

# 2025-2026 Youth Council & Application Cycle Analysis



Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Asian American & Pacific Islanders (AAPI) Commission

# AAPI Commission



- Established on October 29, 2006, as the Massachusetts Asian American Commission (AAC).
- Renamed to Massachusetts Asian American and Pacific Islanders Commission (AAPIC) on July 16, 2021.
- Composed of 21 Commissioners appointed by various state officials.
- Mission
  - Celebrate and highlight contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders to Massachusetts.
  - Address unique needs and challenges of the AAPI community.
  - Enhance well-being of the diverse group, fostering inclusivity.

# AAPIC Youth Council

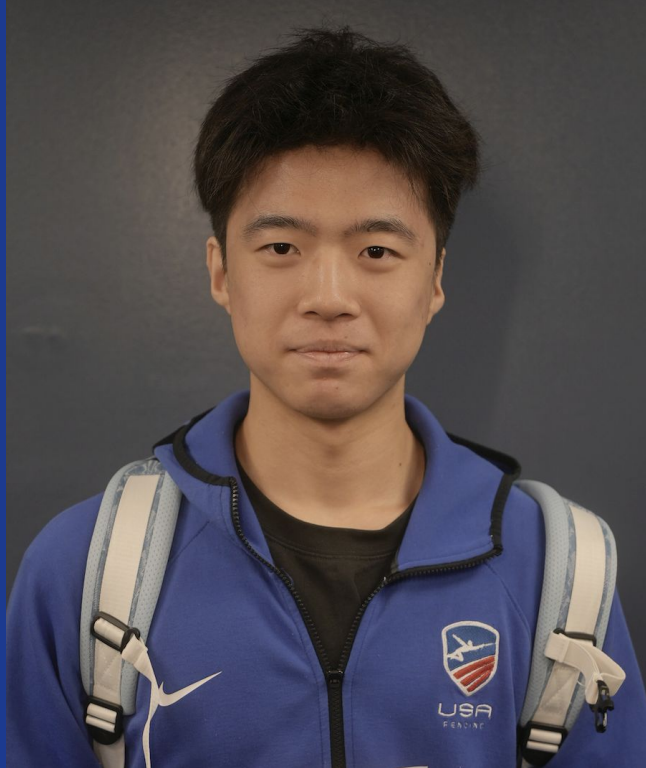
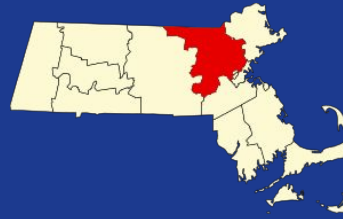
- The AAPIC Youth Council was envisioned by Education Committee in 2022, with support from Commissioners and staff.
- Created in response to concerns from AAPI students about racism and the lack of concrete action in school districts.
- Goal:
  - Uplift young people's voices and promote leadership among AAPI youth across Massachusetts.
- Mission:
  - Empower and amplify the voices and experiences of AAPI youth, helping them grow as leaders and agents of meaningful change in their communities.
- Starting in the 2024–2025 program year, the Youth Council introduced civic engagement projects, where each member designs and leads an independent project over the course of the year, culminating in a final showcase.



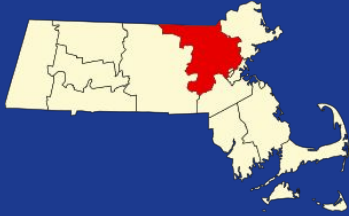
*Introducing the  
AAPI Commission's  
2025-2026  
Youth Council*



# Jason Yin



Jason Yin is a senior at Weston High School and the founder of the LinguoBridge Initiative, a cross-cultural language exchange program connecting over 150 students across the U.S. and China. He is passionate about promoting cultural understanding and youth empowerment through community-driven projects. Jason is a nationally rated varsity fencer, a certified alpine ski coach, and an emcee for cultural events including the Boston Asian Music Festival and Weston Spring Festival Gala. He also serves on the DEI Alliance and the Vision For Valor Initiative, where he helps lead outreach efforts and advocate for inclusive, youth-centered change.

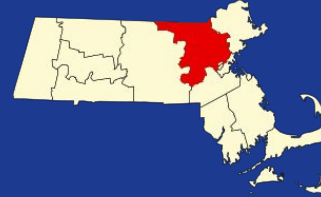
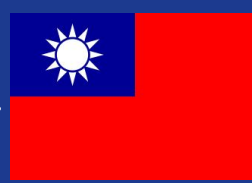


# Bhavika Kalia

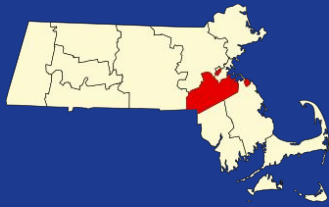
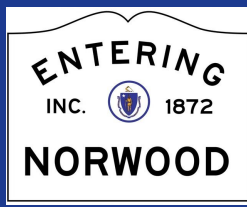
Hello! My name is Bhavika, which means emotional in Hindi. I am a rising junior at Somerville High School and a passionate youth advocate who has been involved with climate change, prevention, and health equity work. From organizing prevention-focused initiatives as a Youth Ambassador for Somerville Positive Forces to creating climate policy recommendations as part of Governor Healey's Youth Climate Change Council, I have learned to approach activism from both a community-oriented and statewide perspective. I hope to use these different lenses to strengthen my work with the AAPIC Youth Council. Dancing to connect with my cultural roots, specifically through Bharatanatyam, a form of Indian classical dance, and reading various genres of books are things I enjoy doing in my free time.



# Anthony You-Cheng Lu



Hello! My name is Anthony Lu, and I am a first-gen Taiwanese American Senior at Natick High School. I lead Model UN and Mock Trial teams, Taiwanese Cultural Ambassadors Group, and Student Government. In addition to that, I enjoy sports. Of course, I am an avid Red Sox and Patriots fan! I also run on the XC/TF team and play baseball and badminton. Ultimately, I strive to make an impact. Whether in sports, a debate, or my AAPI community, I can't wait to bring my relentless spirit to uplift our AAPI community.



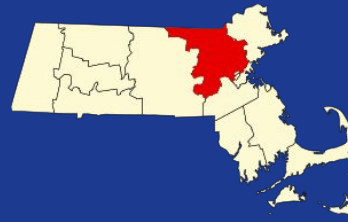
# Diya Bhandari

I am a rising senior from Norwood, Massachusetts and a second-generation Indian-American. Interested in pursuing political science and international economics, I am the president of my school's Asian Cultural Club and the fundraising co-chair for our DECA chapter. Outside of school, I love to play tennis and binge watch House of Cards. As a part of this year's Youth Council cohort, I'm more than excited to make meaningful change within my community alongside other AAPI youth leaders across the state!

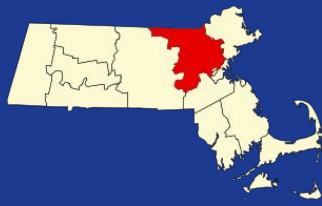




# David Guo



David Guo is a student-athlete from Lexington, Massachusetts, dedicated to elevating AAPI youth voices in basketball and sports. He has competed in basketball, tennis, and track and field, and has seen firsthand that biases, structural barriers, and significant underrepresentation persist on the basketball court—often leaving many AAPI youth unheard and disengaged. These challenges arise during critical years of growth and development, when sports can play a transformative role. Through his initiatives, David draws on his lived experiences to advance athletic equity, empowering AAPI youth achieve their shining moments on the court. He also leverages basketball and sports as platforms to foster inter-community and inter-ethnic understanding, cultivating inclusive connections that strengthen communities. Beyond athletics, David values time with family and friends and enjoys cooking.

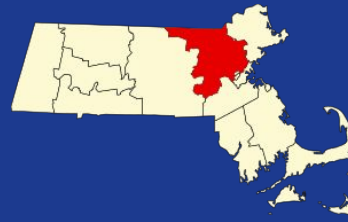
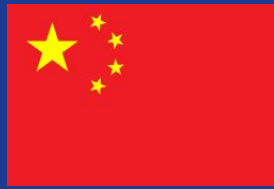


# Reva Upadhayay

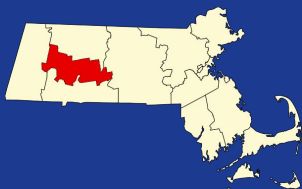
Reva Upadhayay is a Malden high school student dedicated to amplifying youth voices and promoting diversity, especially within the Asian American and Pacific Islander community. Outside of school, clubs, and sports, she runs Bouqs by Reva, where she creates customized flower bouquets. She enjoys bringing people together, thinking creatively, and making a positive impact. As a 2025–2026 Youth Council member, Reva looks forward to sharing ideas, learning from others, and helping to foster positive change within AAPI communities.



# Emily Wu



Emily Wu is a senior at Lexington High School interested in pursuing a pre-law track. Through her role as co-chair of the Chinese American Association of Lexington (CAAL), she is committed to fostering cross-cultural understanding and empowering Chinese American youth voices in her community. This past summer, she attended the United Chinese Americans (UCA) convention in Washington, D.C., where she connected with fellow youth leaders from all over the country and engaged in meaningful dialogue with AAPI congressional representatives. Outside of school, Emily enjoys figure skating, making music, writing, and hitting the gym.



# Ying Kay Leung

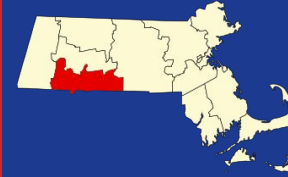
*Continuing from 2024-2025 Program Year*

Hi, my name is Ying Kay (he/him). This is my second year on the Youth Council. I am 17 years old and a rising senior at the Northfield Mount Hermon School located in Gill, Massachusetts. I've lived in Western Massachusetts my whole life, and I'm Chinese American. I'm passionate about photography, writing, skiing, and advocating for diverse AAPI communities. I'm excited to meet and talk to you all!



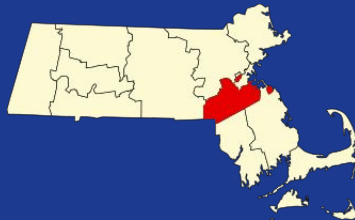
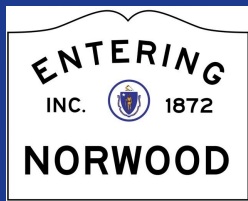


# Rachel Huynh Roblinski



Rachel Roblinski is a senior at Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical High School, studying Health Assisting. As a Vietnamese-American from a small community she is passionate about bridging cultural barriers and creating more inclusive spaces for all AAPI community members. She takes active roles in her school's student government as well as leadership opportunities all around Western Massachusetts. She is passionate about advocating for access to healthcare and healthcare information, environmental sustainability and access to technical learning. Rachel is also a licensed medical professional in the state of Massachusetts. In her free time she is a competitive dancer, continues her formal healthcare education, and volunteers at many local businesses and charities in Hampden County.

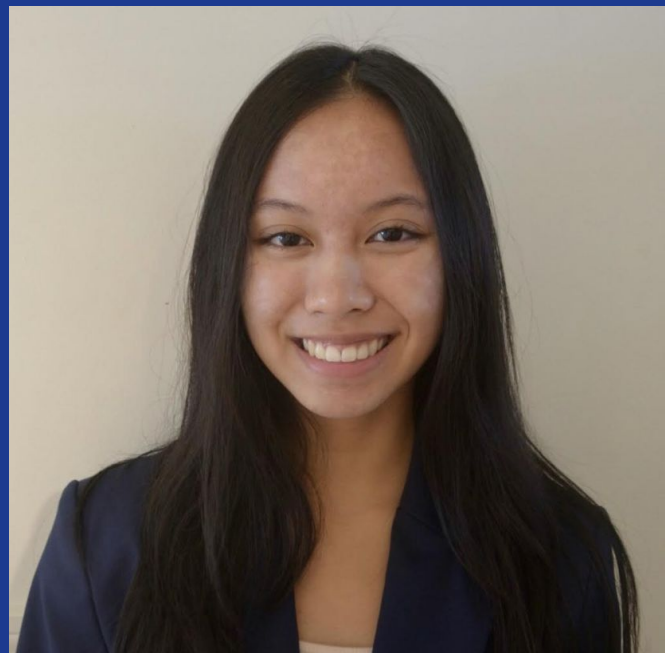




# Anika Nina Isabelle Mabano

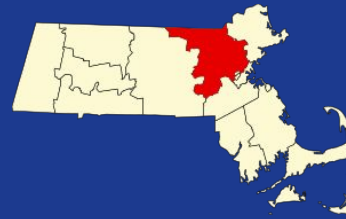
Hi, my name is Anika Mabano! I was born in the Philippines and grew up here in Massachusetts, where I am currently a senior at Norwood High School. Through my interest in pursuing Computational Biology (a wonderful blend of computer science, biology, and philosophy), I saw the ability for technology to be a force for equity in public health as well as education and community storytelling.

I'm excited to bring this perspective to the AAPI Youth Council and help create meaningful, tech-driven change. Beyond this, you'll often find me immersed in my creative outlets of playing the violin, writing poetry, or working on my latest coding project.

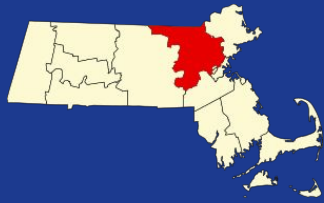


# Chahat Kalia

*Continuing from 2024-2025 Program Year*



Hello! My name is Chahat, and I'm a passionate advocate for AAPI rights, LGBTQIA+ equality, climate justice, and mental health awareness, especially when it comes to uplifting marginalized voices. Over the past few years, I've worked at the intersection of education, policy, and community organizing: speaking at the Massachusetts State House, leading youth health campaigns, restarting programs like the Queer Activist College, and helping shape climate policy as part of the Governor's Youth Climate Council. I've organized cultural events to celebrate what it means to be AAPI and taught younger students about the harms of climate change! As a young person of Asian descent, I've navigated cultural and societal challenges that have shaped both my advocacy and my worldview. These experiences allow me to bring a unique lens to every space I'm in, grounded in resilience, intersectionality, and the belief that change is built through community.



