6.0 Program Resources

6.1 The institution provides adequate financial support to the program so that the program can achieve its stated mission and goals.

6.2 The program has adequate physical facilities (classrooms, offices, clinical space, research laboratories) that are accessible, appropriate, safe, and sufficient to achieve the program's mission and goals.

6.3 The program's equipment and educational/clinical materials are appropriate and sufficient to achieve the program's mission and goals.

6.4 The program has access to clerical and technical staff, support services, and library and technology resources that are appropriate and sufficient to achieve the program's mission and goals.
What are the candidate learning outcomes in the areas of content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions?

CAA Established Thresholds for Required Student Achievement Measures

The Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA) currently requires accredited programs to report student achievement data on an annual basis in three areas, which are identified in the Standards for Accreditation of Graduate Education Programs in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology: program completion rates, Praxis examination performance of graduates, and employment rates. To support assessment of a program's effectiveness and to comply with accreditation standards, the CAA has established specific thresholds for program performance in the three required student achievement measures, as follows:

- **Program completion rate**—At least 80% of students must have completed the program within the program's published time frame, as averaged over the 3 most recently completed academic years.
- **Praxis examination pass rate**—At least 80% of program graduates who have sat for the Praxis examination must have passed, as averaged over the 3 most recently completed academic years.
- **Employment rate**—At least 80% of program graduates must be employed in the profession or pursuing further education in the profession within 1 year of graduation, as averaged over the 3 most recently completed academic years.

These specific measures and related thresholds for performance were first established by the CAA in 2002 and have been reviewed and validated every 3 years for continued currency, appropriateness, and effectiveness in evaluating a program's success. The CAA considers extensive research on current benchmarks in use by other accreditors, best practices in the areas of performance assessment and outcomes measurement, recommendations by the U.S. Department of Education, and national performance averages and trends when determining which achievement measures to require and when establishing related thresholds for those student achievement measures.
What key assessments do you use to gauge the above mentioned learning outcomes?

**Standard 5.0 Assessment**

5.1 The program conducts ongoing and systematic formative and summative assessments of the performance of its current students.

The program identifies student–learning outcomes that address knowledge and skills consistent with the mission of the program. The program uses a variety of assessment mechanisms and techniques, including both formative and summative measures as defined below, administered by a range of program faculty and supervisors or preceptors, to evaluate students’ progress, and apply those mechanisms consistently.

*Formative Assessment*—ongoing measurement throughout educational preparation for the purpose of monitoring acquisition of knowledge and skills and improving student learning. The Clinical Competency Checklist and Clinical Skills Summary are completed for each semester for each student and with each clinical assignment. The Clinical Competency Checklist rates students successful independence across seven clinical areas with 124 items. Performance is summarized in those seven areas with 25 items. Please see summarized data for students during their NEAG School of Ed semester during their public school student teaching experience.

Additional formative assessments are completed throughout each of the five semesters of clinical practice. They include the Knowledge and Skills Checklist for the nine areas of practice and the Clinical Experience Tracking Form.

*Summative Assessment*—comprehensive evaluation of learning outcomes, including acquisition of knowledge and skills, at the culmination of an educational experience (e.g., course, program). The Academic Summary of Knowledge, the Knowledge and Skills Summary, the completion of the Clinical Project and the Praxis II are completed. Please see summarized data for students.

The program:

- assesses acquisition of student learning outcomes;
- provides students with regular feedback about their progress in acquiring the expected knowledge and skills in all academic and clinical components of the program, including all off-site experiences;
- documents the feedback mechanisms used to evaluate students’ performance;
- documents guidelines for remediation (e.g., repeating course work and/or clinical experiences, provisions for retaking examinations) and implements remediation opportunities consistently.
5.2 The program documents student progress toward completion of the graduate degree and professional credentialing requirements and makes this information available to assist students in qualifying for certification and licensure.

The program maintains accurate and complete records throughout each student's graduate program. Forms and tracking systems are used for this purpose. Responsibility for the completion of the records and timetable for completion are clearly established. Records are readily available to students upon request. Records are available to program graduates in accordance with the institution's and program's policies for retention of student information, and those policies are described. The program maintains documentation on each student in sufficient detail so that the program can verify completion of all academic and clinical requirements for the graduate degree and eligibility for relevant state and national credentials.

How are data collected, analyzed, and reported for the purpose of program improvements?

