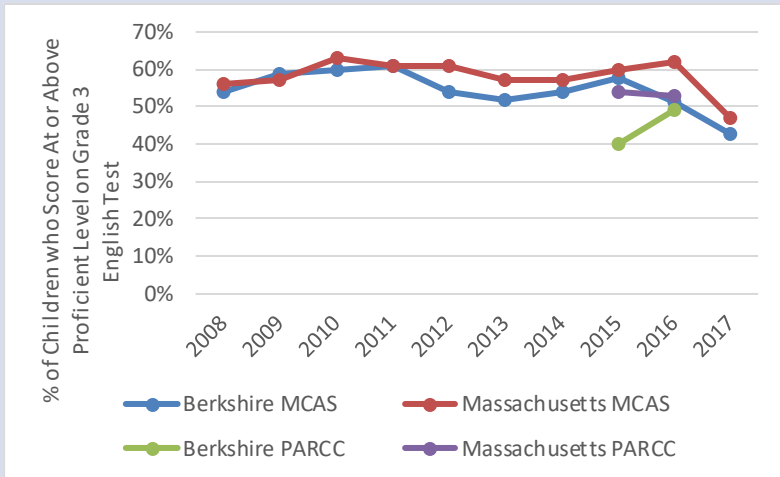


# Early Childhood Literacy

## Berkshire County

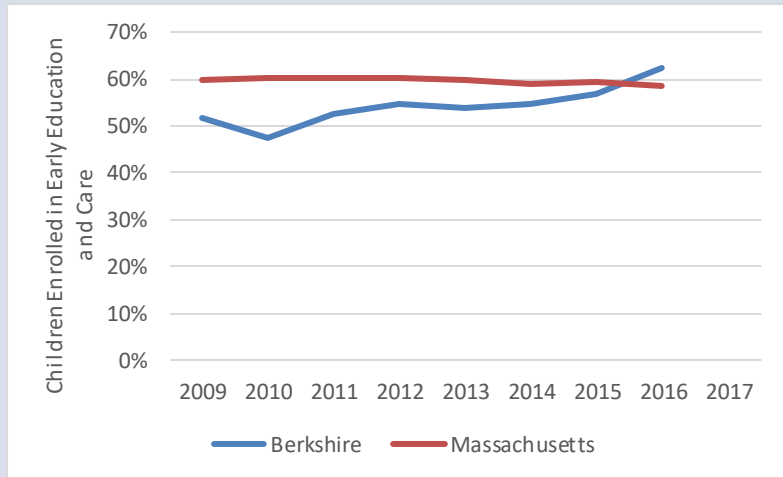
- The percent of children who score at or above proficient on Grade 3 MCAS English tests has seen a decrease over the last 10 years and is lower than the state.
- Economically disadvantaged 3rd Graders is significantly higher than the state percentage and continues to go up.
- The percentage of children enrolled in early care and education has increased and is at the highest rate in the last eight years and is now above the state percentage.
- The childcare capacity has continued to drop over the last six years.
- The birth rate to teens has continued to drop and is at its lowest point in 20 years, but is still slightly above the state rate.
- There was a decline in the % of children under 5 who were in poverty, resulting in the lowest rate in the last 8 years, however it is still higher than the state.

