

# Why Rural Matters 2015-2016

## Understanding the Changing Landscape



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A Report of the Rural School  
and Community Trust

June 2017



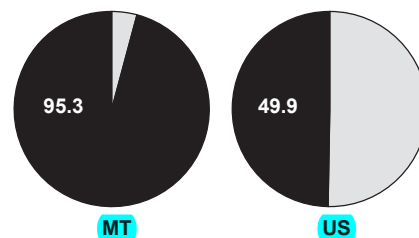
**MONTANA** - No state has a higher percentage of rural schools or small rural districts, and nearly one in three public school students is enrolled in a rural district. Rural student populations show high mobility rates and a large percentage of rural ELL students. Montana's rural schools and districts are the nation's smallest, transportation costs are high relative to instructional spending, and teacher salaries are low, consistent with bordering states. Educational Outcomes are below national averages at grade four and slightly above national averages at grade eight. In terms of college readiness measures, rural graduation rates are among the nation's lowest (only three states have a lower graduation rate among rural minority students), but rural AP participation and ACT/SAT test-taking rates are slightly above the national medians.

**PRIORITY  
RANKING**

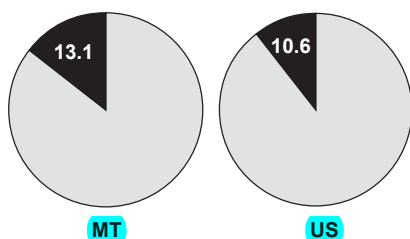
**18**

GAUGE 1:		Notable   Important   Very Important   Crucial			
Importance		<div><div></div><div>4</div></div>			
		MT	Rank*		
Percent rural schools		74.0%	1		
Percent small rural school districts		95.3%	1		
Percent rural students		32.3%	10		
Number of rural students		46,560	41		
Percent state education funds to rural districts		38.3%	7		

Percent small rural districts



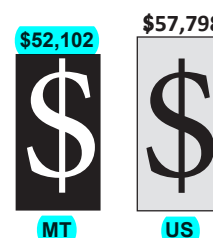
Percent rural mobility



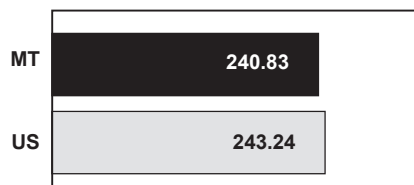
GAUGE 2:				
	Fair	Serious	Critical	Urgent
	22			
Student and Family Diversity	MT	Rank*		
Percent rural minority students	21.3%	22		
Percent rural ELL students	3.4%	15		
Percent rural IEP students	11.7%	42		
Percent rural students eligible for free or reduced lunches	43.8%	28		
Percent rural mobility	13.1%	6		

GAUGE 3:		<div><div></div><div>Notable</div><div>Important</div><div>Very Important</div><div>Crucial</div></div>			
Educational Policy Context		<div><div></div><div>34</div><div></div></div>			
		MT		Rank*	
Rural instructional expenditures per pupil		\$7,160		35	
Ratio of instructional to transportation expenditures		\$9.68		18	
Median organizational scale (x 100)		54		49	
State revenue to schools per local dollar		\$1.22		26	
Rural salary expenditures per instructional FTE		\$52,102		14	

Rural salary expenditures per instructional FTE



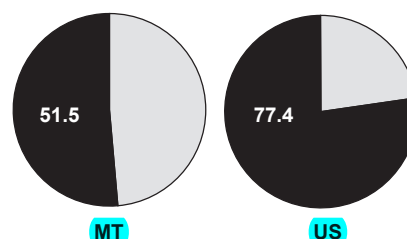
Rural Grade 4 NAEP performance (math)



GAUGE 4:				
	Fair	Serious	Critical	Urgent
Educational Outcomes	32			
	MT			Rank*
	Rural Grade 4 NAEP performance (math)		240.83	19
	Rural Grade 4 NAEP performance (reading)		222.89	21
	Rural Grade 8 NAEP performance (math)		288.96	32
	Rural Grade 8 NAEP performance (reading)		271.95	36
	Rural Grade 8 NAEP performance (science)		163.80	38

GAUGE 5:				
	Fair	Serious	Critical	Urgent
College Readiness	<div><div></div><div>15</div><div></div></div>			
	MT	Rank*		
Overall graduation rate in rural districts	84.7%	15		
Graduation rate for rural minority students	51.5%	4		
Graduation rate for rural free or reduced lunch eligible students	73.9%	13		
Percent rural Juniors and Seniors taking at least one AP course	28.3%	28		
Percent rural Juniors and Seniors who took the ACT or SAT	50.5%	32		

Graduation rate for rural minority students

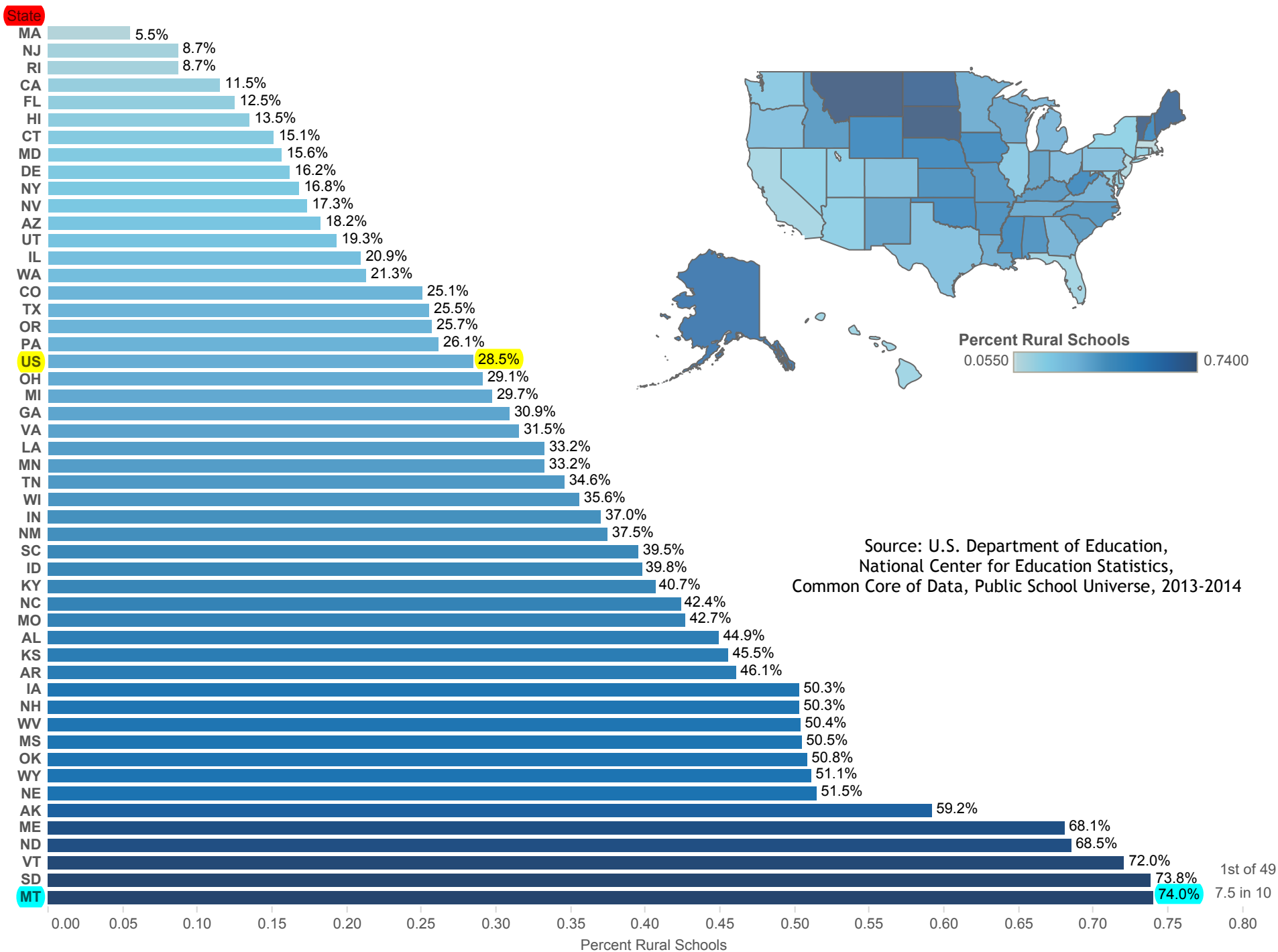


\* A rank of 1 is most crucial or most urgent

Rank	Population Density	State / Population
1	1,017.4/sq mi	New Jersey / 8,874,374
2	681.8/sq mi	Rhode Island / 1,053,252
3	648.0/sq mi	Connecticut / 3,592,053
4	630.8/sq mi	Massachusetts / 6,657,291
5	474.6/sq mi	Maryland / 5,887,776
6	368.5/sq mi	Delaware / 917,060
7	359.2/sq mi	New York / 19,594,330
8	294.4/sq mi	Florida / 19,361,792
9	277.0/sq mi	Pennsylvania / 12,758,729
10	257.9/sq mi	Ohio / 11,560,380
11	232.5/sq mi	California / 38,066,920
12	222.2/sq mi	Illinois / 12,868,747
13	191.4/sq mi	Virginia / 8,185,131
14	181.2/sq mi	North Carolina / 9,750,405
15	179.6/sq mi	Indiana / 6,542,411
16	166.7/sq mi	Georgia / 9,907,756
17	153.1/sq mi	Tennessee / 6,451,365
18	147.6/sq mi	South Carolina / 4,727,273
19	141.3/sq mi	New Hampshire / 1,321,069
20	127.4/sq mi	Hawaii / 1,392,704
21	108.5/sq mi	Kentucky / 4,383,272
22	102.3/sq mi	Michigan / 9,889,024
23	97.1/sq mi	Texas / 26,092,033
24	96.8/sq mi	Washington / 6,899,123
25	91.9/sq mi	Alabama / 4,817,678
26	87.8/sq mi	Louisiana / 4,601,049
27	87.4/sq mi	Wisconsin / 5,724,692
28	86.5/sq mi	Missouri / 6,028,076
29	76.5/sq mi	West Virginia / 1,853,881
30	65.1/sq mi	Vermont / 626,358
31	61.9/sq mi	Minnesota / 5,383,661
32	61.6/sq mi	Mississippi / 2,984,345
33	57.6/sq mi	Arizona / 6,561,516
34	55.4/sq mi	Arkansas / 2,947,036
35	54.7/sq mi	Iowa / 3,078,116
36	54.6/sq mi	Oklahoma / 3,818,851
37	49.9/sq mi	Colorado / 5,197,580
38	39.6/sq mi	Oregon / 3,900,343
39	37.6/sq mi	Maine / 1,328,535
40	35.0/sq mi	Kansas / 2,882,946
41	33.7/sq mi	Utah / 2,858,111
42	25.0/sq mi	Nevada / 2,761,584
43	24.0/sq mi	Nebraska / 1,855,617
44	19.1/sq mi	Idaho / 1,599,464
45	17.1/sq mi	New Mexico / 2,080,085
46	10.8/sq mi	South Dakota / 834,708
47	10.0/sq mi	North Dakota / 704,925
48	6.8/sq mi	Montana / 1,006,370
49	5.9/sq mi	Wyoming / 575,251
50	1.1/sq mi	Alaska / 728,300

## Percent Rural Schools

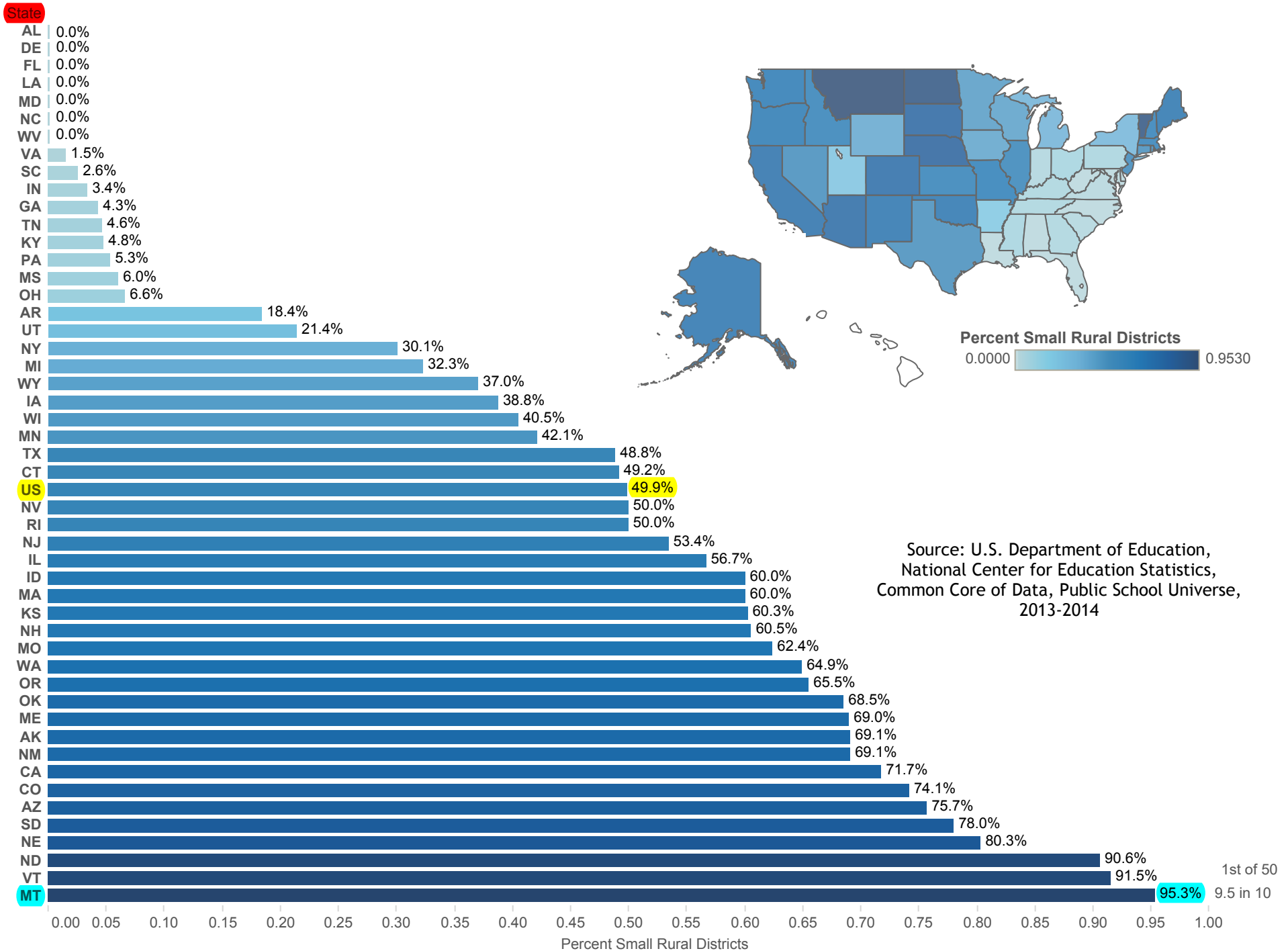
The number of public schools located in places classified as rural by the U.S. Census Bureau, expressed as a percentage of all public schools in the state.