Standard 5.0 Assessment

5.3 The program conducts regular and ongoing assessments of program effectiveness and uses the results for continuous improvement.

The program documents the procedures followed in evaluating the quality, currency, and effectiveness of its graduate program and the process by which it engages in systematic self-study. The documentation indicates the mechanisms used to evaluate each program component, the schedule on which the evaluations are conducted and analyzed, and the program changes and/or improvements that have resulted from assessments.

The program collects and evaluates data on its effectiveness from multiple sources (e.g., students, alumni, faculty, employers, off-site supervisors or preceptors, community members, persons receiving services). The data includes students' and graduates' evaluations of courses and clinical education.

In addition, the following measures of student achievement are required and are evaluated relative to established thresholds, as defined below:

- Program completion rate—students completing the program requirements within the program’s published time frame. Documentation includes the number and percentage of students completing the program within the published timeframe for each of the 3 most recently completed academic years. If, when averaged over 3 years, the program’s completion rate does not meet or exceed the CAA’s established threshold, the program must provide an explanation and a plan for improving the results.
- Praxis examination pass rate—test-takers from the program who passed the Praxis examination. Documentation includes the number and percentage of test-takers from the
program, excluding individuals who graduated more than 3 years ago, who passed the Praxis examination for each of the 3 most recently completed academic years; results should be reported only once for test-takers who took the exam multiple times in the same examination reporting period. If, when averaged over 3 years, the program’s pass rate does not meet or exceed the CAA’s established threshold, the program must provide an explanation and a plan for improving the results.

- Employment rate—program graduates employed in the profession or pursuing further education in the profession within 1 year of graduation. Documentation includes the number and percentage of program graduates who are employed or continuing further education in the profession for each of the 3 most recently completed academic years. If, when averaged over 3 years, the program’s employment rate does not meet or exceed the CAA’s established threshold, the program must provide an explanation and a plan for improving the results.

Results of the assessments, including the required student achievement measures, are used to plan and implement program improvements that are consistent with the program’s mission and goals.

5.4 The program regularly evaluates all faculty members and faculty uses the results for continuous improvement.

The program describes the mechanism for regular evaluation of its faculty by program leadership (e.g. director, chair, evaluation committee) in accordance with institutional policy and guidelines. Students have the opportunity to evaluate faculty in all academic and clinical settings on a regular and ongoing basis. The program demonstrates how results of all evaluations are communicated to the faculty and used to improve performance.
Describe any clinical and field experiences required for the program, and how are they designed in partner with schools and practitioners.

Clinical experiences in speech language pathology and audiology are important components of the degree program and are offered in the UCONN Speech and Hearing Clinic (located in the D.C. Phillips Communication Sciences Building) as well as at other on-campus sites including the Emergent Literacy Program at UCONN Child Labs, the STARR Program and the Adult Literacy Program. Off-campus placements include acute and rehabilitation hospitals, long term-care facilities, out-patient clinics, birth-to-three agencies, schools, and private practice settings.

Clinical practicum at the University of Connecticut provides students with a wide variety of clinical experiences at the graduate level. Students are scheduled for clinical practicum only when the requirements for academic preparation and observation have been satisfied. Occasionally this sequence may be adjusted so that clinical experiences may be scheduled concurrently with the required academic study. The first 25 earned clinical clock hours of practicum must be obtained under the direct supervision of qualified supervisors at the University of Connecticut Speech and Hearing Clinic and/or its contracted sites. In addition to their initial experiences in the university clinic, students are assigned to a minimum of two off-campus clinical sites during their graduate program. These include settings such as hospitals, private practice, schools, early intervention sites, and rehabilitation centers. Most students will be placed in three external clinical placements during the final three semesters of the program.

Speech-language pathologists who work in the Connecticut public schools must have school certification. Through an arrangement with the School of Education, students enrolled in the M.A. program in SLHS can fulfill requirements leading to certification as an SLP for employment in Connecticut's public schools. Incoming graduate students apply to the NEAG Teacher Certification Program for Speech Language Pathologists in the fall of their first year. Once accepted a fingerprint and background check are completed. The students complete the Student Teaching Application in their second semester. Students are placed in a school for their student teaching practicum experience and complete 100 hours of supervised experience.
How do clinical and field experience ensure candidates to interact with diverse faculty and pupils?