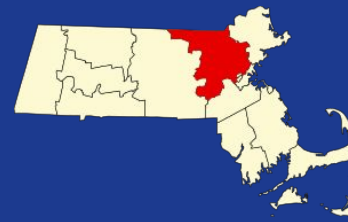
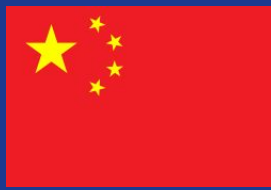
# Juliet Dong

Juliet Dong is a senior at Acton Boxborough and is a community leader committed to advancing social justice through education, culture, and policy. As a Chinese American and the founder of the Jasmine Cultural Arts Foundation, she empowers youth through accessible arts programming while amplifying underrepresented voices. Juliet also served as a community liaison for a state-funded climate resilience initiative and advocates for financial literacy and equity through nonprofit work. She's super excited to work on the Youth Council to promote storytelling, grassroots engagement, and youth leadership to create lasting change.

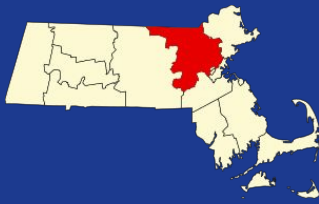




# Vienna Dschung



Vienna Dschung is a rising senior at Weston High School, interested in creating more space for Asian American voices. As Miss China International Ambassador 2024, a CARE Leadership Next Gen Fellow, and summer intern for State Representative Tara Hong, Vienna is proud to serve Asian Americans throughout different topics such as immigration, education, and climate justice. A topic she particularly cares about is creating community for immigrant children, something she does through her organization, Empower Initiative. Outside of school, Vienna can be found attending Zoom meetings (mostly working on her plant-based school food campaign), making YouTube videos, and reading.



# Grace Zhang

Grace is a high school senior from Natick, Massachusetts. As a second generation Chinese American, she is passionate about using her voice to create positive change in her community. At Natick High School, she serves as President of both the Math Team and Science Team, Treasurer of the Student Council, and a student representative on the School Council. An avid tennis player, Grace is also co-captain of her high school tennis team and Treasurer of the U.S. Tennis Association New England Player Council. In her free time, she enjoys reading, coding, and singing karaoke.



# Selection Process

## Initial Review

- Selection Committee (SC):  
Shubhecchha Dhaurali (PRD)  
& Ashley Shan (YCC)
- Process:
  - SD and AS independently reviewed and rated each application (49 total).
- Rating Criteria:
  - Essays: Ranked out of five.
  - Resume: Ranked out of five.
  - Video: Ranked out of five
    - i. Scoring: Total possible score of 15 points per candidate.

## Group Discussion

- SC met and selected **top 24 candidates** based on rankings
- Invited all 24 candidates for 30 minute interview
- Considerations:
  - Interview Questions Responses
  - Speech and Dictation
  - Project Idea Articulation + Vision
  - Upcoming high school grade level
  - Past leadership and community building experience
  - AAPI background

## Interviews

- Interviews scheduled during weeks of **July 21-31, 2025** through Calendly technology
- Candidates (24) interviewed by SC via Zoom Telecoms
- Questions Asked
  - Applicant Introduction
  - Specific community project or initiative involvement
  - Project idea for Youth Council
  - Experiences with teamwork, collaboration
  - Questions for SC

## Final Selection

- SC ranked each applicant's interview on a scale of 15
  - 14-15 - Acceptance
  - 10-13 - Acceptance leaning
  - 6-9- Need to engage in more holistic comparison
  - ≤5 - Rejected
- Accepted YC members have demonstrated skills in organization, time management, and leadership, suitability for a more rigorous and project-based programs, represent a mix of experiences, and AAP racial diversity.

49



2025-2026 YC Applications  
Received Statewide



# 2024 AAPI Voter Demographics | MASSACHUSETTS

**313,018**

ELIGIBLE AAPI VOTERS\*

**24.5%**

AAPI VOTER ELIGIBILITY  
GROWTH (2012-2022)

**6.10%**

AAPI SHARE OF  
ELECTORATE IN  
MASSACHUSETTS



**37.7%** POPULATION GROWTH  
SINCE 2012

**5.57%** GROWTH IN FIRST TIME  
VOTERS SINCE 2022

**160,469**

FOREIGN BORN  
NONCITIZENS

**180,591**

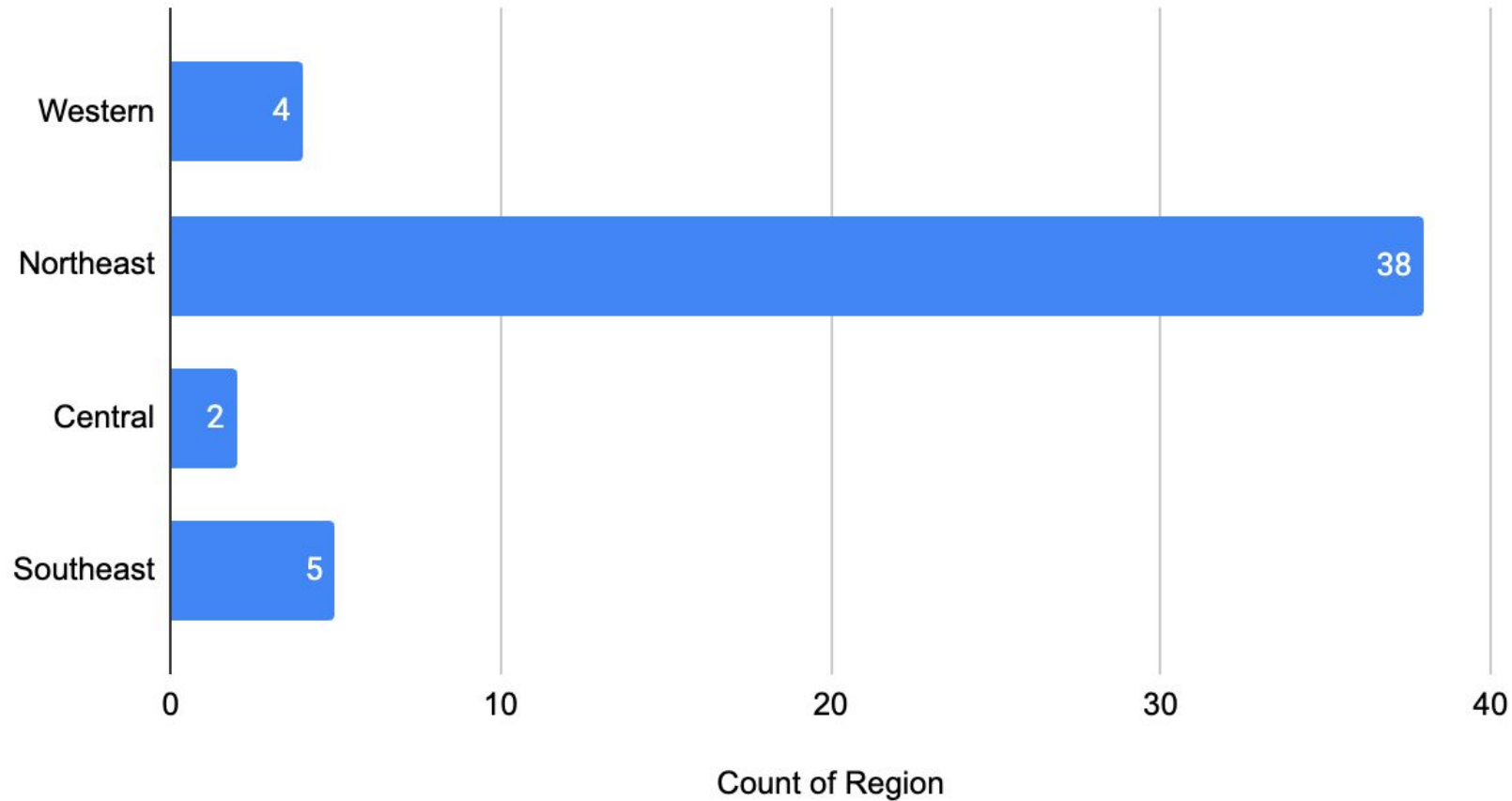
FOREIGN BORN  
CITIZENS

**233,915**

NATIVE BORN  
CITIZENS

*\* Includes multi-racial population*

## Count of Region



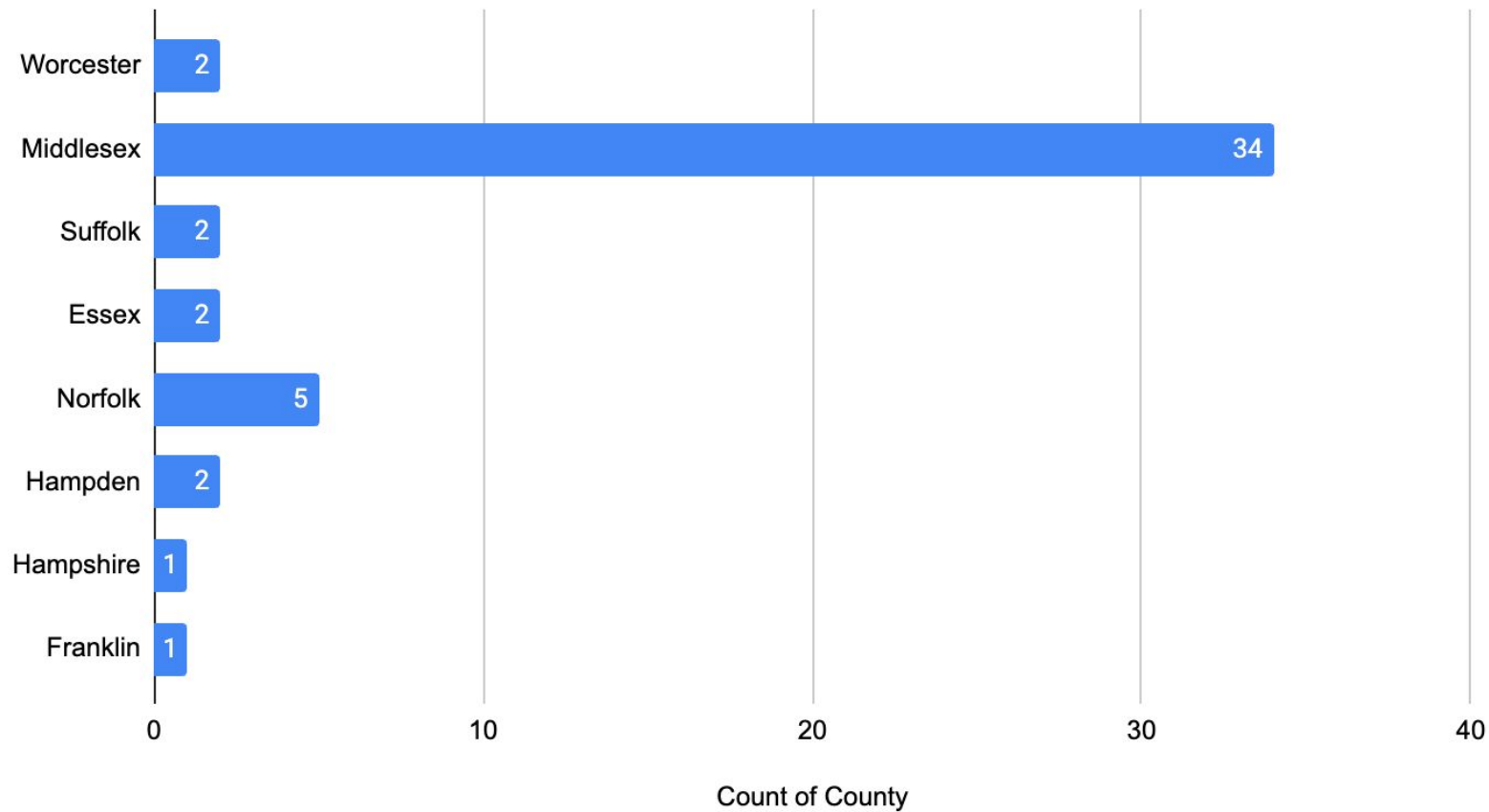
# 2024 AAPI Voter Demographics | MASSACHUSETTS

## COUNTIES WITH HIGHEST AAPI POPULATIONS

	AAPI Share of County Pop	Size of AAPI Population	AAPI Eligible Voter Share of County	Number of AAPI Eligible Voters
Middlesex County	13%	211,385	18.4%	104,209
Norfolk County	12%	86,298	16.5%	44,363
Suffolk County	8.9%	69,899	12.7%	39,348
Worcester County	5.1%	44,126	7%	21,501
Essex County	3.5%	28,372	4.9%	16,773