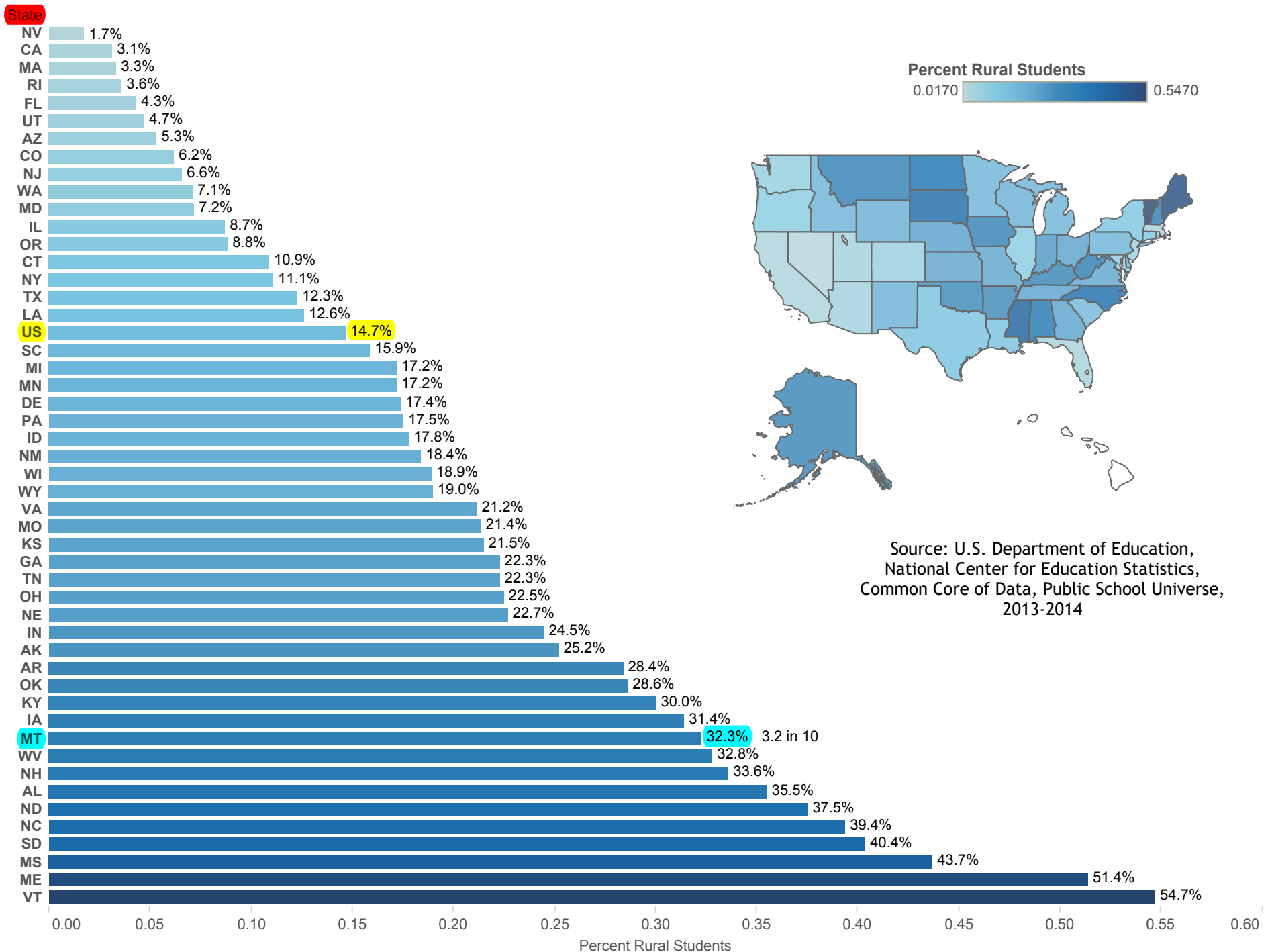
## Percent Small Rural Districts

The number of rural public school districts with an enrollment size below the national median for rural districts, expressed as a percentage of the total number of public school districts in the state.



## Percent Rural Students

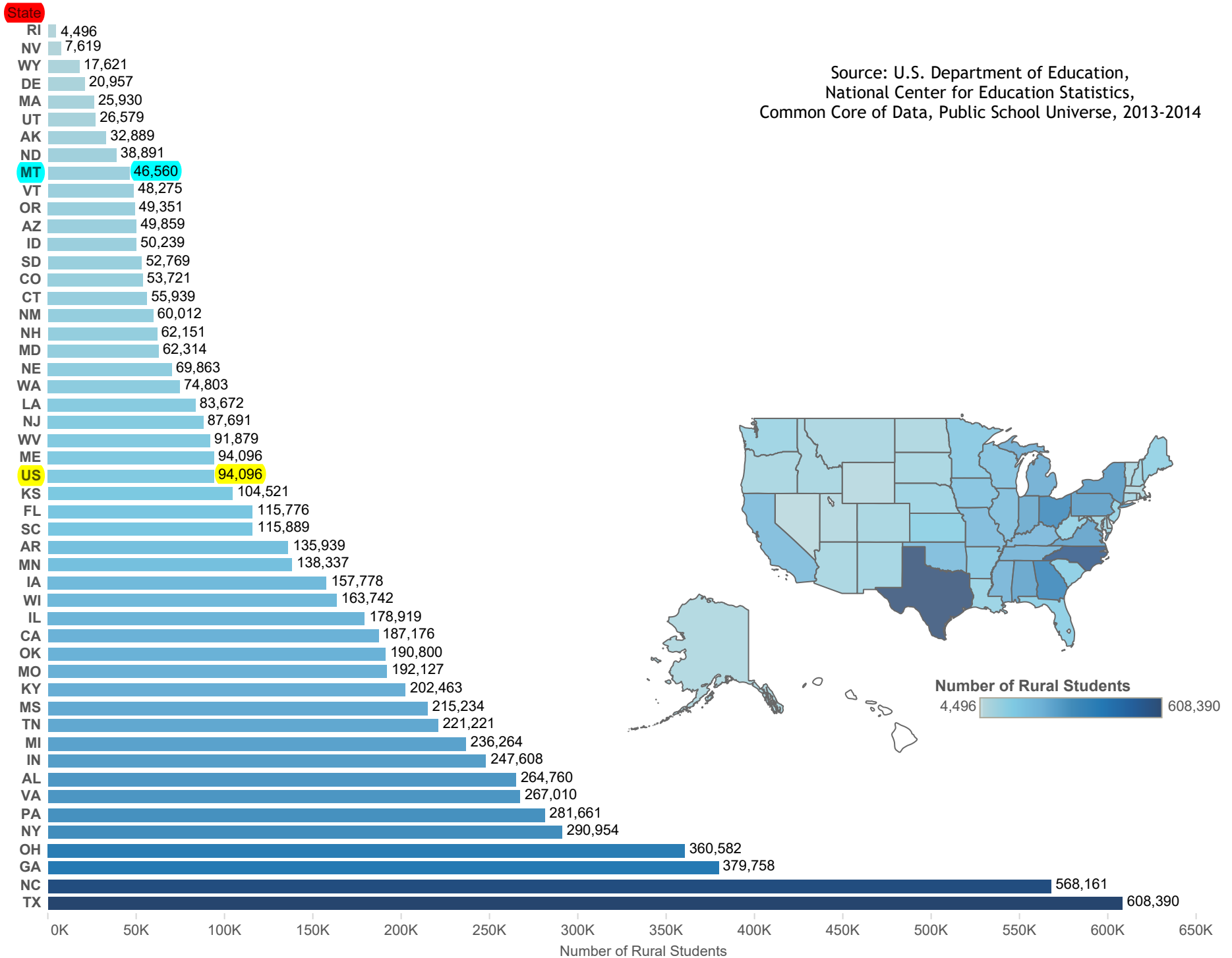
The number of students attending public schools located in places classified as rural by the U.S. Census Bureau, expressed as a percentage of all public school students in the state.



## Number of Rural Students

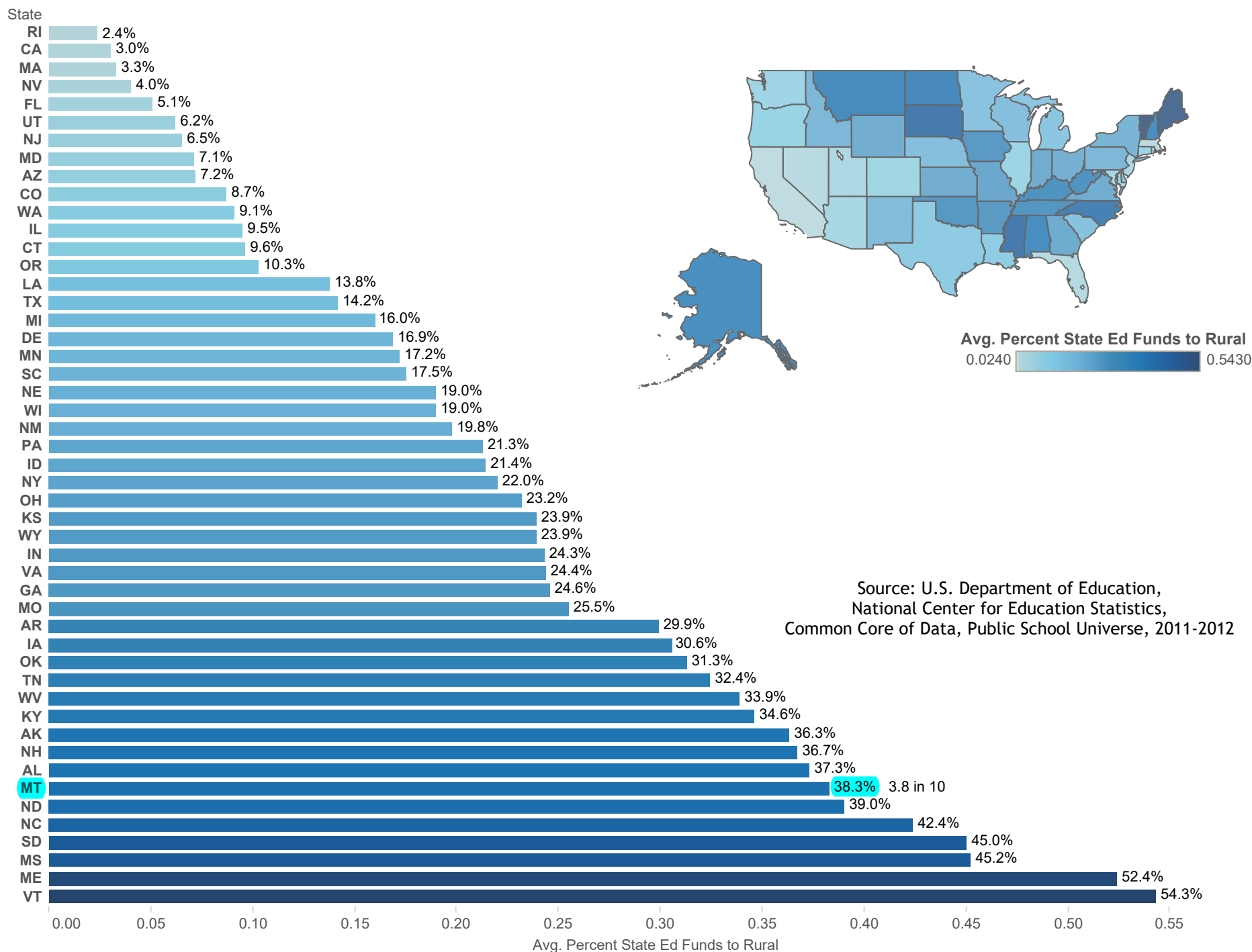
The number of students attending public schools located in a district classified as rural by the U.S. Census Bureau.