**% of children who score at or above proficient level on Grade 3 English tests**



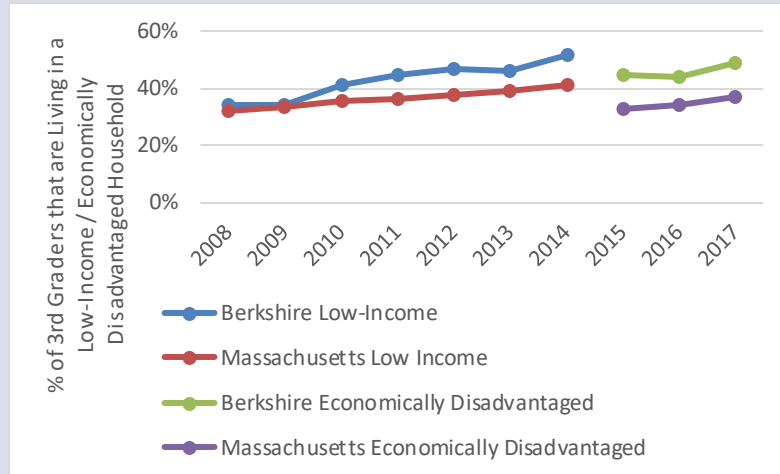
Source: MA Department of Education

**% of children enrolled in early education and care**



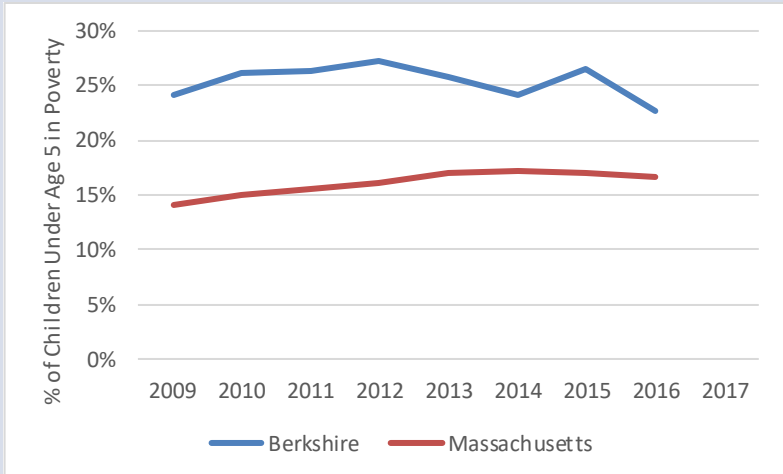
Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey 5-year average