A variety of clinical practicum experiences must be obtained so that the applicant can demonstrate skills across the scope of practice in speech-language pathology. Acceptable clinical practicum experience includes clinical and administrative activities directly related to patient care. Supervision must be sufficient to ensure the welfare of the patient and the student in accordance with the ASHA Code of Ethics. Supervision of clinical practicum must include direct observation, guidance, and feedback to permit the student to monitor, evaluate, and improve performance and to develop clinical competence. The amount of supervision must also be appropriate to the student’s level of training, education, experience and competence. Supervisors must hold a current CCC in the appropriate area of practice if students intend to apply clock hours toward the Clinical Certificate of Competency in Speech-Language Pathology (CCC-SLP). Activities supervised shall be limited to those specified in the Scope of Practice for the professional area in which supervisors are certified.

Clinical practicum at the University of Connecticut provides students with a wide variety of clinical experiences at the graduate level. Students are scheduled for clinical practicum only when the requirements for academic preparation and observation have been satisfied. Occasionally this sequence may be adjusted so that clinical experiences may be scheduled concurrently with the required academic study. The first 25 earned clinical clock hours of practicum must be obtained under the direct supervision of qualified supervisors at the University of Connecticut Speech and Hearing Clinic and/or its contracted sites. In addition to their initial experiences in the university clinic, students are assigned to a minimum of two off-campus clinical sites during their graduate program. These include settings such as hospitals, private practice, schools, early intervention sites, and rehabilitation centers. Most students will be placed in three external clinical placements during the final three semesters of the program.

The program ensures that the student’s experiences include diverse populations and settings. Experiences are tracked and monitored for all five semesters of clinical experiences. Tracking is completed for client age and severity, as well as, ethnic and social diversity. All programs and placements are arranged to ensure diverse opportunities.
Qualifications and scholarship of the program faculty

Research Faculty

Full Time Tenure Track

**Dr. Kathleen Cienkowski, Associate Professor**
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**Dr. Carl A. Coelho, Professor**
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**Dr. Bernard Grela, Associate Professor and Department Head**
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**Dr. Nicole Landi, Faculty Affiliate (Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology)**
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**Dr. Frank E. Musiek, Professor**
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Dr. Pradeep Ramanathan, Assistant Professor  
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Dr. Erika Skoe, Assistant Professor  
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Dr. Tammie Spaulding, Assistant Professor  
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Dr. Rachel M. Theodore, Assistant Professor  
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Website:  SLaP Lab
**Dr. Jennifer Tufts, Associate Professor**  
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**Dr. Kristin Vasil-Dilaj, Assistant Professor in Residence**  
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**Clinical Faculty**

**Full Time Non Tenure Track**

**Elizabeth Burke, Lecturer III**  
Education: M.S., University of Wisconsin  
Clinical Interests: Clinical education/supervision; disorders of communication in children from birth to 21 years, traumatic brain injury  
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**Wendy Chase, Lecturer III and Director of Clinical Education**  
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**Christine Hare, Lecturer I**  
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**Jean McCarthy, Lecturer I**  
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Candidate Performance Data Tables
Speech – Language Pathology
School of Education Certification Program

### Program Completion Rate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th># completed within expected time frame</th>
<th>% completed within completed time frame</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012-2013</td>
<td>10/10</td>
<td>100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>21/22</td>
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### Praxis Examination Pass Rates of Graduates

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<th>Period</th>
<th># taking exam</th>
<th># passed exam</th>
<th>% pass rate</th>
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<tr>
<td>2012-2013</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>100%</td>
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</table>

### Employment Rates of Graduates in the profession within one year of Graduation

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<th># of graduates</th>
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<td>2012-2013</td>
<td>9 to date</td>
<td>90% to date</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>100%</td>
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### Additional Data

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<th>Period</th>
<th>Mean Grad GPA</th>
<th>Mean PRAXIS II</th>
<th>Mean School Practicum Hours</th>
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<tr>
<td>2012-2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
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<td>2010-2011</td>
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<td>112</td>
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### Summary of Clinical Skills

#### 2012-2013 - Total Number of Students

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<th>ELEMENT SUB-SET</th>
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<th>D</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>NAME</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
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#### 2012-2013 Percentage of Students

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#### 2011-2012 Percentage of Students

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#### 2010-2011 - Total Number of Students

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#### 2010-2011 Percentage of Students

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