Source: U.S. Department of Education,  
National Center for Education Statistics,  
Common Core of Data, Public School Universe, 2013-2014



## Percent of State Education Funds to Rural Districts

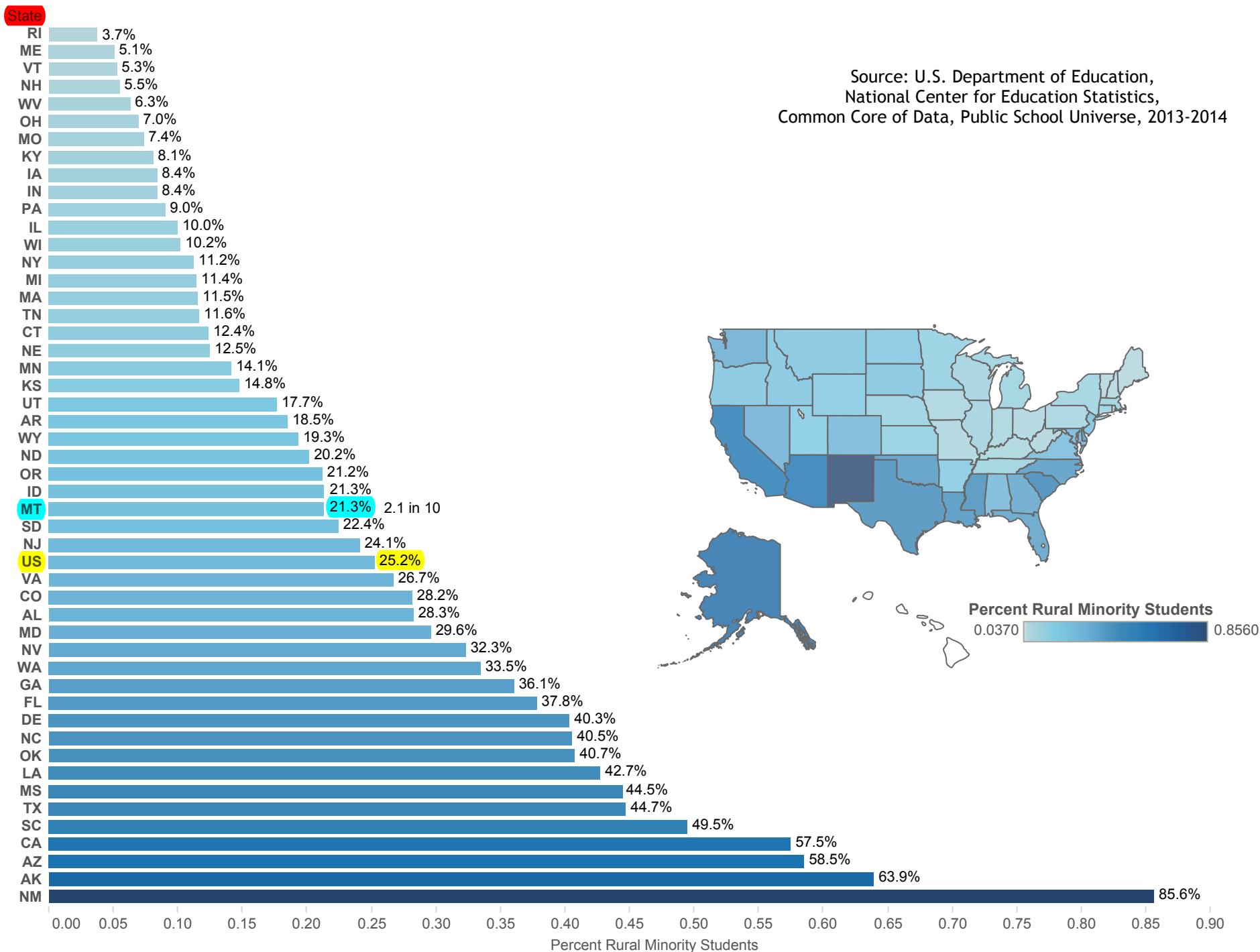
State education funding to local school districts located in rural settings, expressed as a percentage of all state education funding to local school districts.



## Percent Rural Minority Students

The number of students enrolled in rural districts who are classified in a racial minority group, expressed as a percentage of all students enrolled in rural districts

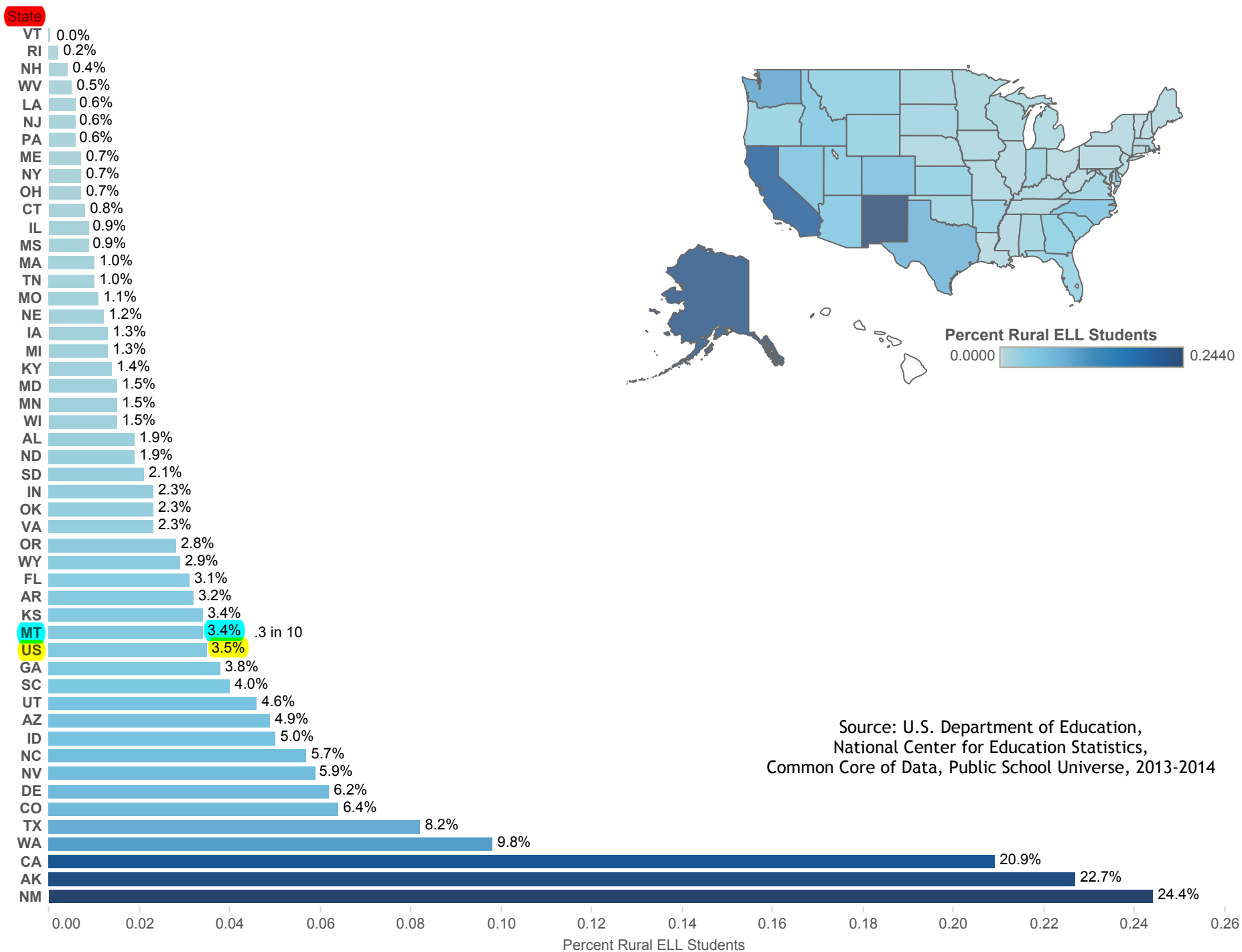
Source: U.S. Department of Education,  
National Center for Education Statistics,  
Common Core of Data, Public School Universe, 2013-2014





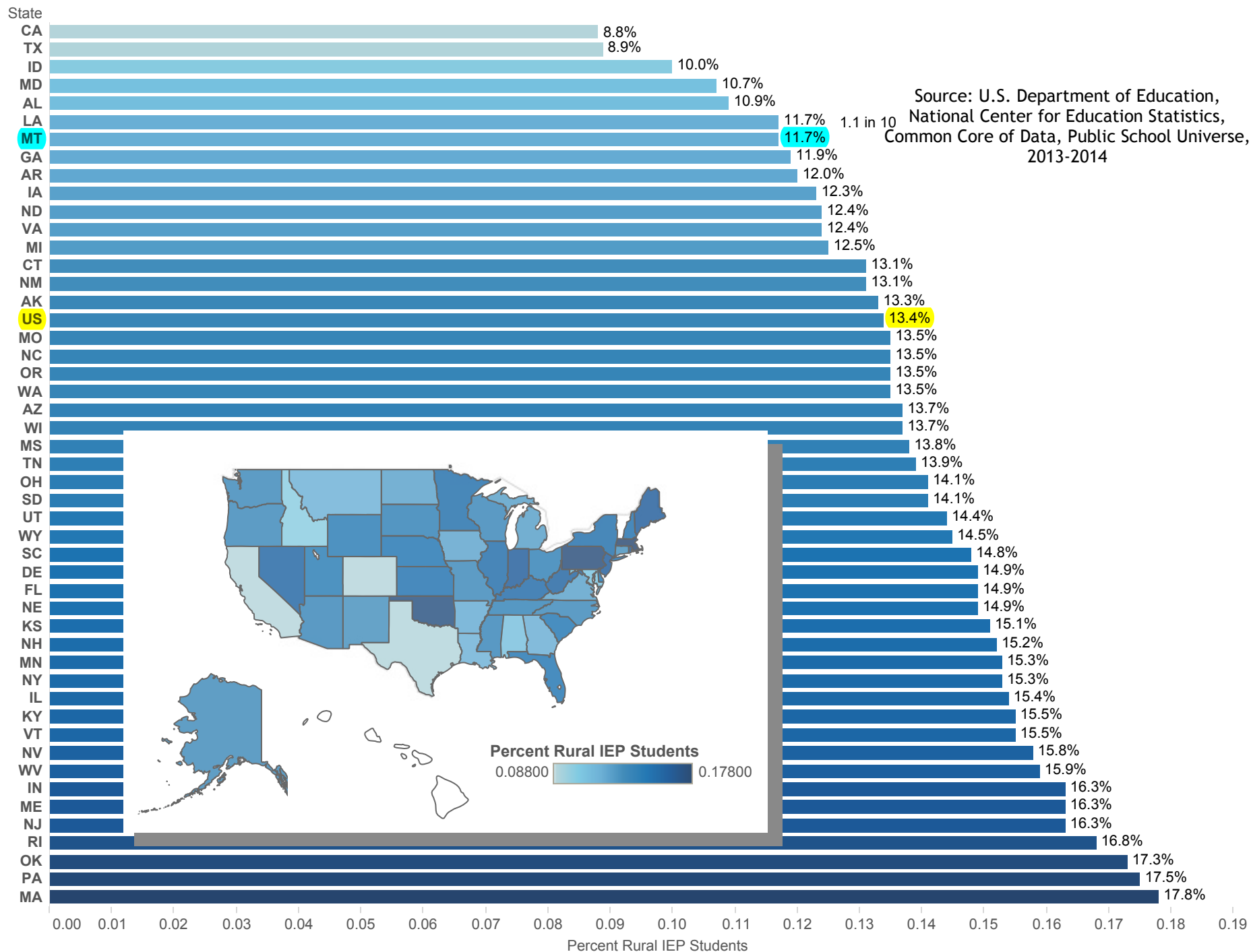
## Percent Rural English Language Learner (ELL) Students

The total number of students enrolled in rural districts who are English Language Learners, expressed as a percentage of all students enrolled in rural districts.



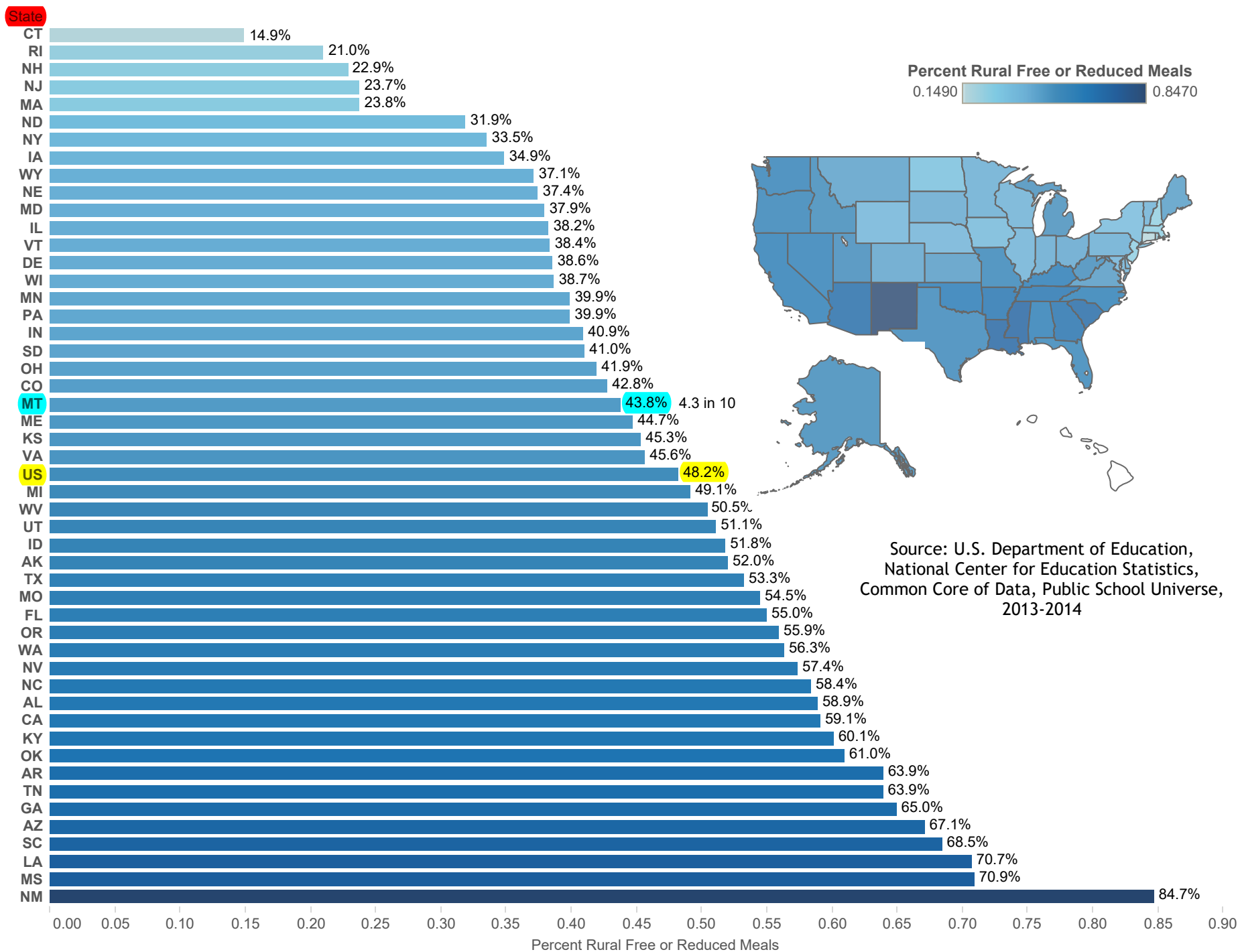
## Percent Rural Special Education (IEP) Students

The total number of students enrolled in rural districts who receive special education services, expressed as a percentage of all students enrolled in rural districts.