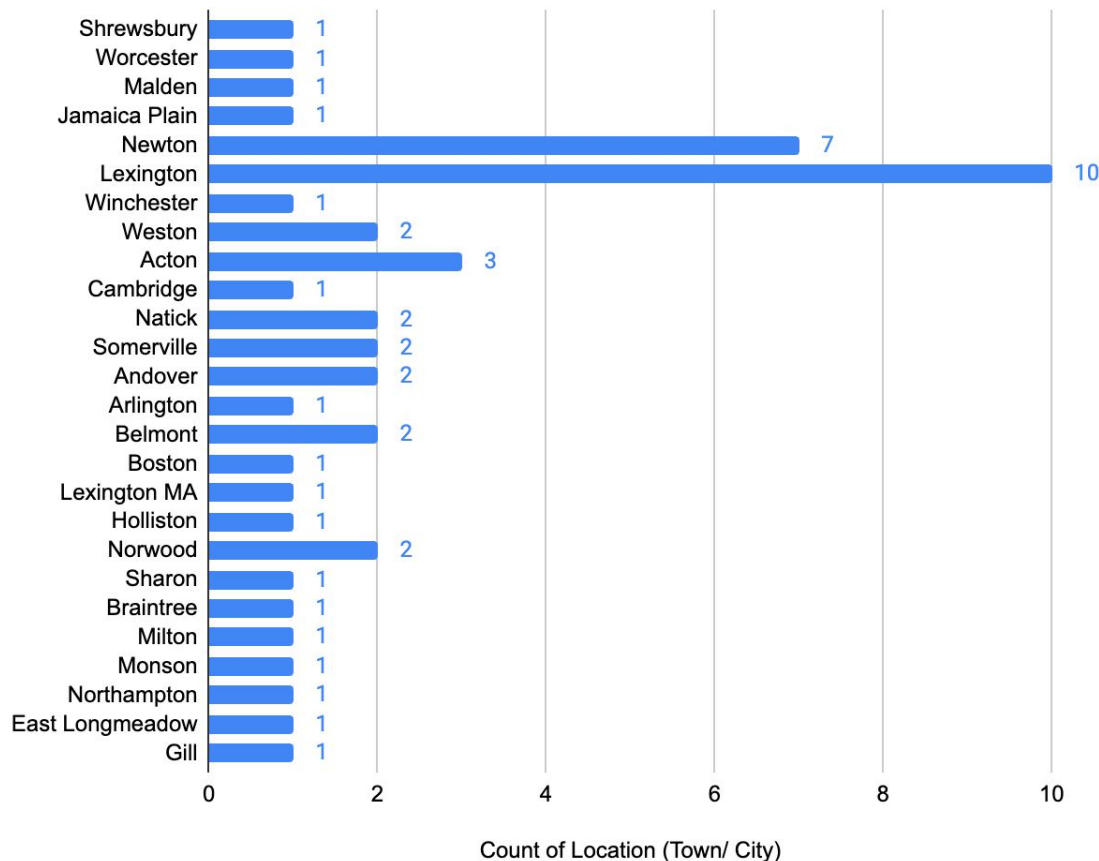
Reference: <https://aapidata.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Massachusetts.pdf>

## Count of County





## Count of Location (Town/ City)



Majority of  
applicants from  
Lexington +  
Newton, MA

# 2024 AAPI Voter Demographics | MASSACHUSETTS

## LARGEST ASIAN AMERICAN ETHNIC GROUPS IN MASSACHUSETTS

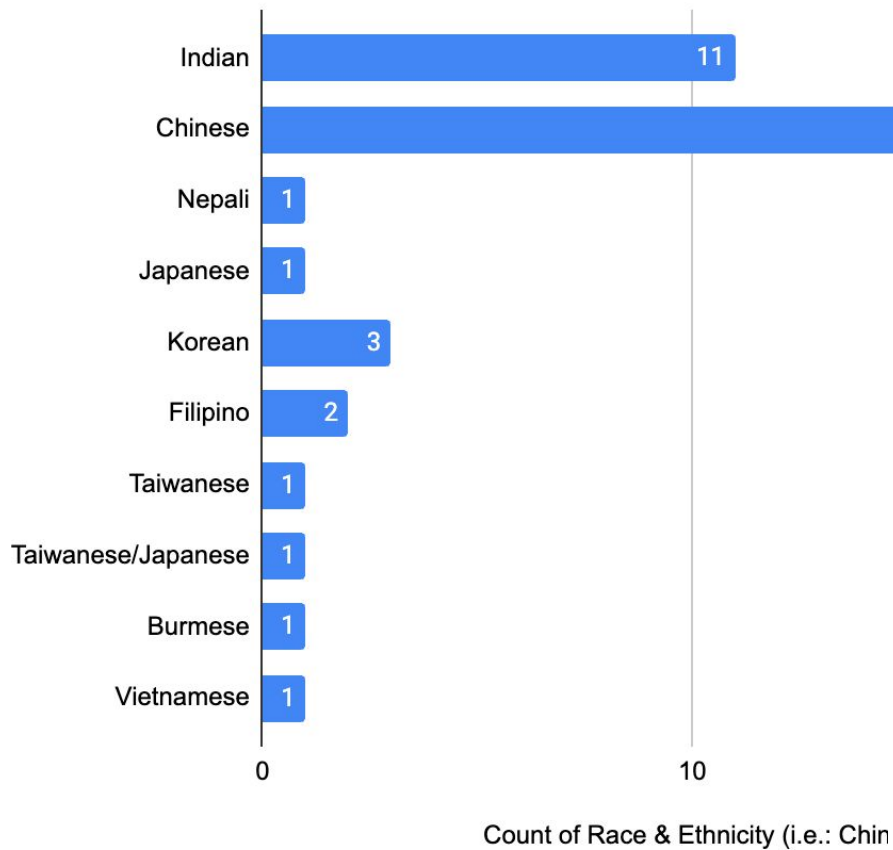
<b>Chinese, except Taiwanese</b> (198,039)	<b>Asian Indian</b> (137,333)	<b>Vietnamese</b> (61,863)	<b>Korean</b> (34,785)	<b>Cambodian</b> (32,171)	<b>Filipino</b> (26,354)
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## LARGEST NHPI ETHNIC GROUPS IN MASSACHUSETTS

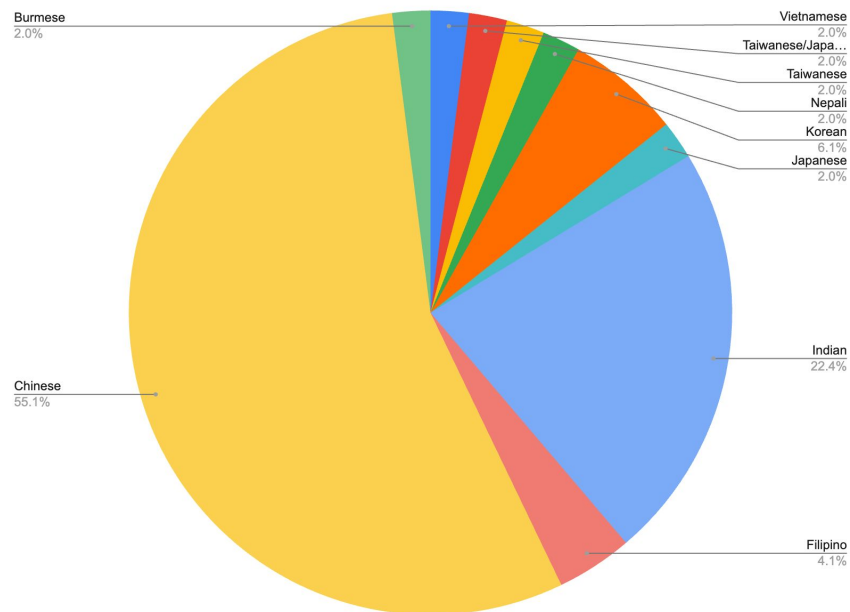
<b>Native Hawaiian</b> (2,990)	<b>Chamorro</b> (1,257)	<b>Samoan</b> (1,024)
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Reference: <https://aapidata.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Massachusetts.pdf>

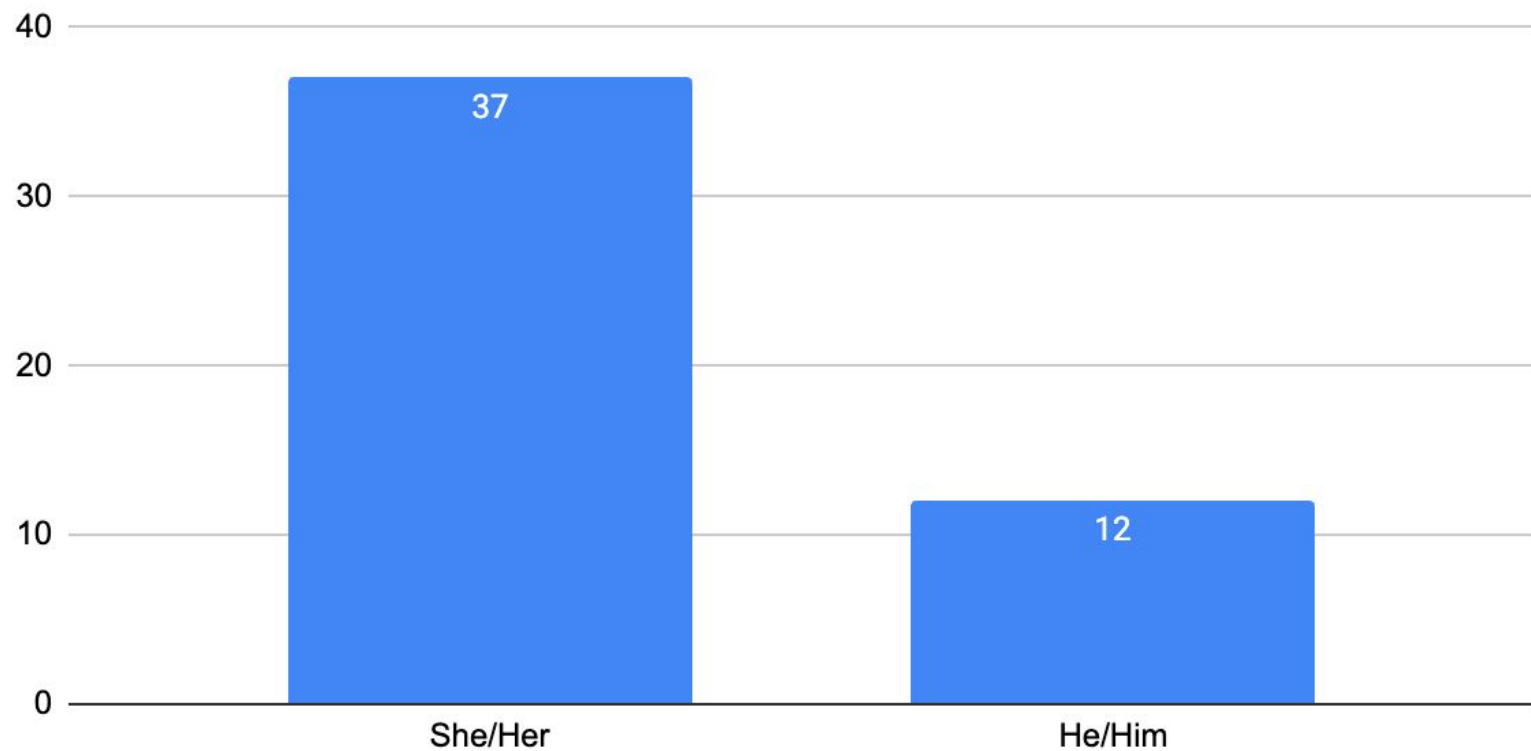
## Count of Race & Ethnicity



Count of Race & Ethnicity (i.e.: Chinese, Vietnamese, Indian, Samoan, etc)