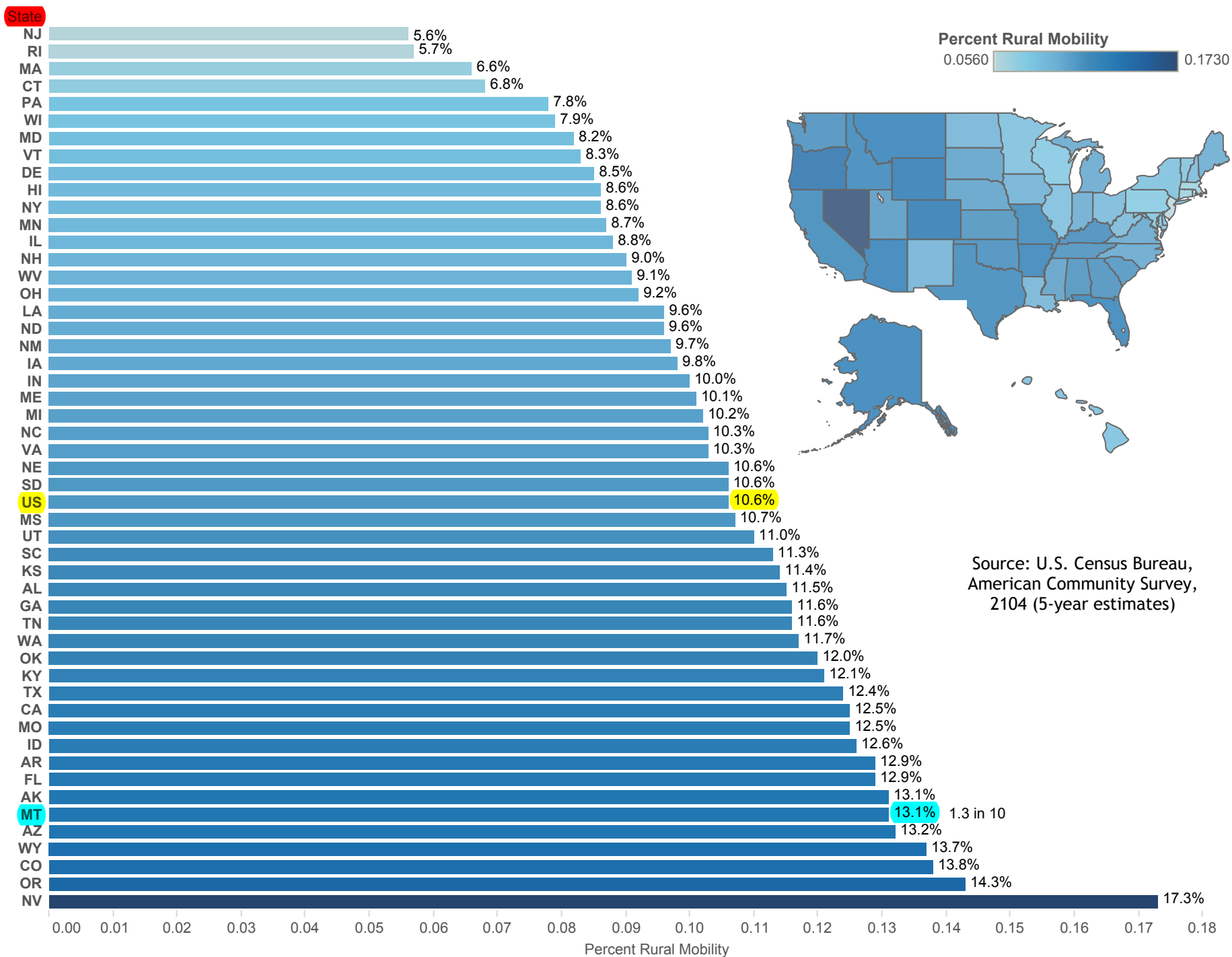
## Percent of Rural Students Eligible for Free or Reduced Meals

Students attending public schools in rural districts who qualify for free or reduced-price meal programs, expressed as a percentage of all students attending public schools in rural districts.



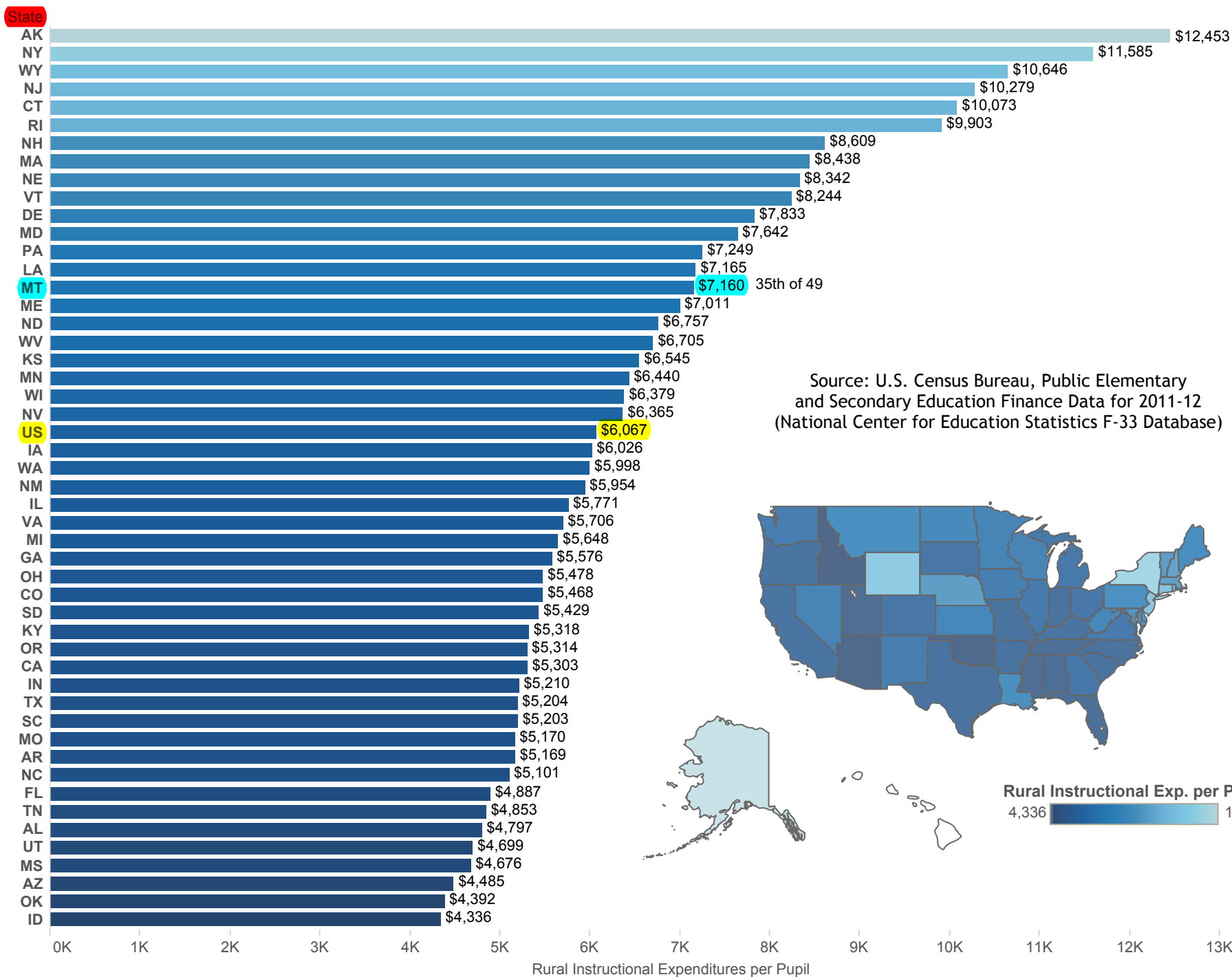
## Percent Rural Student Mobility

The percentage of rural households with school-age children who changed residences within the previous 12 months, per U.S. Census figures.



## Rural Instructional Expenditures per Pupil

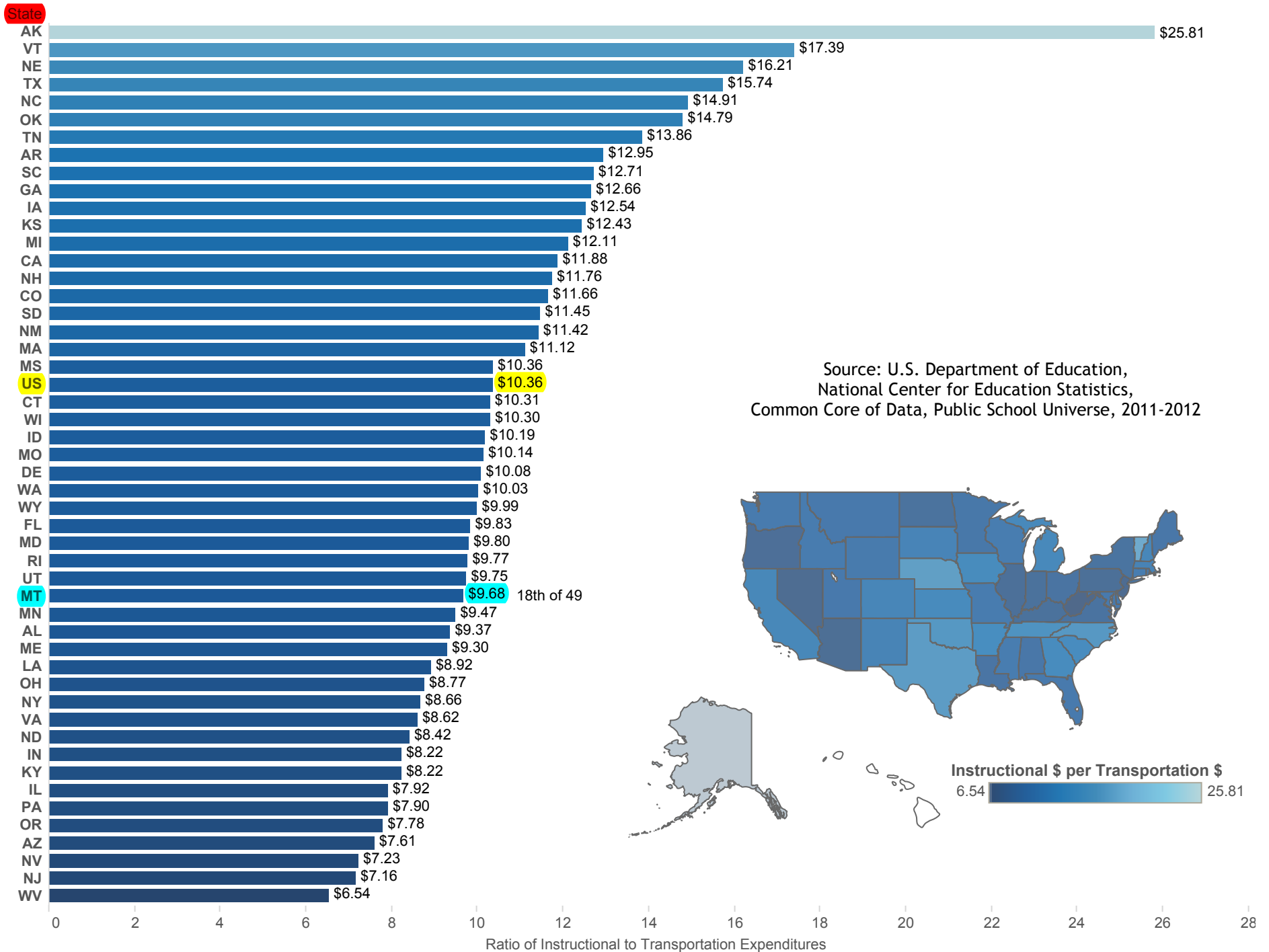
Total current expenditures for instruction in rural school districts, divided by the total number of students enrolled in those school districts.