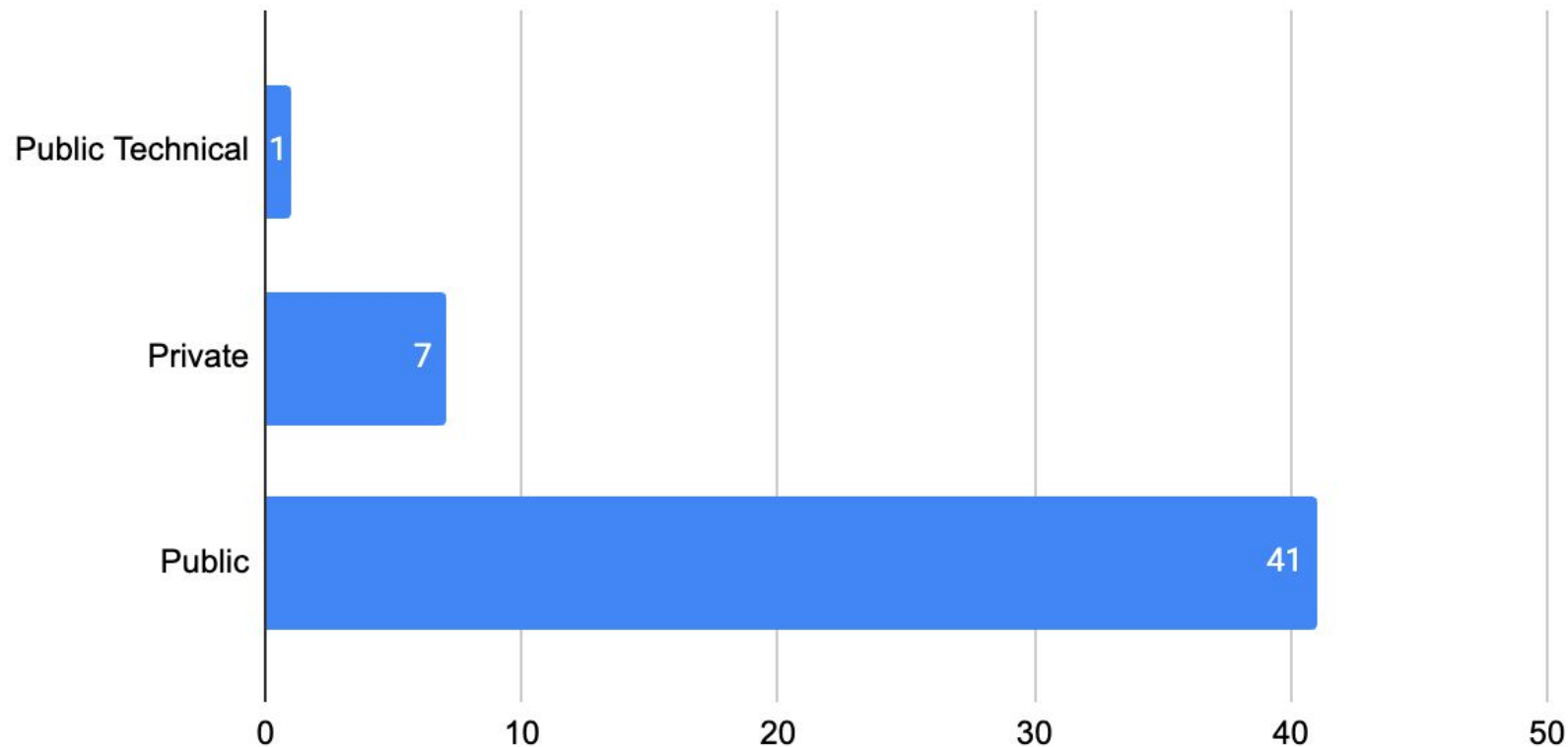
## Count of Pronouns



Count of Pronouns

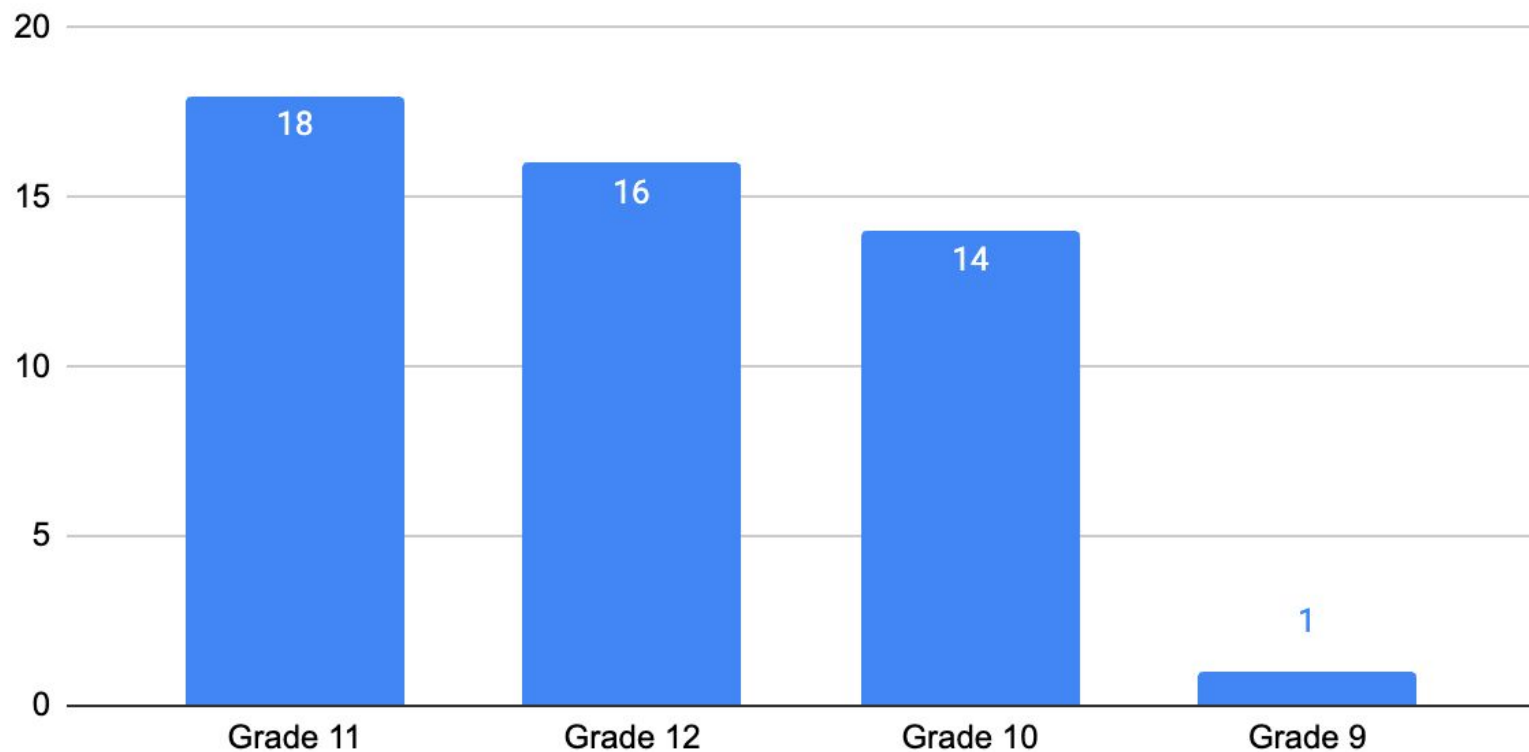


## Count of Type of school (i.e. private/public/home-schooled)



Count of Type of school (i.e. private/public/home-schooled)