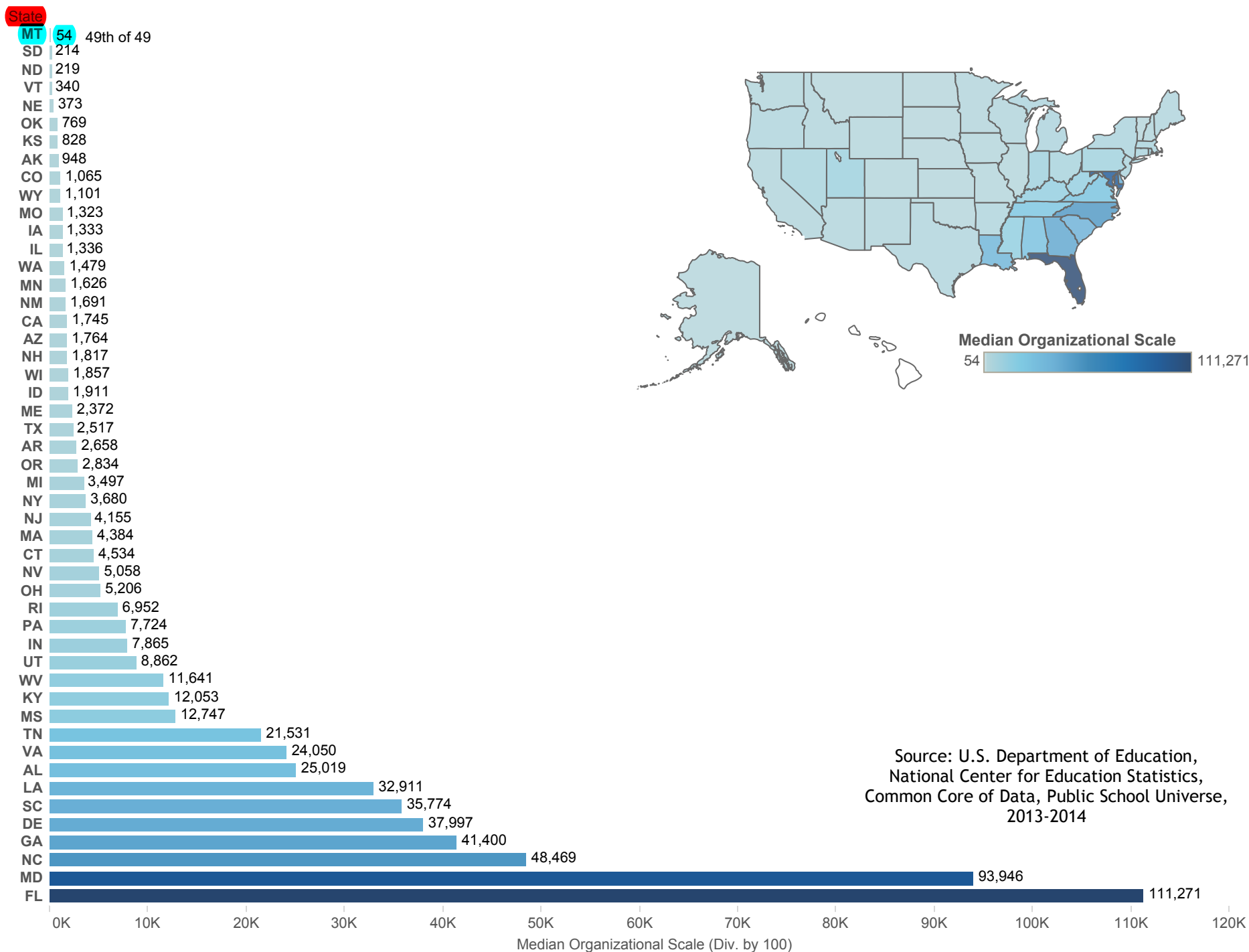
# Ratio of Instructional Dollars to Transportation Dollars in Rural Districts

Ratio of total current expenditures for regular education instruction to total current expenditures for pupil transportation.



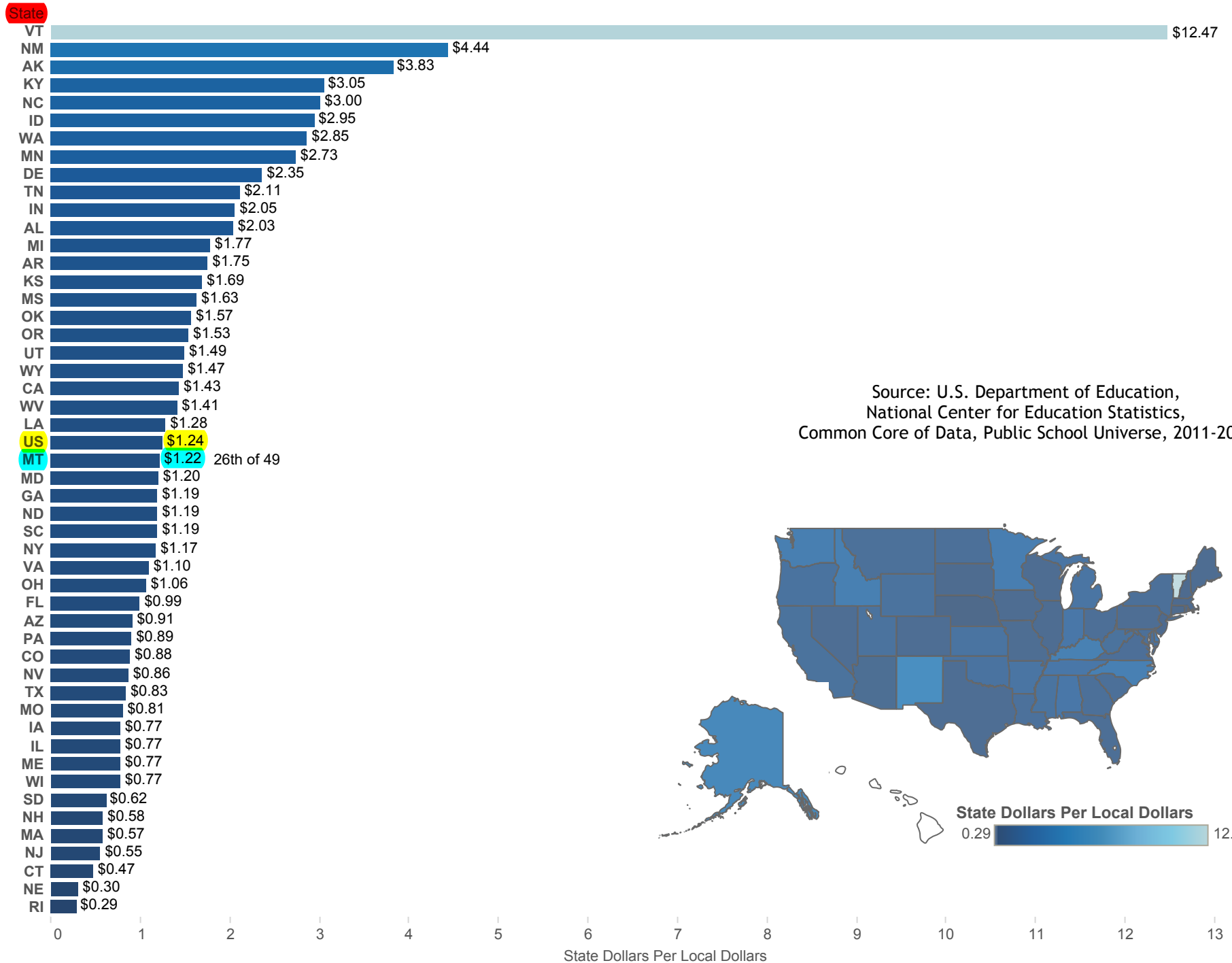
## Median Organizational Scale for Rural Districts

The state median for the organizational scale indicator obtained by multiplying school enrollments by district enrollments. (Note: For simplification, the indicators were divided by 100.)



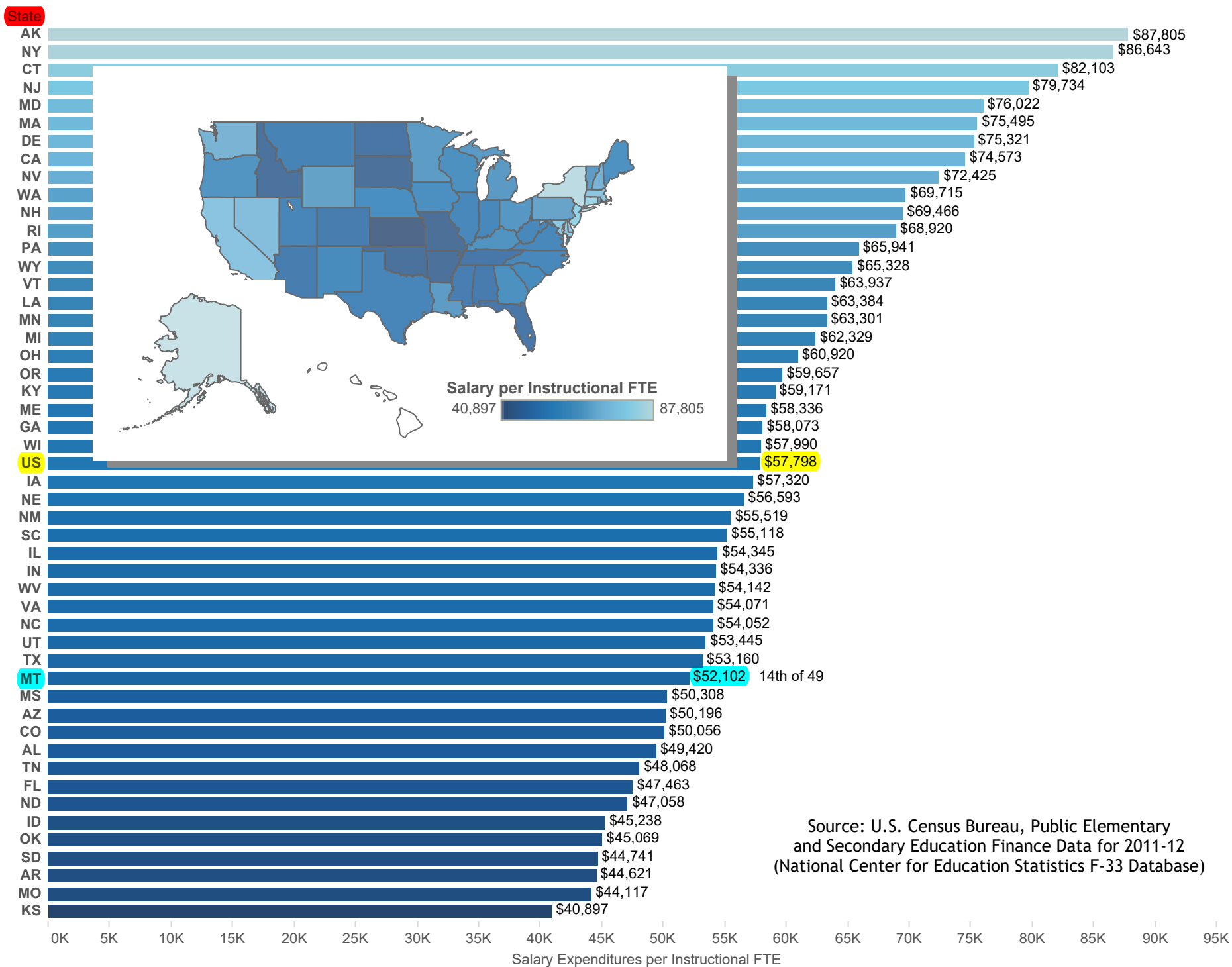
# State Funding per Local Dollar to Rural Districts

The number of dollars received by rural districts from state funds for each dollar generated by local funds.



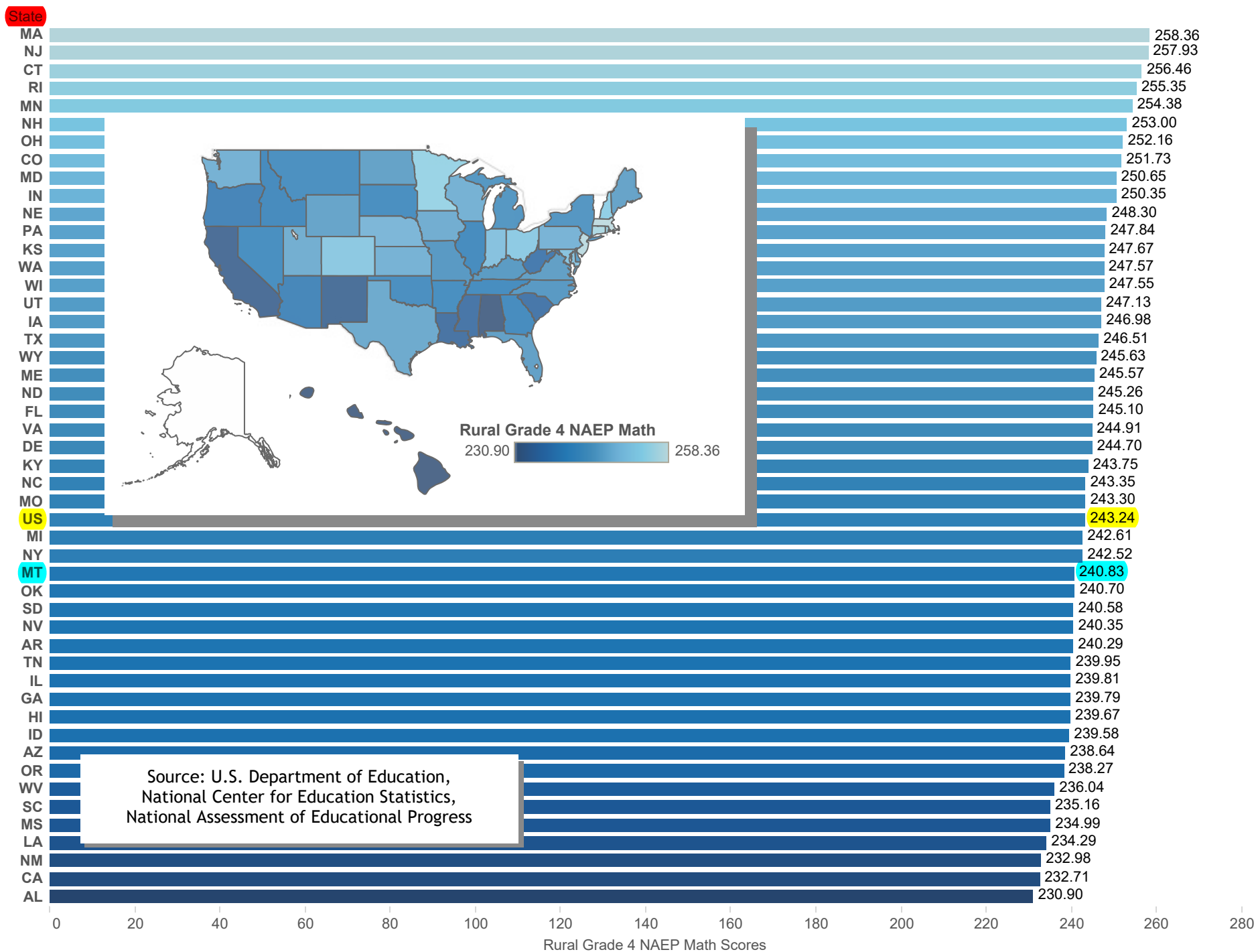
## Rural Salary Expenditures per Instructional FTE

Total current expenditures for instructional salaries, divided by the total number of instructional staff members.



## Rural Grade 4 NAEP Math Scores

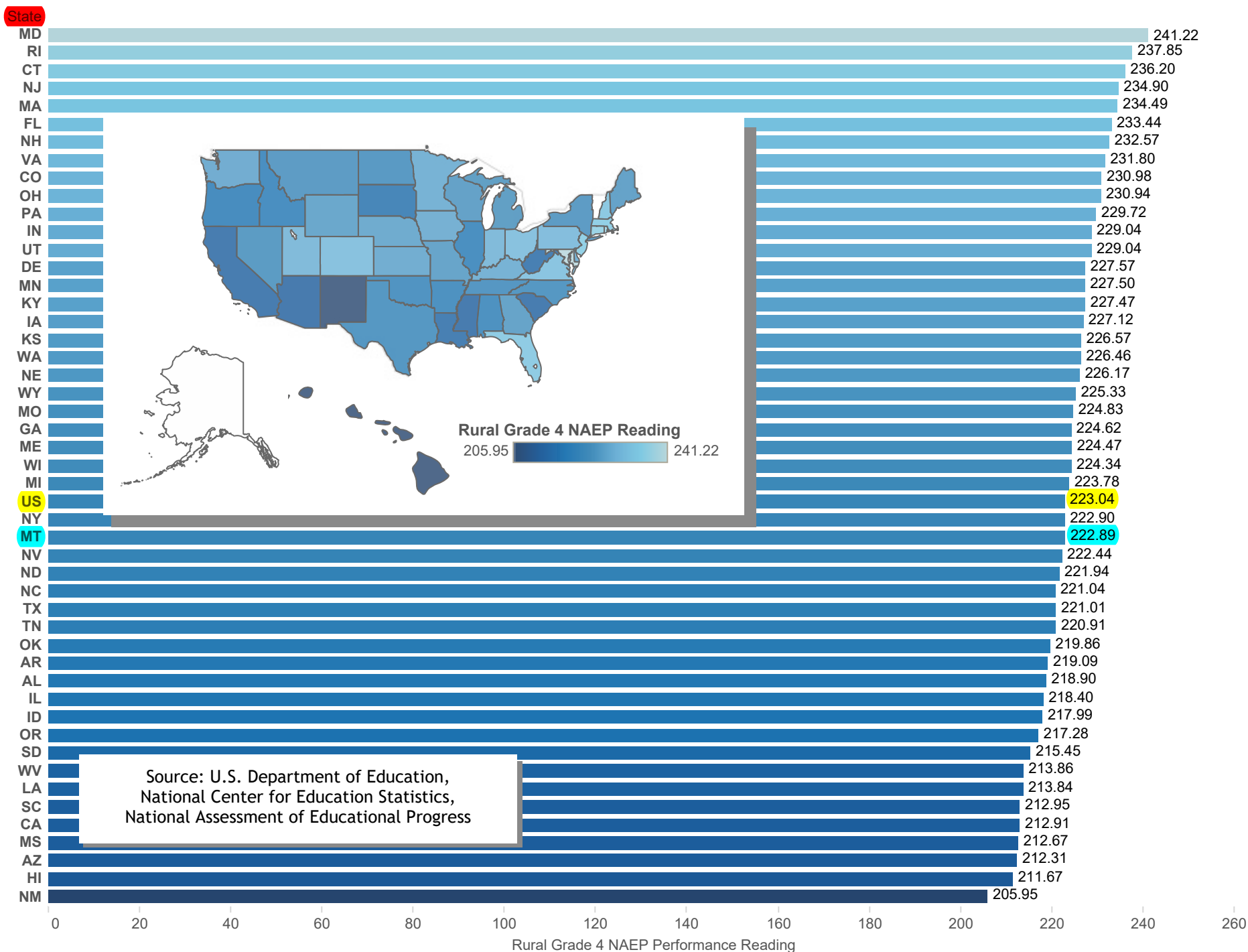
The mean score on the 2013 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) math test administered to students in grade 4, as reported by the U.S. Department of Education for the sample of rural schools in each state.





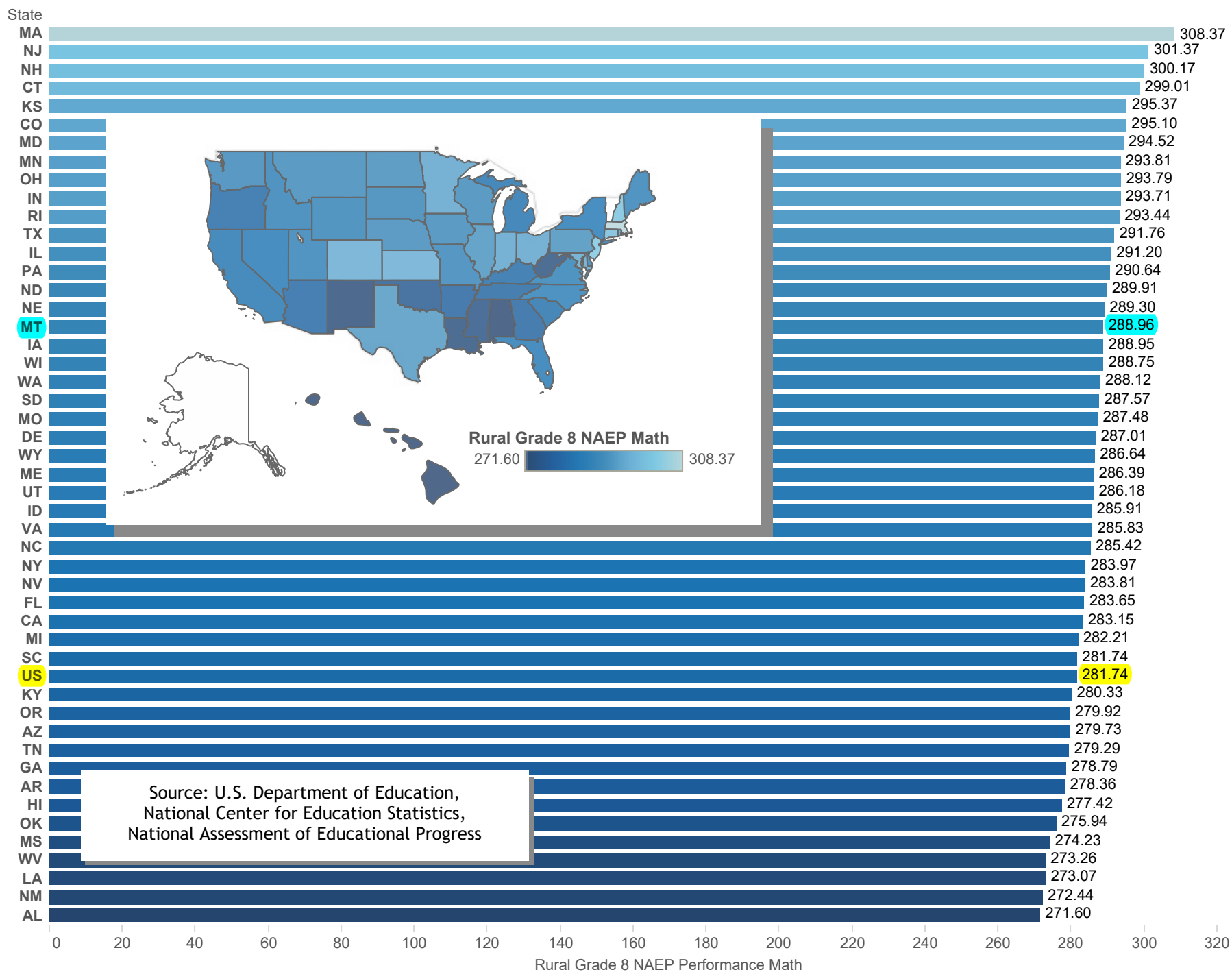
## Rural Grade 4 NAEP Reading Scores

The mean score on the 2013 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reading test administered to students in grade 4, as reported by the U.S. Department of Education for the sample of rural schools in each state.



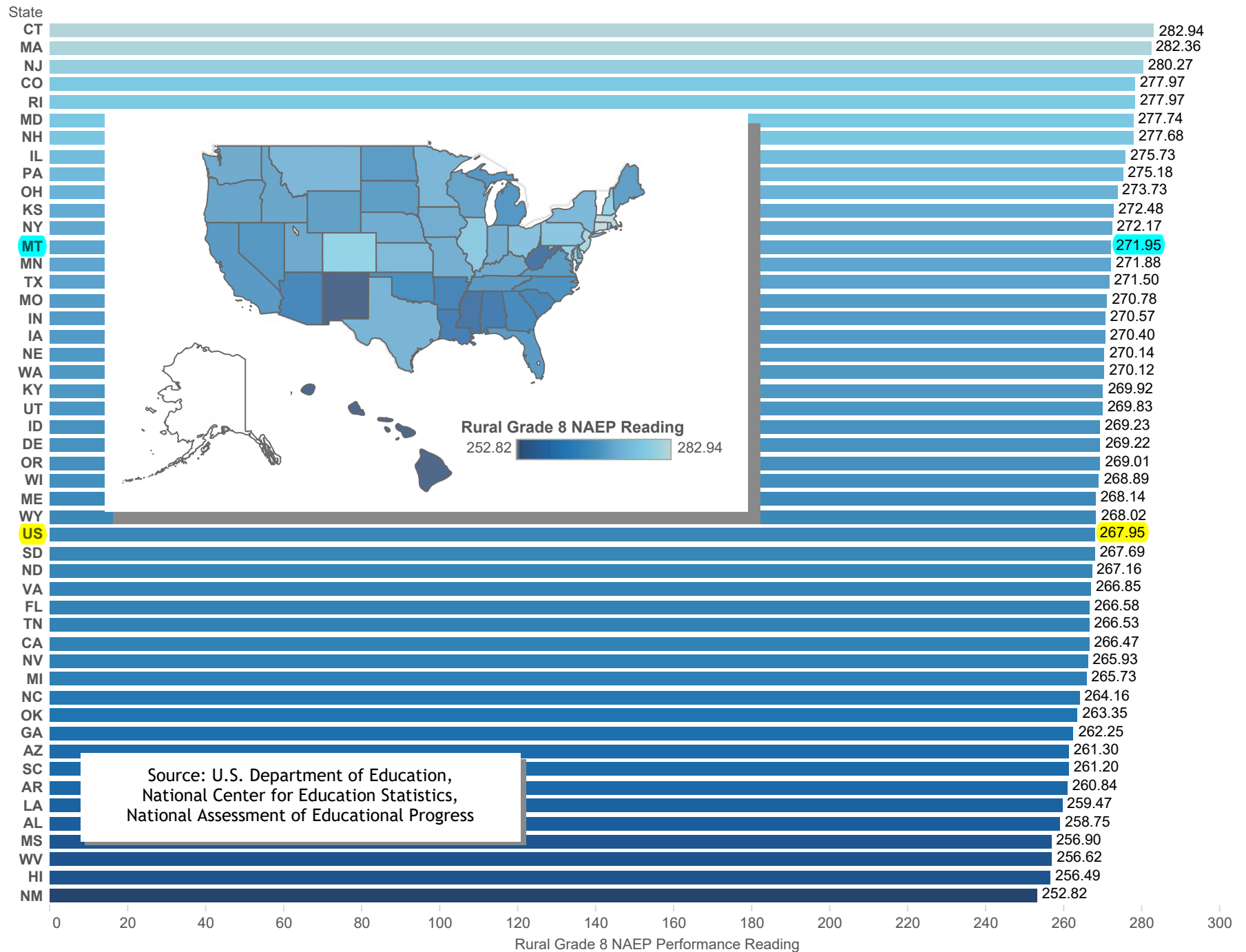
## Rural Grade 8 NAEP Math Scores

The mean score on the 2013 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) math test administered to students in grade 8, as reported by the U.S. Department of Education for the sample of rural schools in each state.