## Count of Current grade level



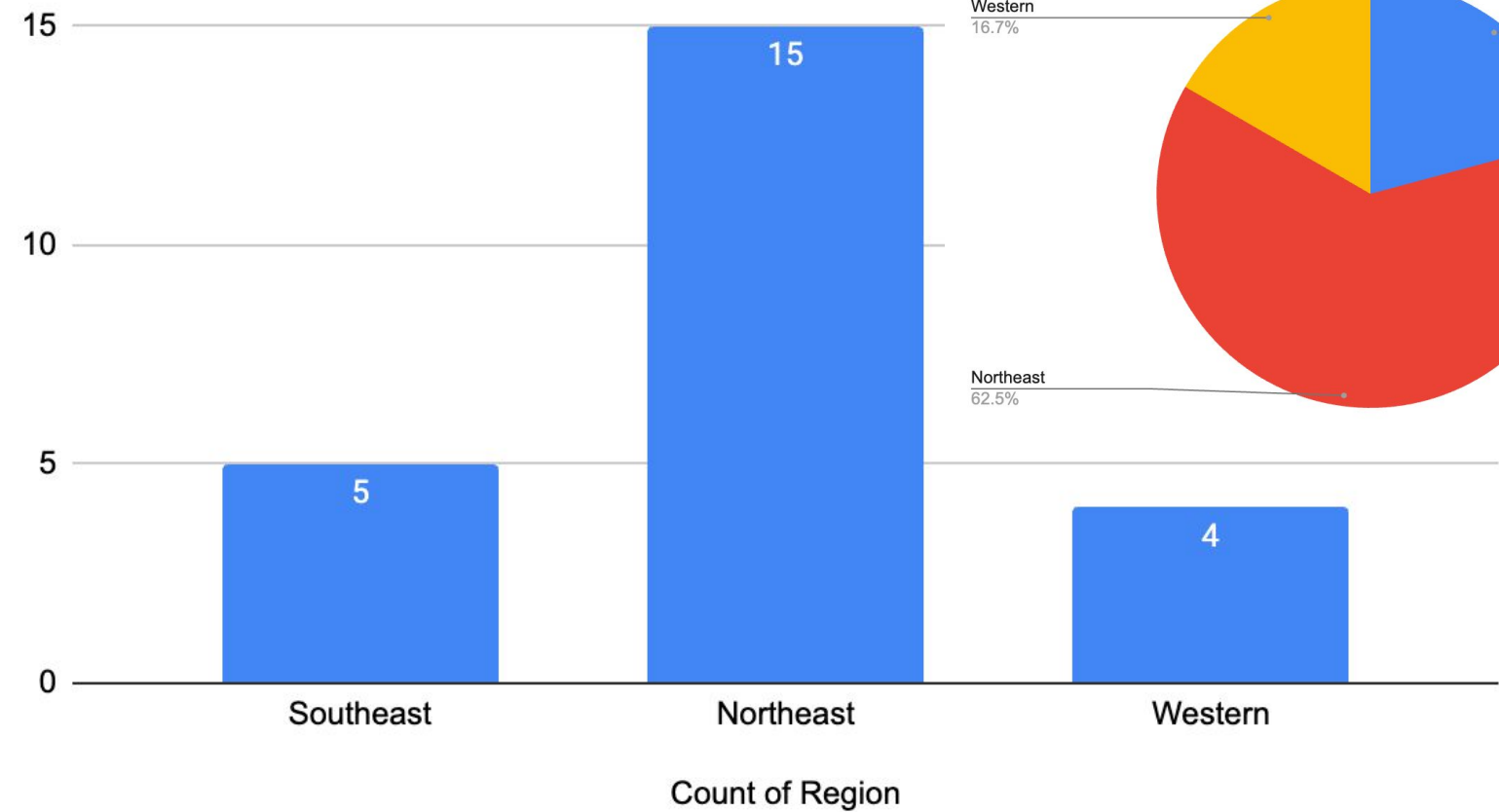
Count of Current grade level

# 24

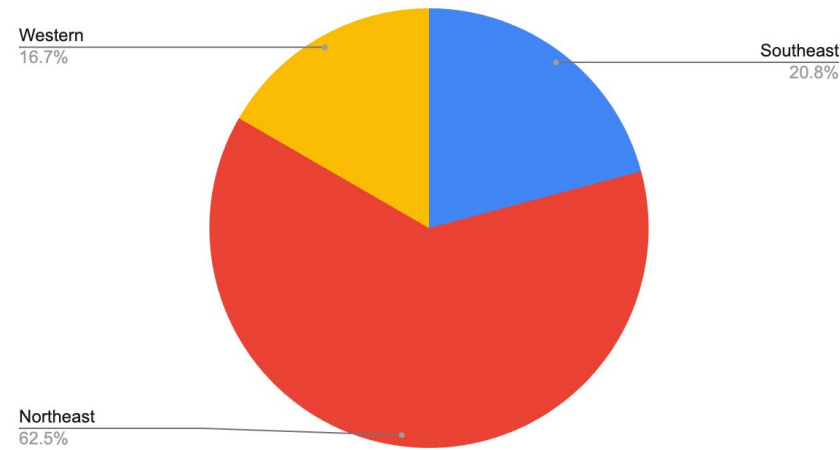


30-Minute Interviews  
July 21 - August 1, 2025

Count of Region



Count of Region





## Count of County

Suffolk

4.2%

Hampshire

4.2%

Hampden

8.3%

Norfolk

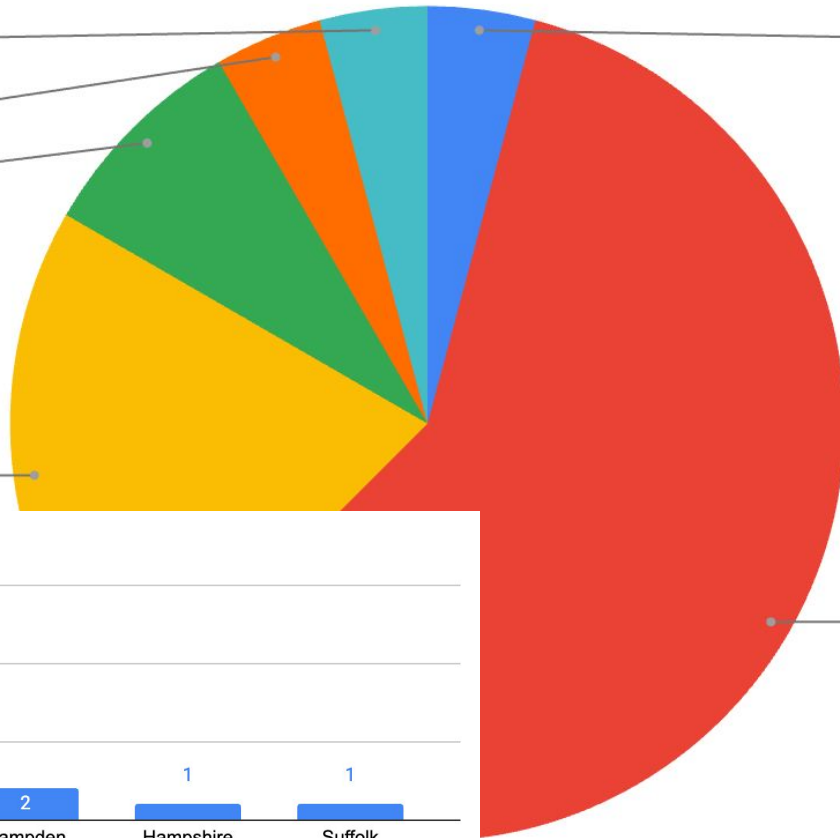
20.8%

Franklin

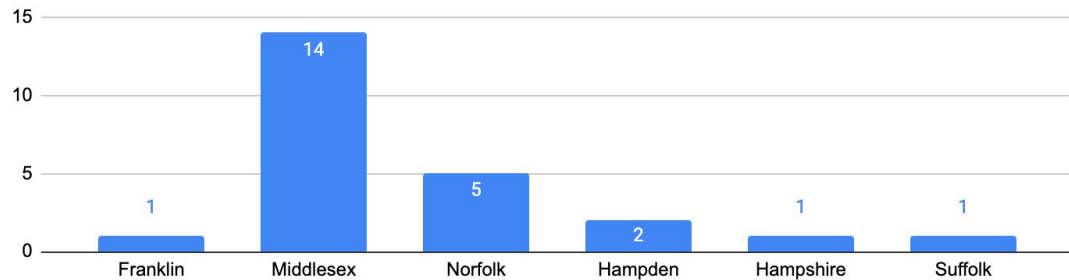
4.2%

Middlesex

58.3%

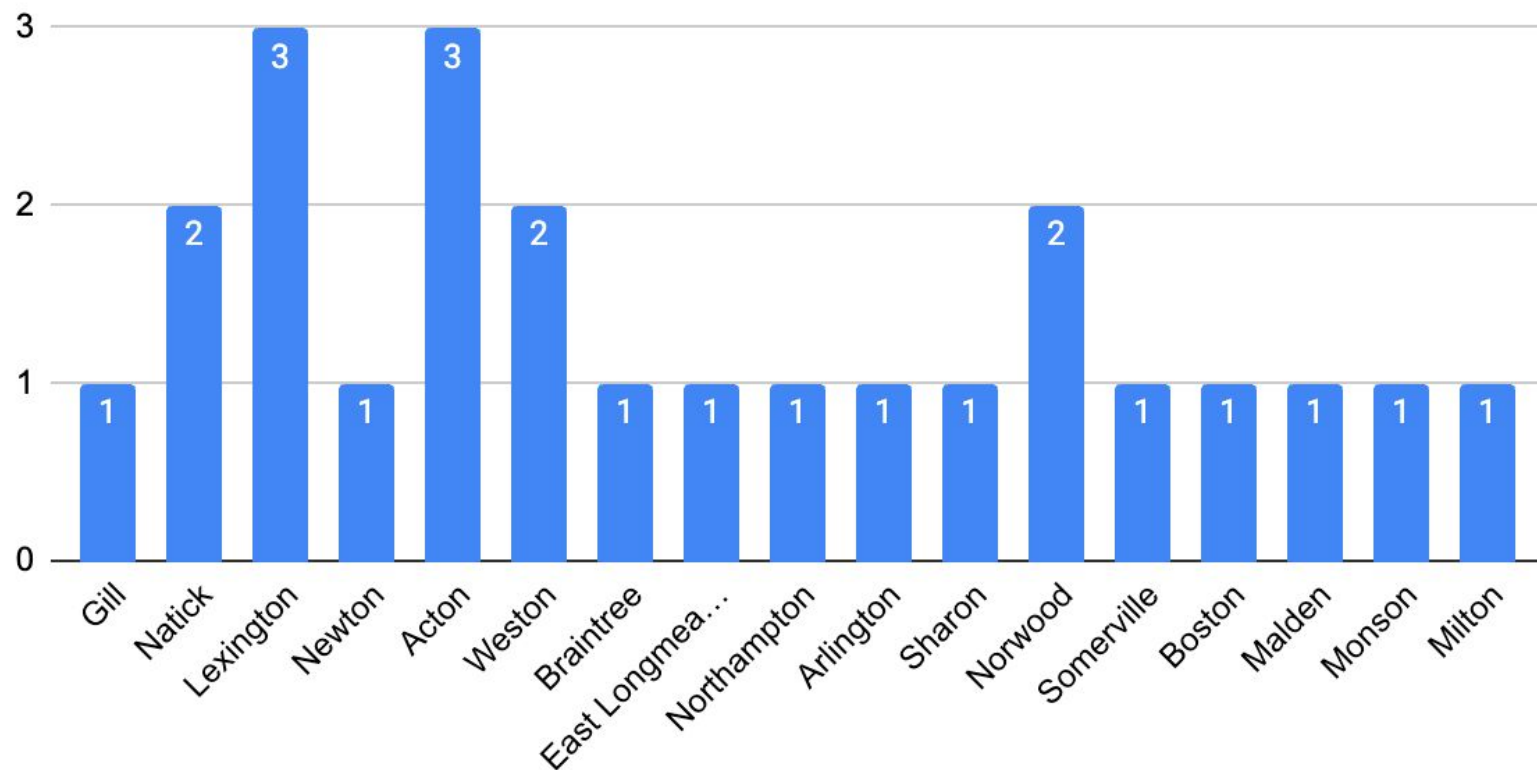


## Count of County



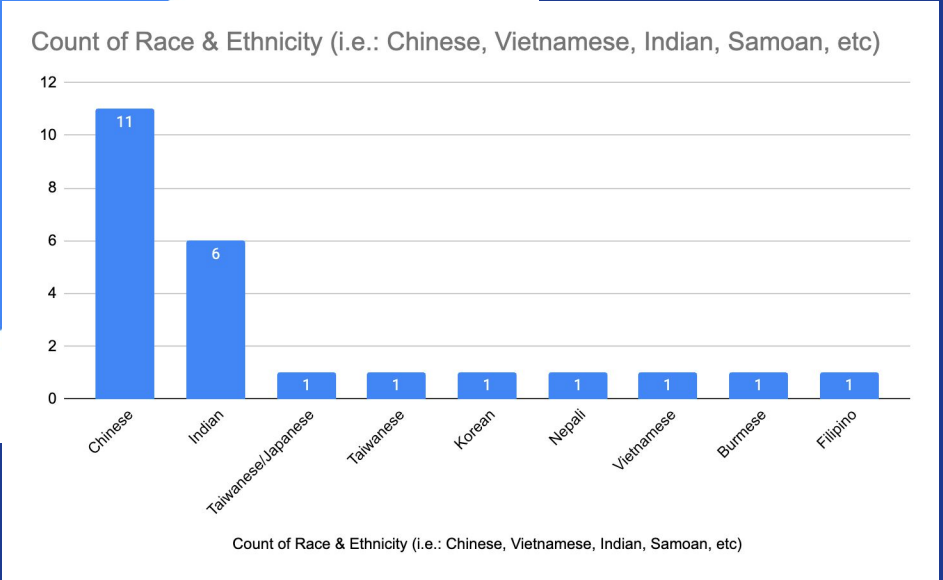
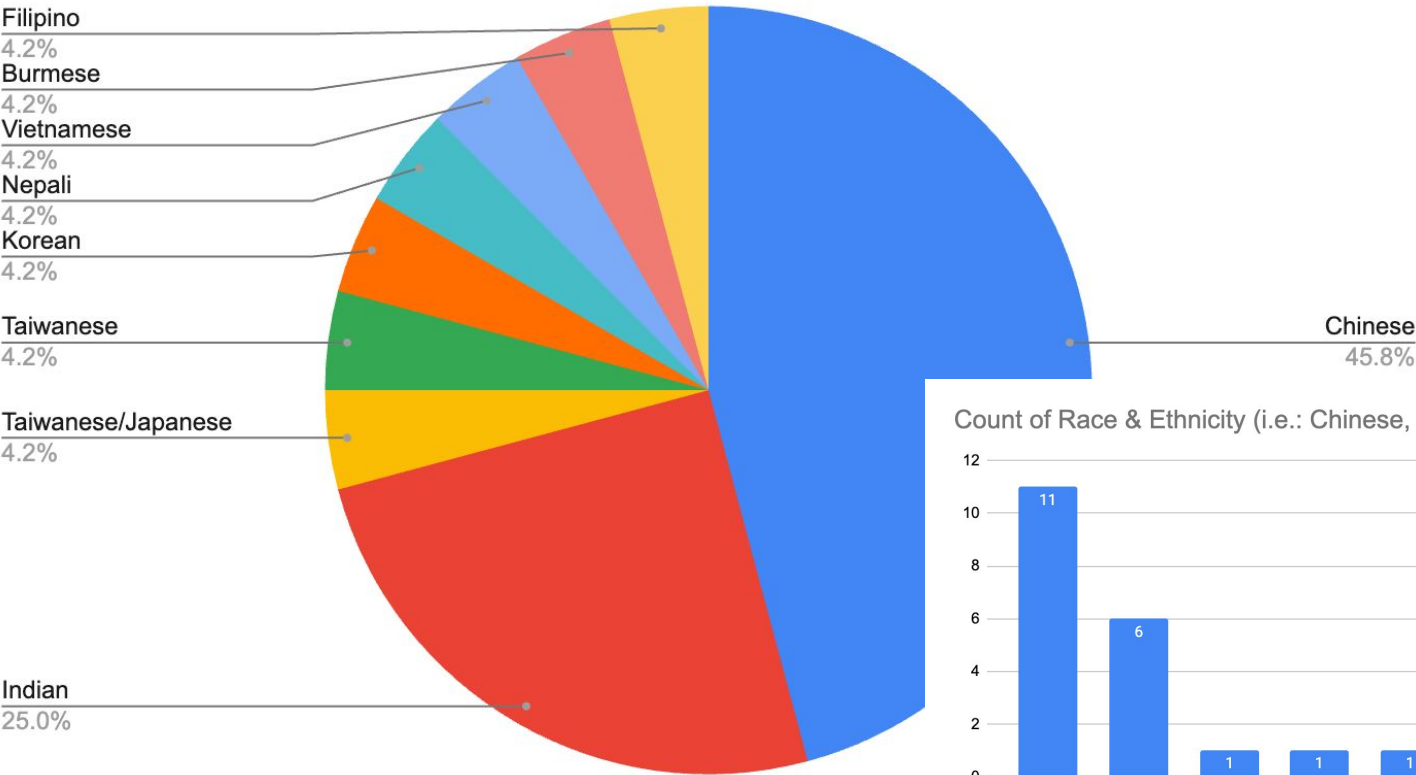
Count of County

## Count of Town

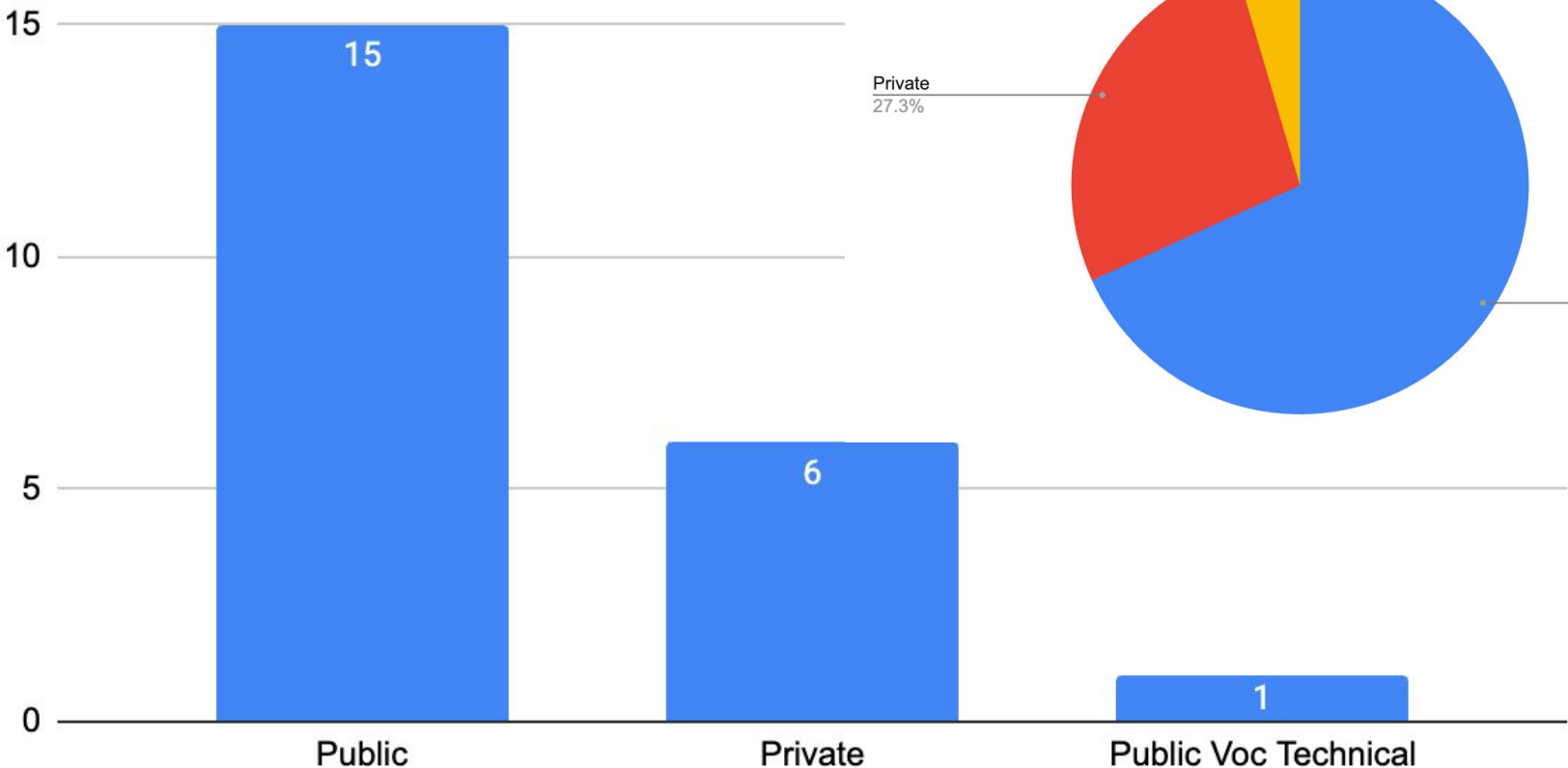


Count of Town

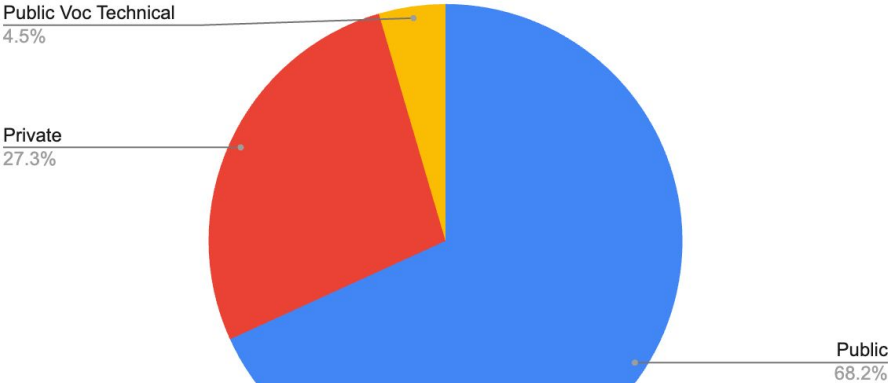
# Count of Race & Ethnicity (i.e.: Chinese, Vietnamese, Indian, Samoan, etc)