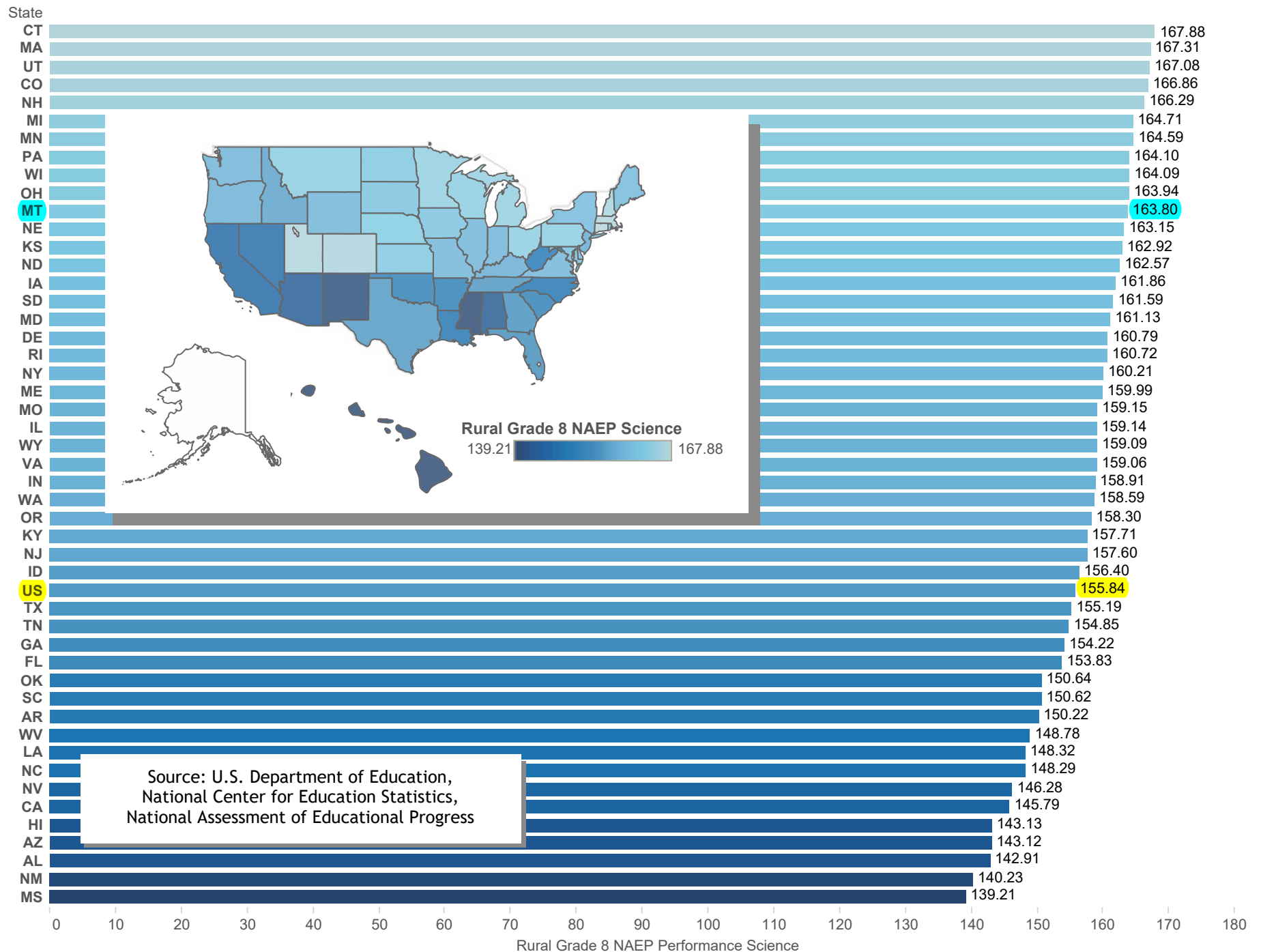
## Rural Grade 8 NAEP Reading Scores

The mean score on the 2013 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reading test administered to students in grade 8, as reported by the U.S. Department of Education for the sample of rural schools in each state.



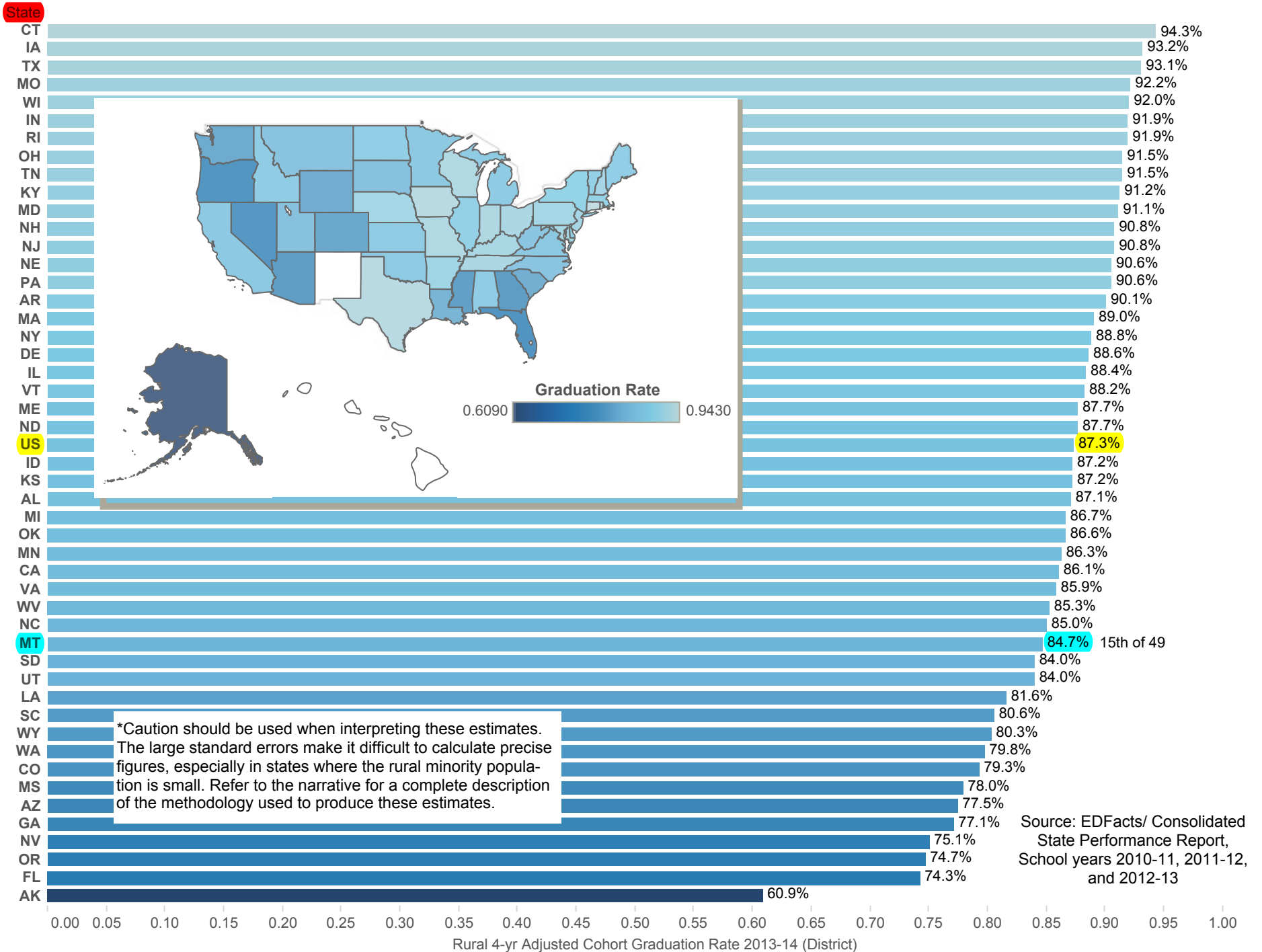
## Rural Grade 8 NAEP Science Scores

The mean score on the 2011 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) science test administered to students in grade 8, as reported by the U.S. Department of Education for the sample of rural schools in each state.



## Graduation Rates of Rural Districts

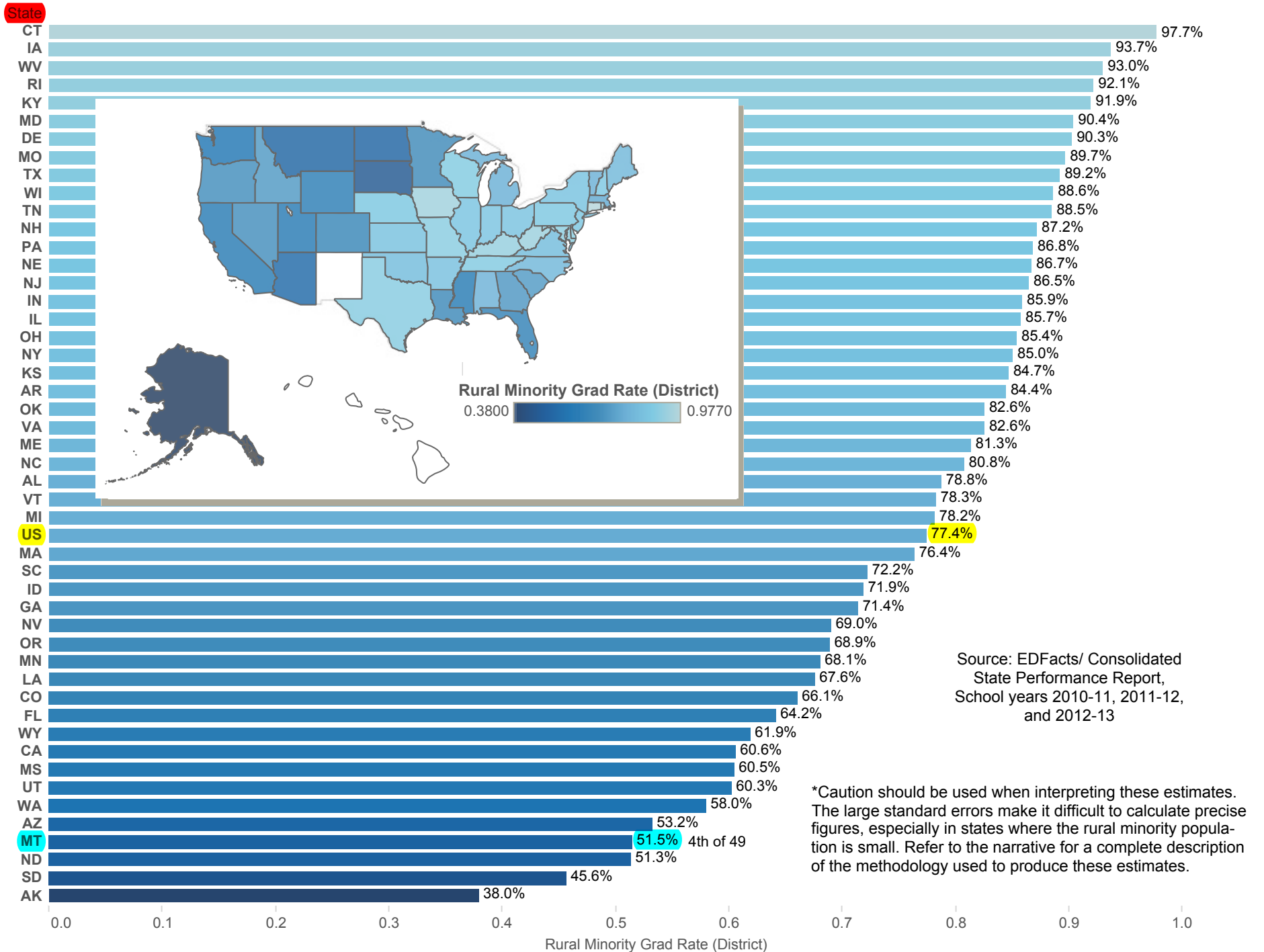
The number of graduating seniors in rural school districts divided by the total number of students who started with the cohort four years earlier, adjusted for transfer students.\*