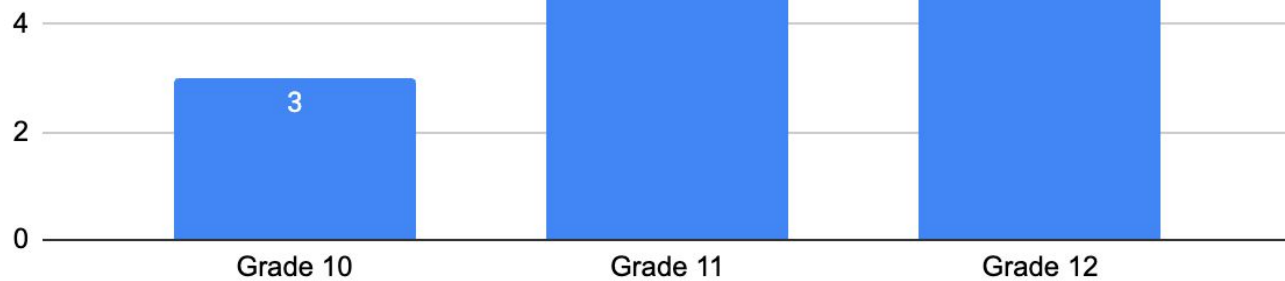
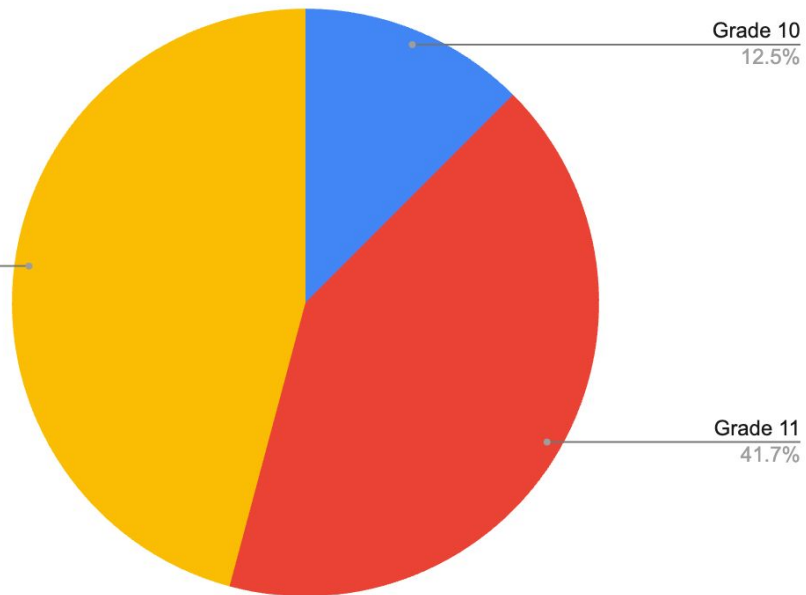
# Count of School Type