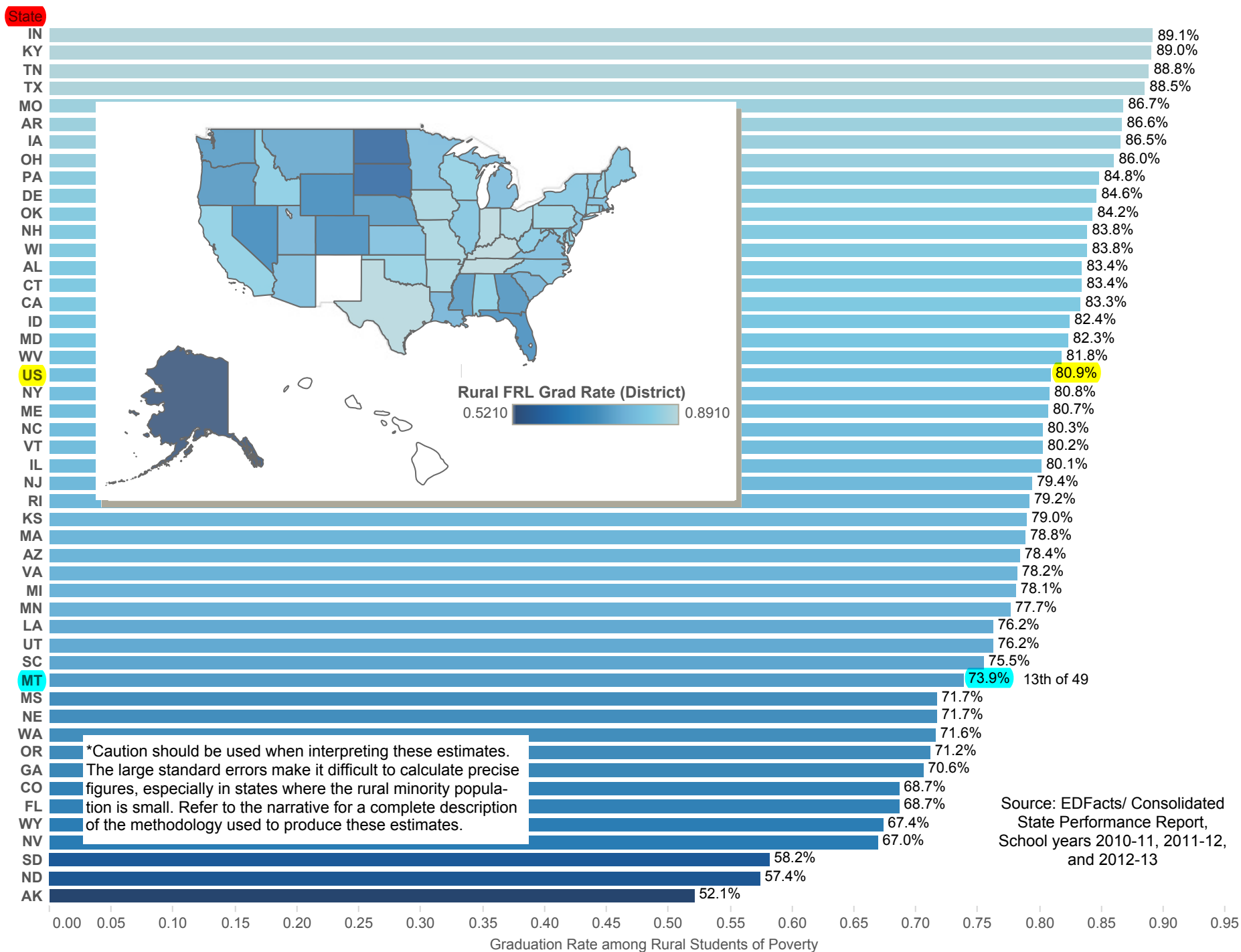
# Graduation Rates among Rural Minority Students

The number of graduating seniors in rural school districts who were of a race other than White divided by the total number who started with the cohort four years earlier, adjusted for transfer students.\*



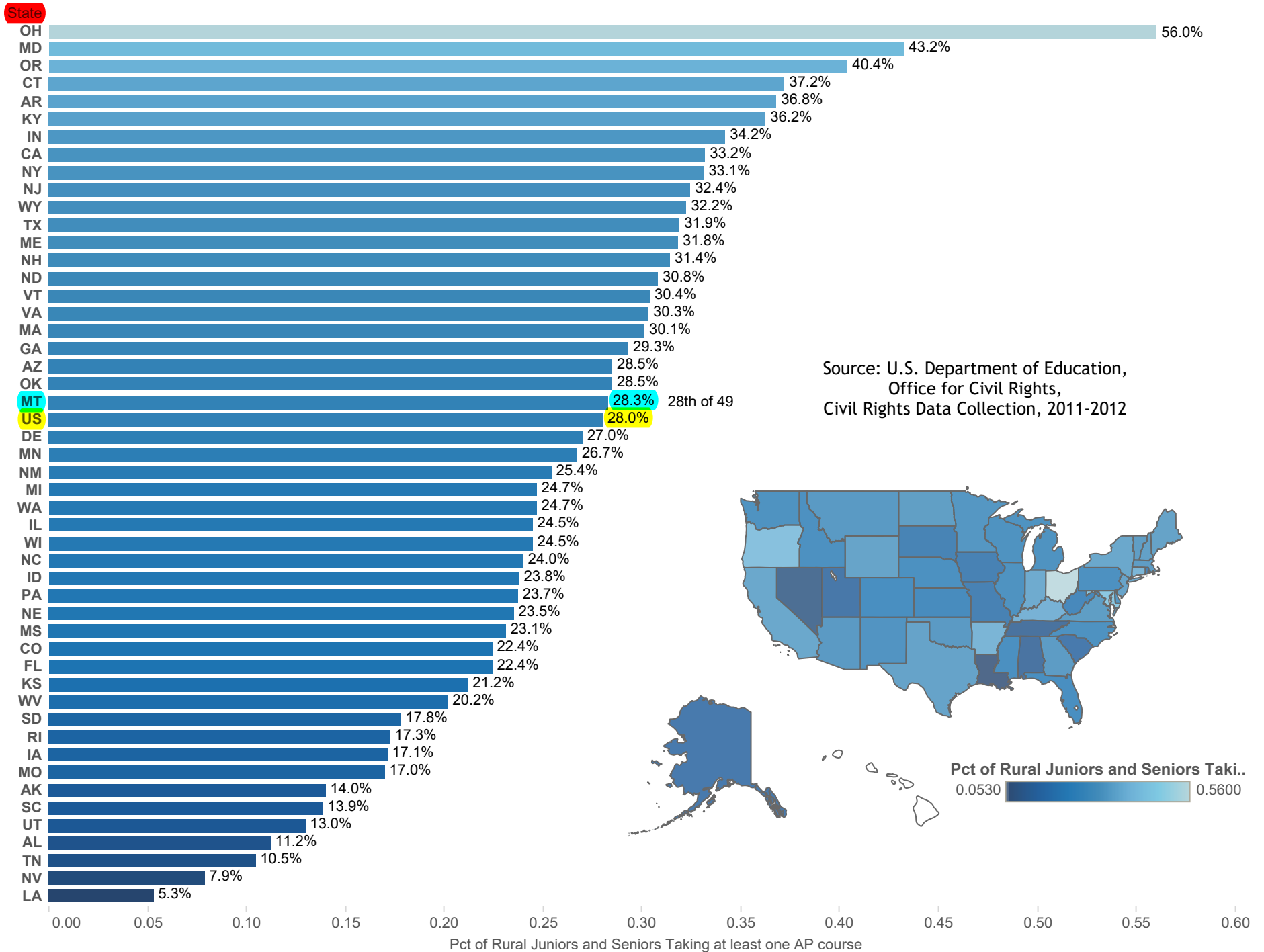
## Graduation Rates among Rural Students of Poverty

The number of graduating seniors in rural school districts who were eligible for free or reduced lunches divided by the total number who started with the cohort four years earlier, adjusted for transfer students.\*



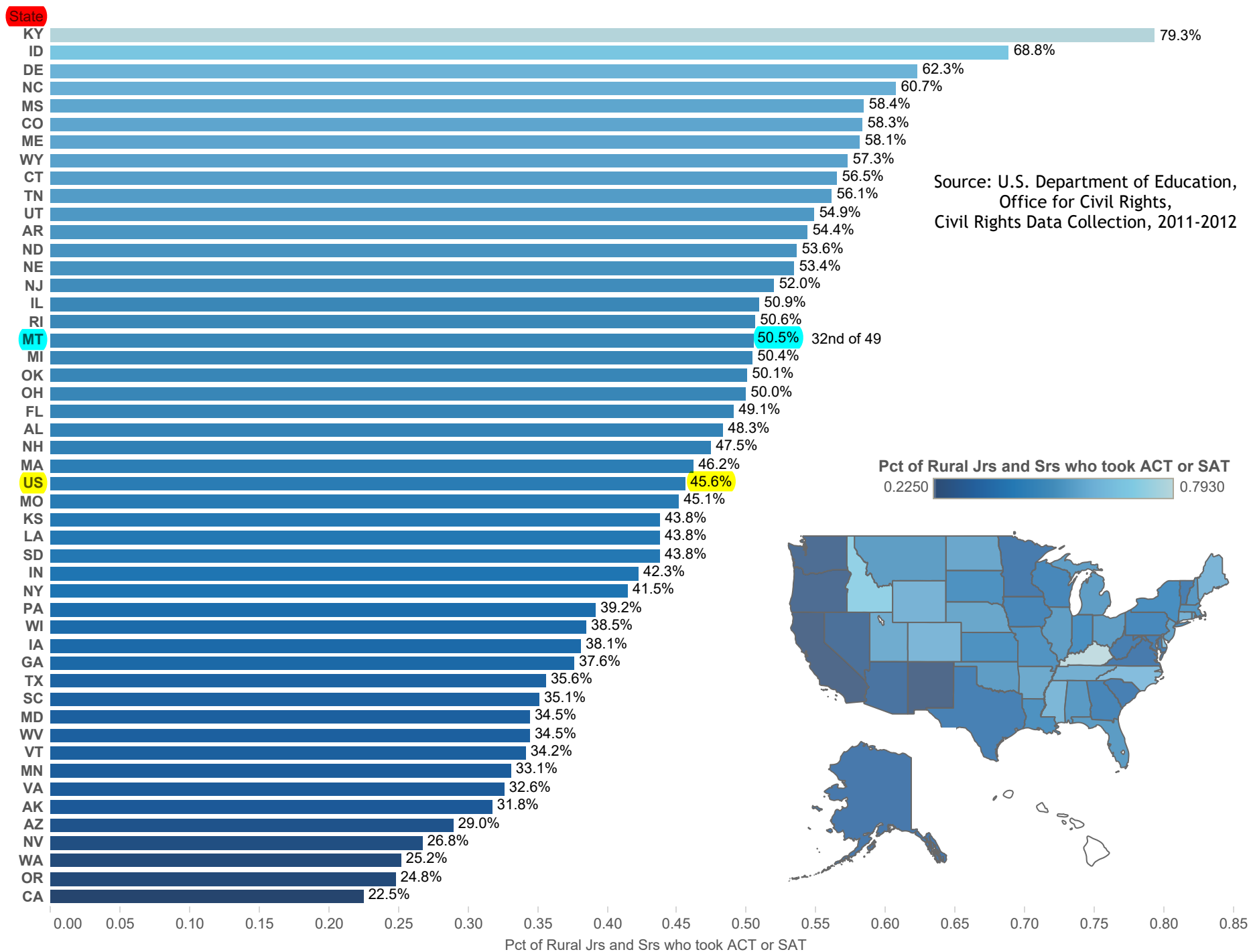
# Percent of Rural Juniors and Seniors Taking AP Coursework

The number of juniors and seniors in rural districts who took at least one AP course, expressed as a percentage of all juniors and seniors enrolled in rural districts.



## Percent of Rural Juniors and Seniors Taking the ACT or SAT

The number of juniors and seniors in rural districts who took the ACT or the SAT, expressed as a percentage of all juniors and seniors enrolled in rural districts.



Rank	Population Density	County / Population
1	57.4/sq mi	Yellowstone, MT / 151,965
2	47.9/sq mi	Silver Bow, MT / 34,462
3	42.4/sq mi	Missoula, MT / 111,011
4	35.4/sq mi	Gallatin, MT / 93,108
5	30.2/sq mi	Cascade, MT / 81,953
6	18.5/sq mi	Lewis And Clark, MT / 64,772
7	17.6/sq mi	Flathead, MT / 92,373
8	17.5/sq mi	Lake, MT / 28,987
9	16.9/sq mi	Ravalli, MT / 40,640
10	12.5/sq mi	Deer Lodge, MT / 9,243
11	6.9/sq mi	Jefferson, MT / 11,465 MT Avg
12	5.6/sq mi	Hill, MT / 16,434
13	5.6/sq mi	Park, MT / 15,642
14	5.3/sq mi	Lincoln, MT / 19,455
15	5.1/sq mi	Stillwater, MT / 9,214
16	5.1/sq mi	Richland, MT / 10,686
17	4.9/sq mi	Carbon, MT / 10,189
18	4.6/sq mi	Broadwater, MT / 5,697
19	4.6/sq mi	Roosevelt, MT / 10,861
20	4.5/sq mi	Glacier, MT / 13,641
21	4.1/sq mi	Sanders, MT / 11,373
22	3.9/sq mi	Dawson, MT / 9,219
23	3.8/sq mi	Pondera, MT / 6,211
24	3.5/sq mi	Mineral, MT / 4,230
25	3.1/sq mi	Custer, MT / 11,869
26	3.0/sq mi	Powell, MT / 7,010
27	2.7/sq mi	Toole, MT / 5,208
28	2.6/sq mi	Teton, MT / 6,075
29	2.6/sq mi	Fergus, MT / 11,496
30	2.6/sq mi	Big Horn, MT / 13,079
31	2.5/sq mi	Musselshell, MT / 4,760
32	2.1/sq mi	Madison, MT / 7,723
33	2.1/sq mi	Sheridan, MT / 3,510
34	1.9/sq mi	Sweet Grass, MT / 3,622
35	1.9/sq mi	Fallon, MT / 3,028
36	1.9/sq mi	Rosebud, MT / 9,335
37	1.8/sq mi	Granite, MT / 3,133
38	1.7/sq mi	Beaverhead, MT / 9,294
39	1.6/sq mi	Blaine, MT / 6,576
40	1.5/sq mi	Liberty, MT / 2,235
41	1.5/sq mi	Wheatland, MT / 2,126
42	1.5/sq mi	Valley, MT / 7,518
43	1.5/sq mi	Chouteau, MT / 5,859
44	1.3/sq mi	Daniels, MT / 1,813
45	1.1/sq mi	Wibaux, MT / 987
46	1.1/sq mi	Judith Basin, MT / 2,023
47	0.8/sq mi	Meagher, MT / 2,026
48	0.8/sq mi	Phillips, MT / 4,194
49	0.8/sq mi	Treasure, MT / 761
50	0.7/sq mi	Prairie, MT / 1,282
51	0.7/sq mi	McCone, MT / 1,758
52	0.6/sq mi	Golden Valley, MT / 738
53	0.5/sq mi	Powder River, MT / 1,710
54	0.4/sq mi	Carter, MT / 1,205
55	0.3/sq mi	Petroleum, MT / 489
56	0.2/sq mi	Garfield, MT / 1,097