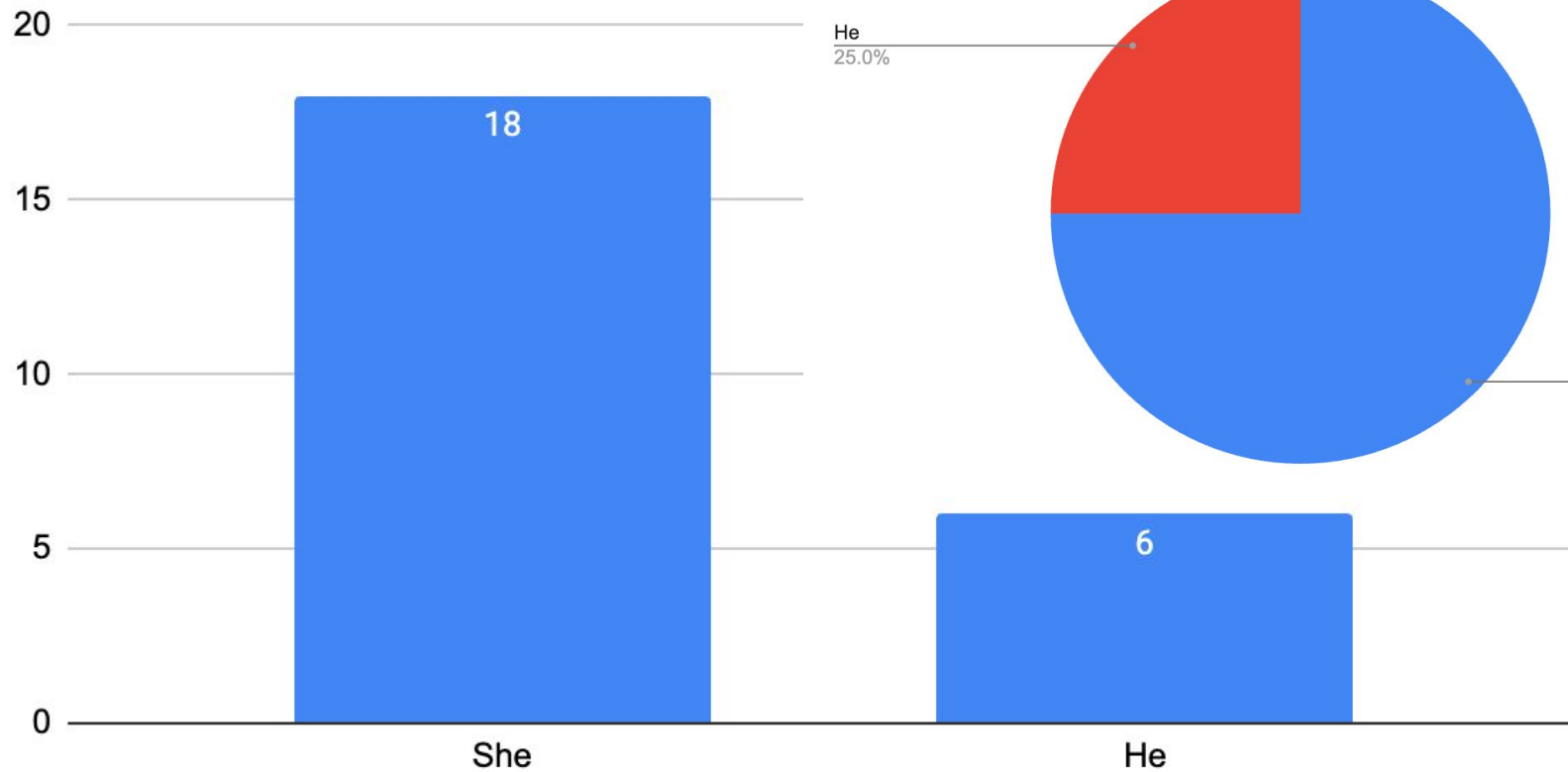
Count of School Type







# Count of Gender



## Count of Gender



Count of Gender

# 12



2025-2026 YC Applications  
ACCEPTED

24.4%

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Acceptance Rate

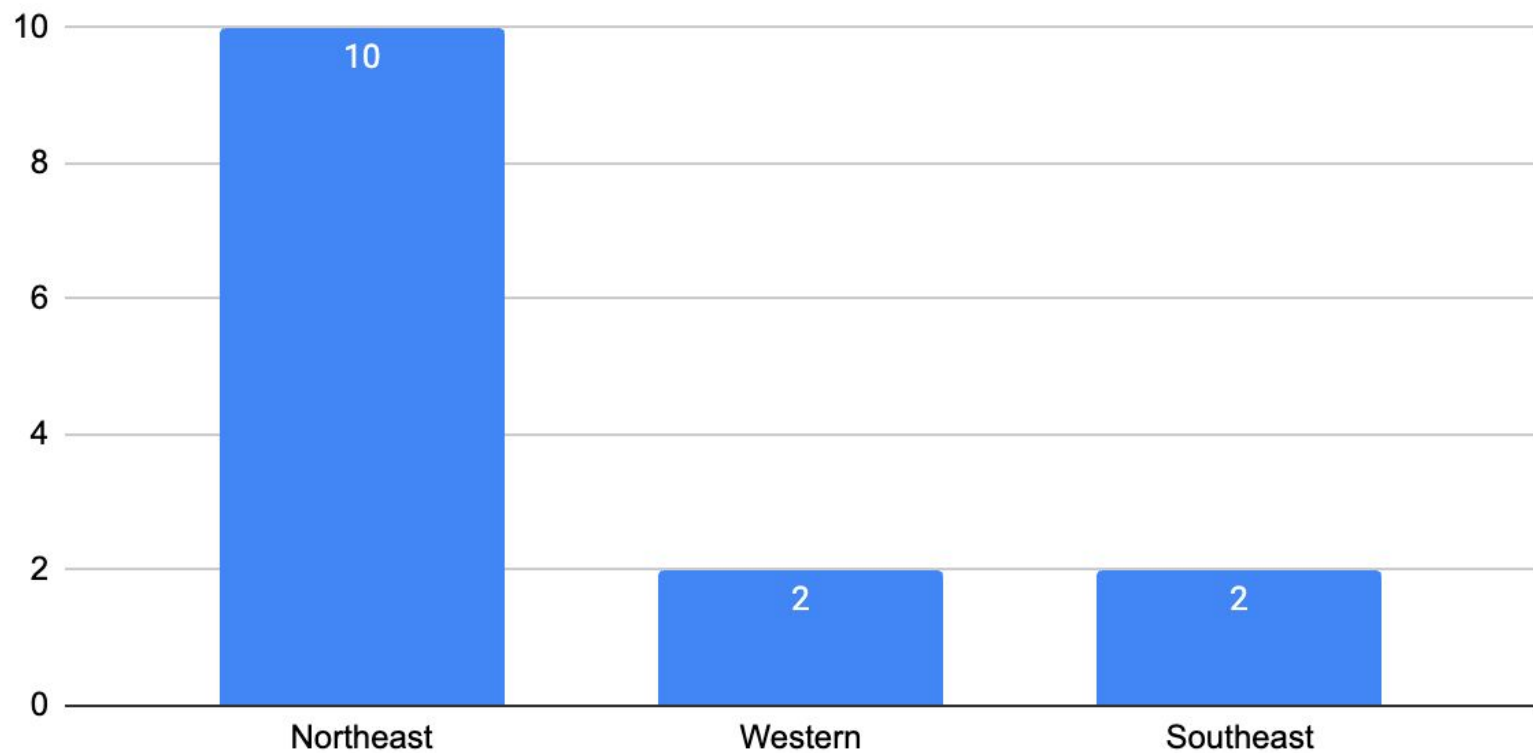
# 14



2025-2026 YC Members  
*12 new, 2 continuing*

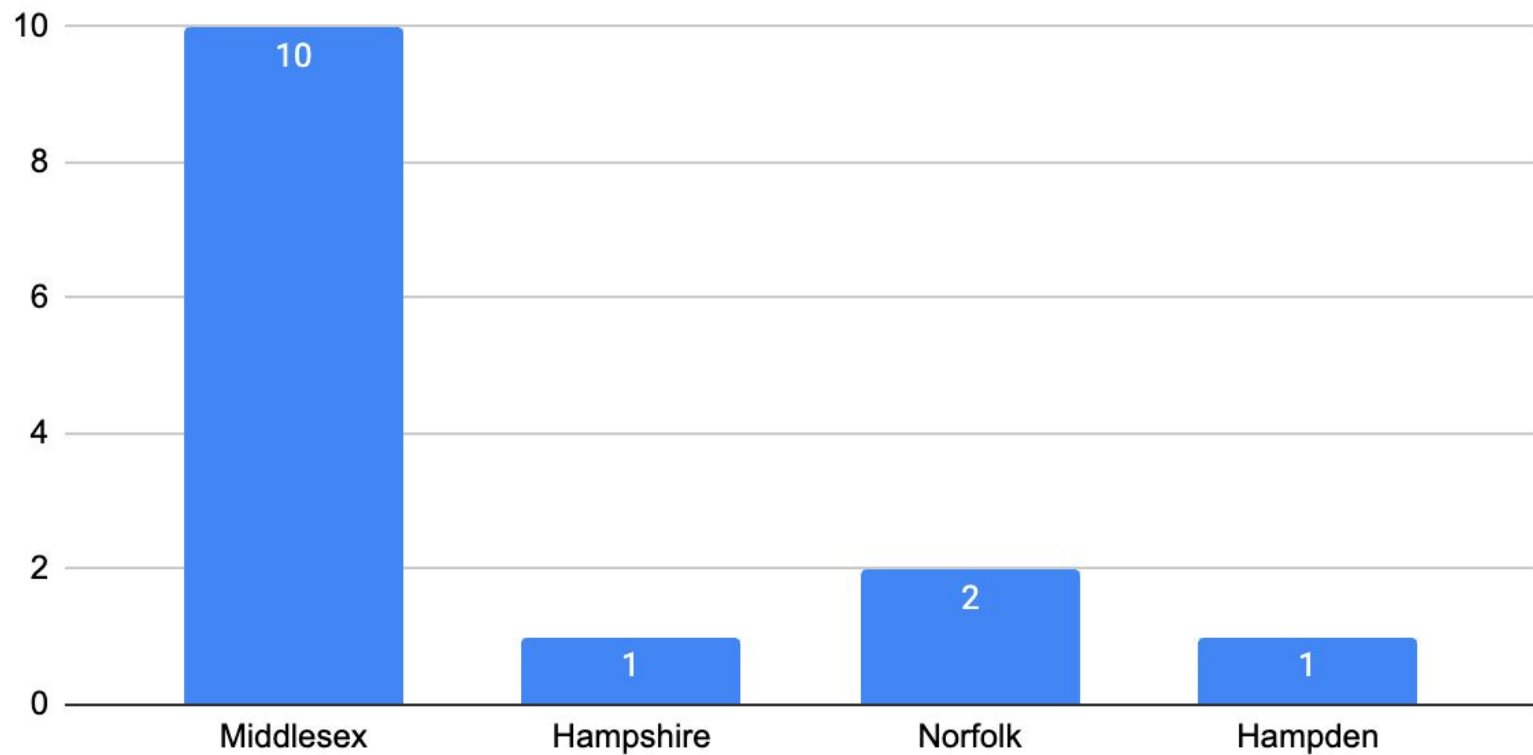


## Count of Region



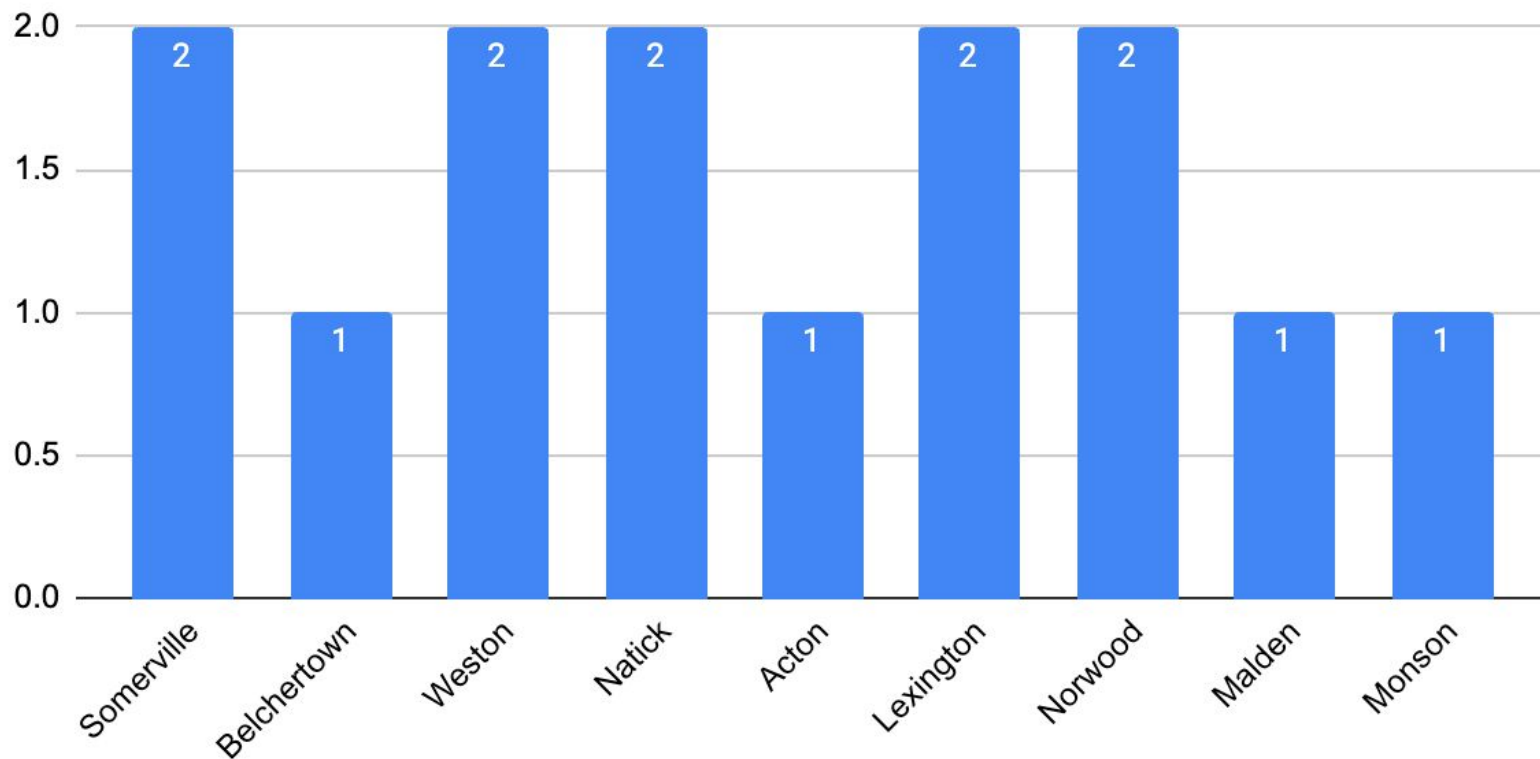
Count of Region

## Count of County



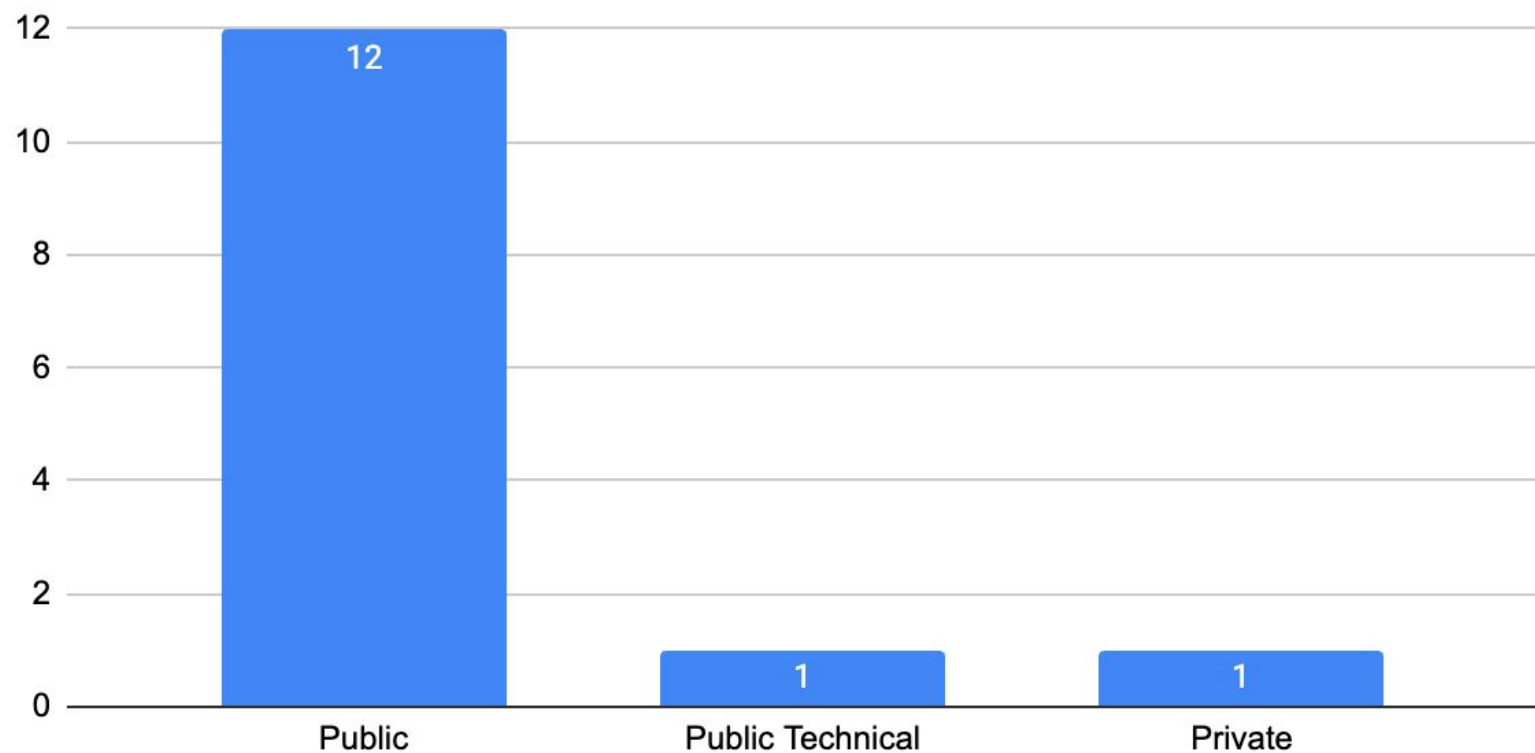
Count of County

## Count of Location (Town/ City)



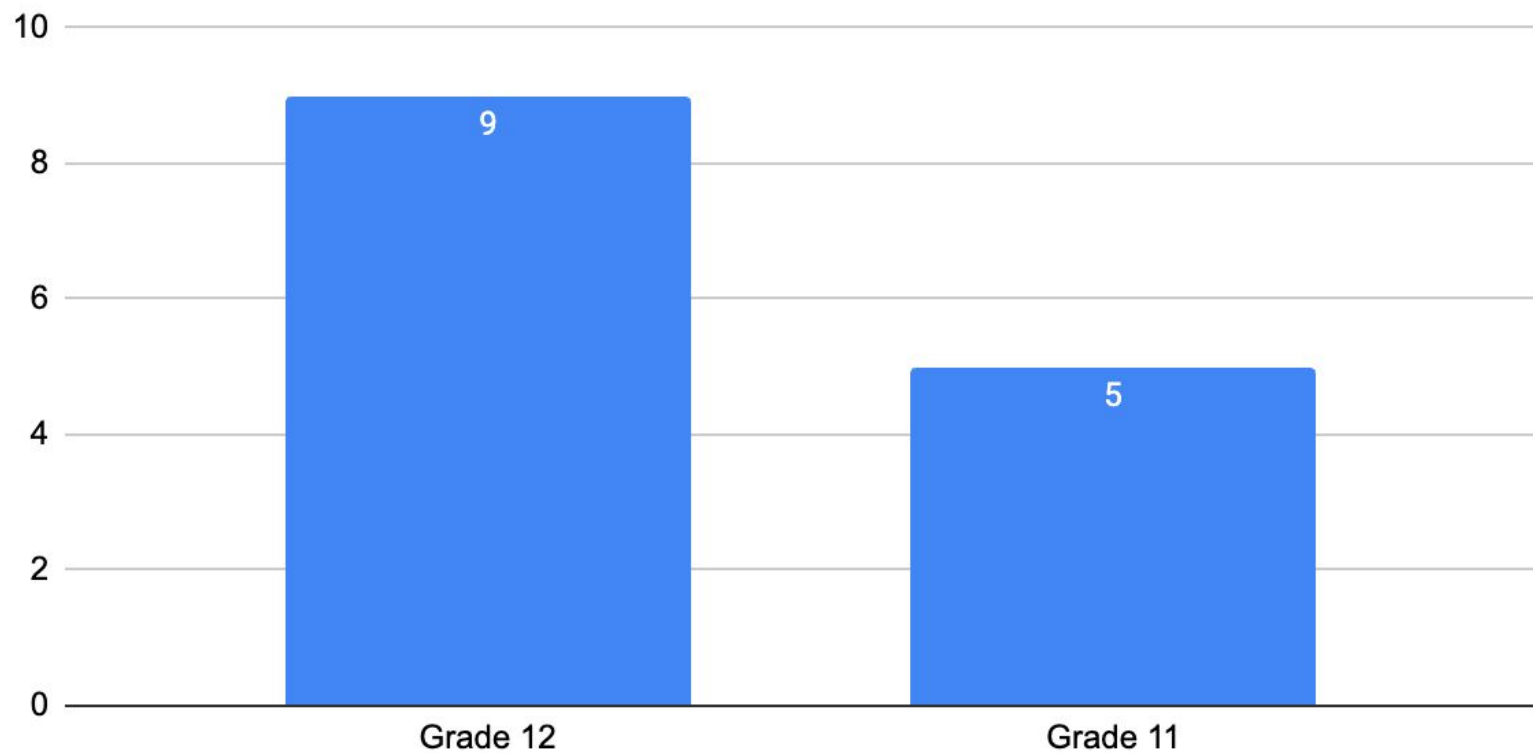
Count of Location (Town/ City)

## Type of school



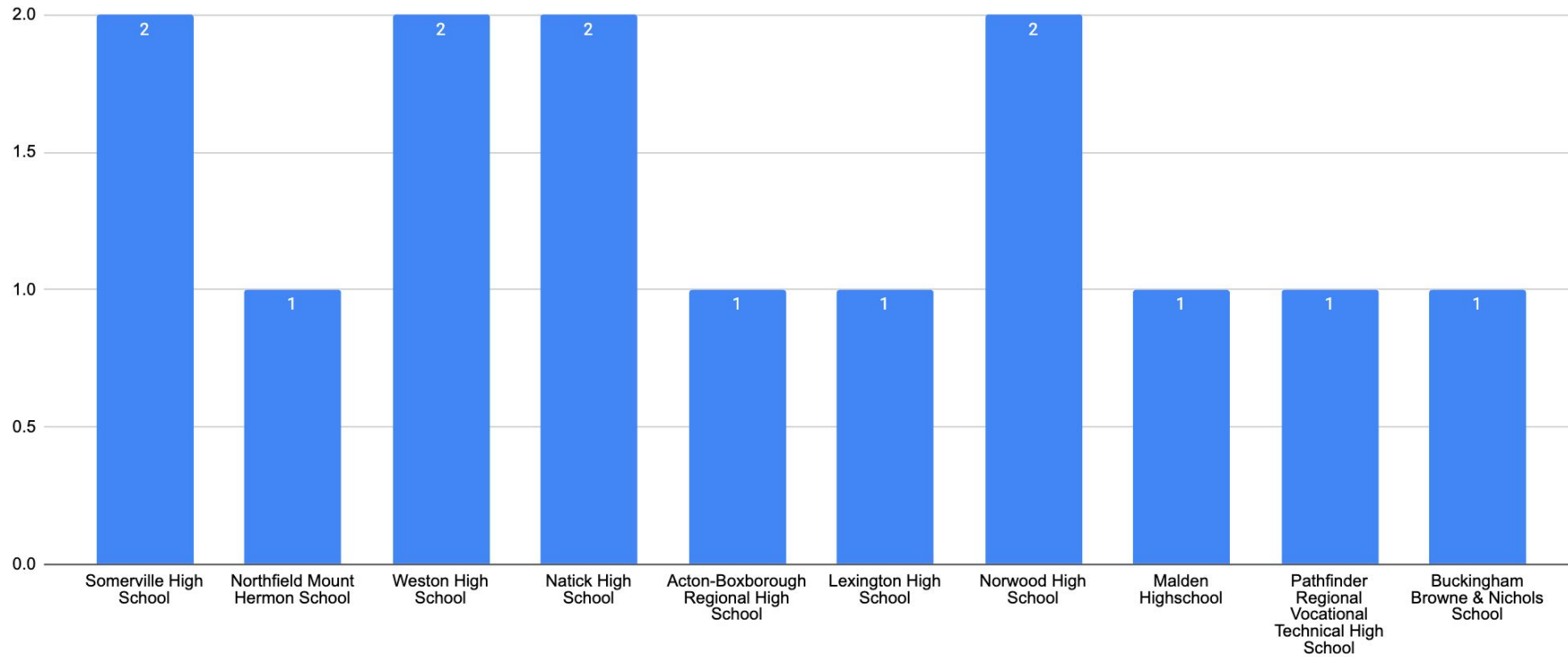
Count of Type of school (i.e. private/public/home-schooled)

## Count of Current grade level



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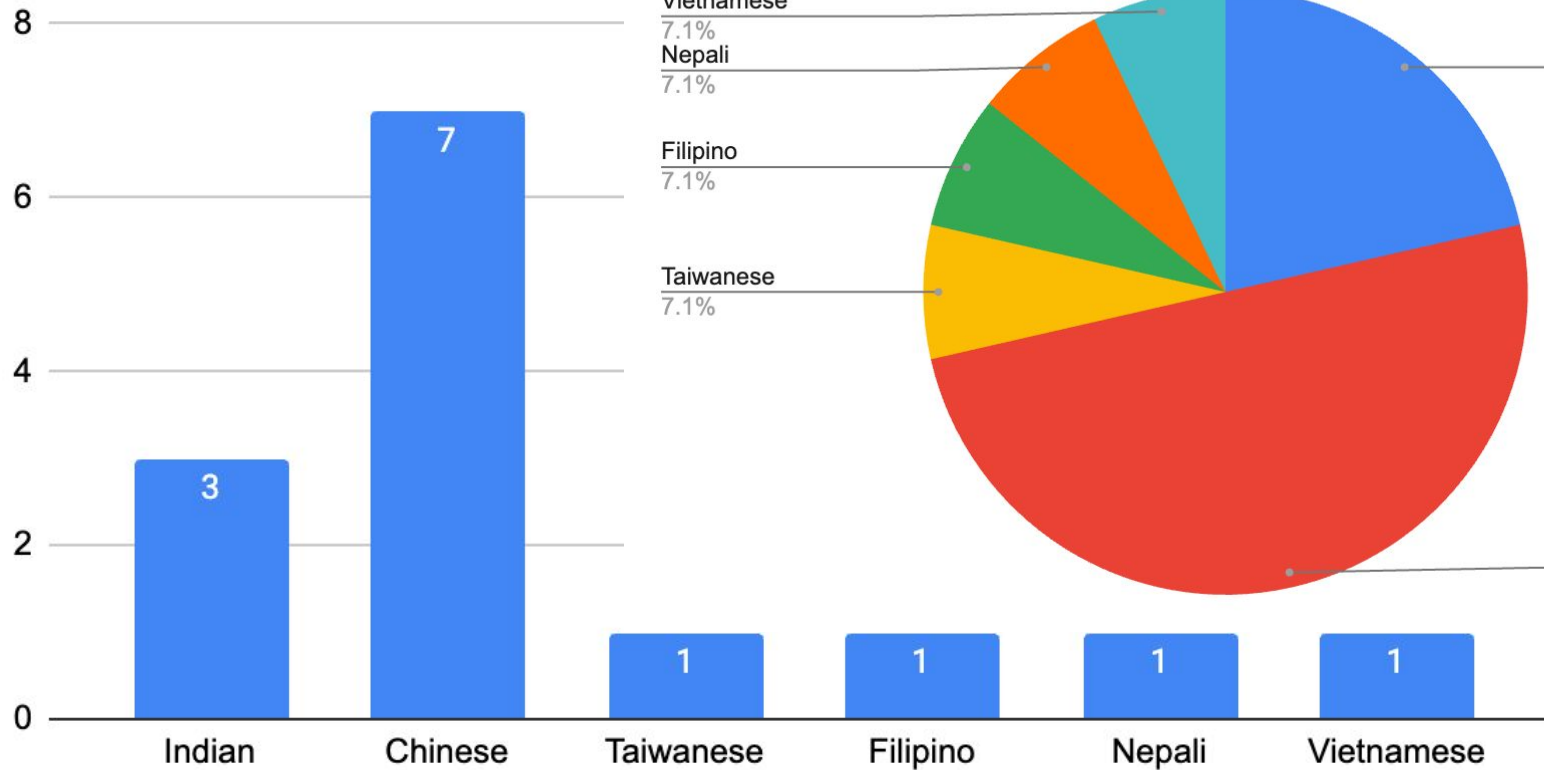
## High school



Count of Please list the name of your current high school

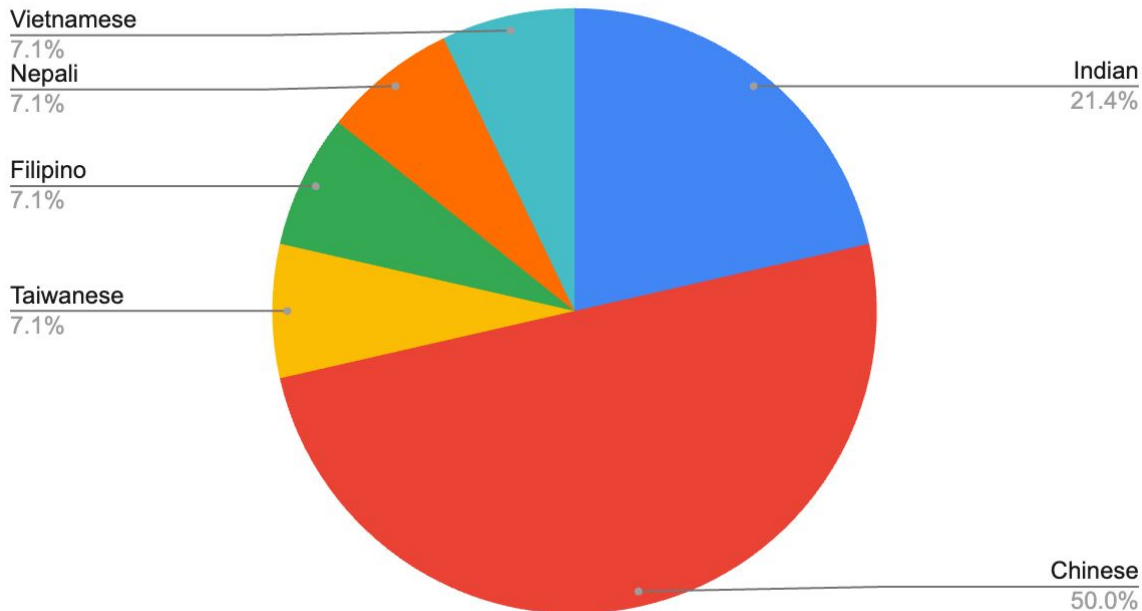


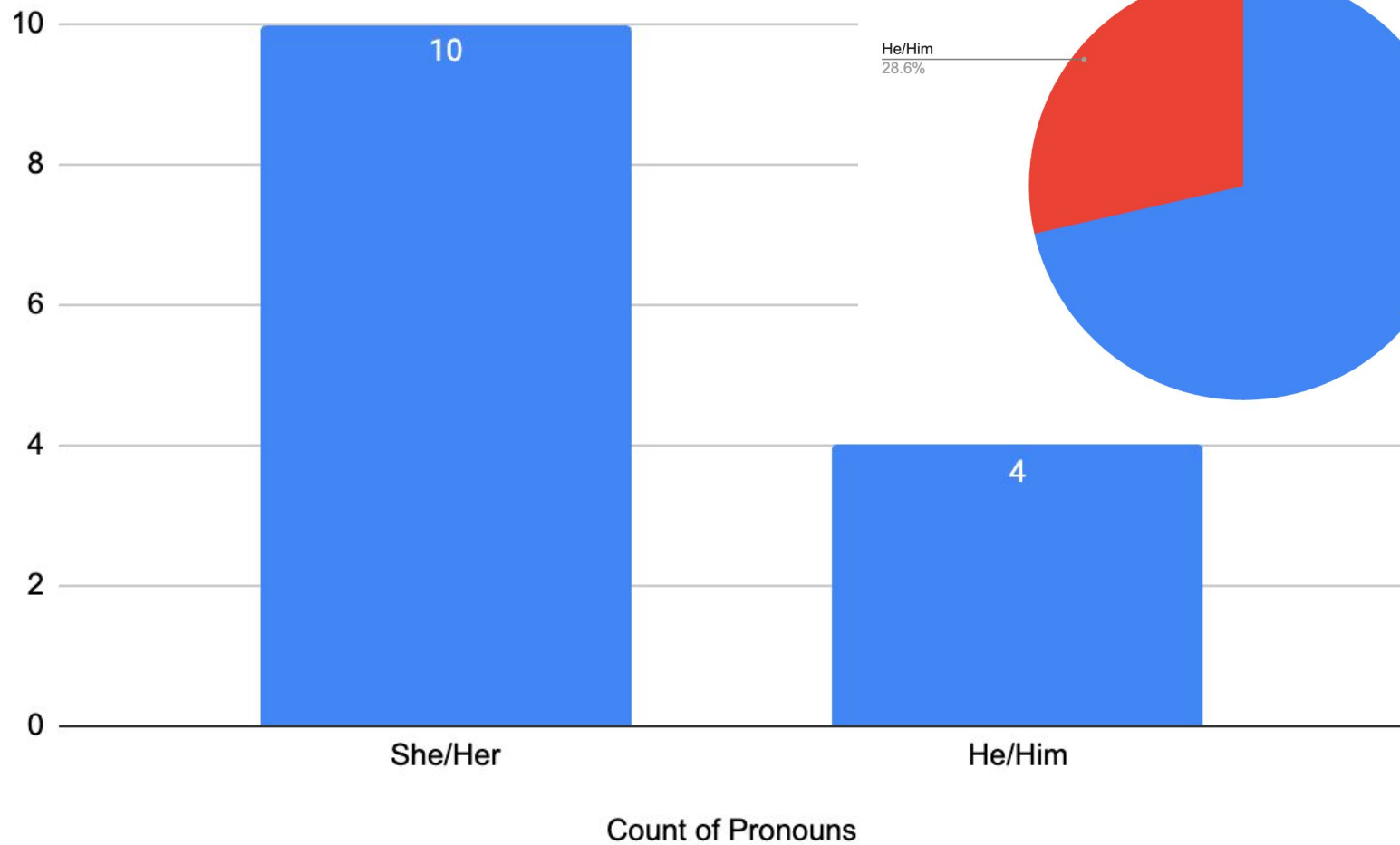
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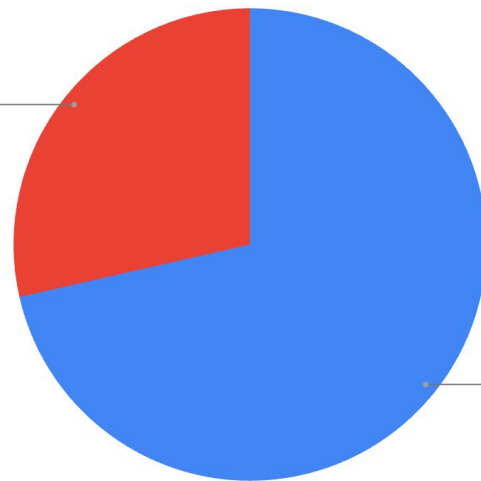
Count of Race & Ethnicity (i.e.: Chinese, Vietnamese, Indian, Samoan, etc)

## Count of Race & Ethnicity





He/Him  
28.6%



She/Her  
71.4%



# Contact Us

## Contact Us

One Ashburton Place 12th Floor, Boston, MA  
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