**% of 3rd Graders that are living in a low-income / economically disadvantaged household**



Source: MA Department of Education

**% of children under age 5 in poverty**



Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey 5-year average

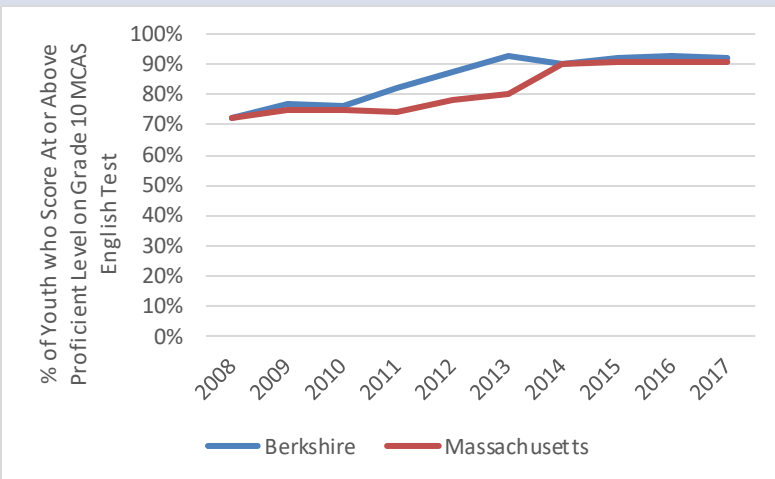
# Positive Youth Development



## Berkshire County

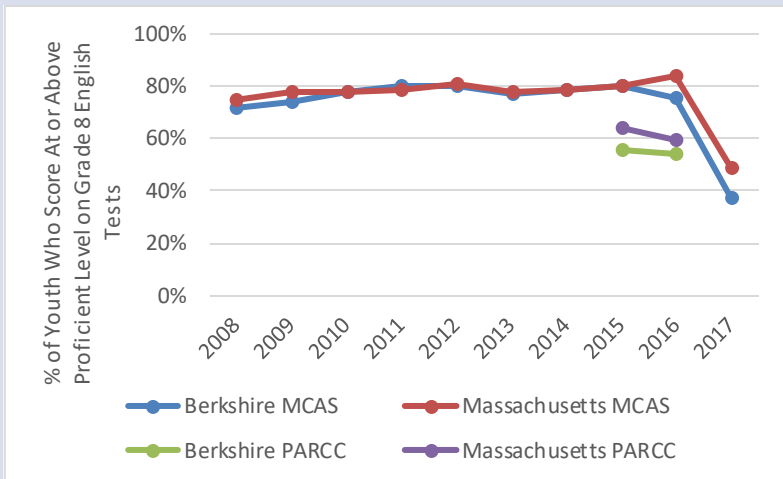
- Eighth grade MCAS English tests had a precipitous drop last year with those at or above proficient half of what it was previously, while 10th grade results was stable.
- The dropout rate saw a slight increase to its highest point in 5 years, while the graduation rate has been stable the last few years.
- The percent of youth living in poverty has gone down to its lowest level in 5 years, but is still higher than the state.
- The county has seen a relatively stable to declining rate of alcohol usage, especially among 8th and 10th graders which have seen a decline. Marijuana usage has gone up across 10th and 12th grades, but has declined for 8th graders. Narcotic usage seems to have gone down among all grades.
- The number of CHINS Interventions has gone down after several years of increase.
- The percentage of high school graduates planning to attend college is slowly declining and is at it's lowest rate in 10 years.

**% of youth who score at or above proficient level on Grade 10 MCAS English tests**



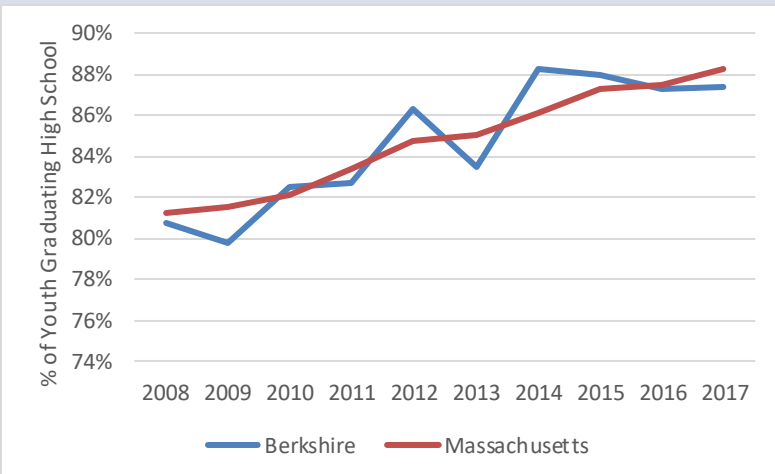
Source: MA Department of Education

**% of youth who score at or above proficient level on Grade 8 English tests**



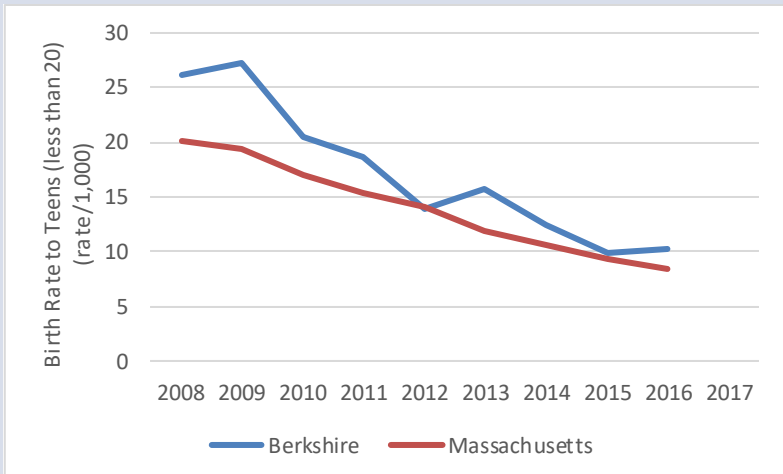
Source: MA Department of Education

**Graduation Rate**



Source: MA Department of Education

**Births rate to teens (less than 20) (rate/1,000)**



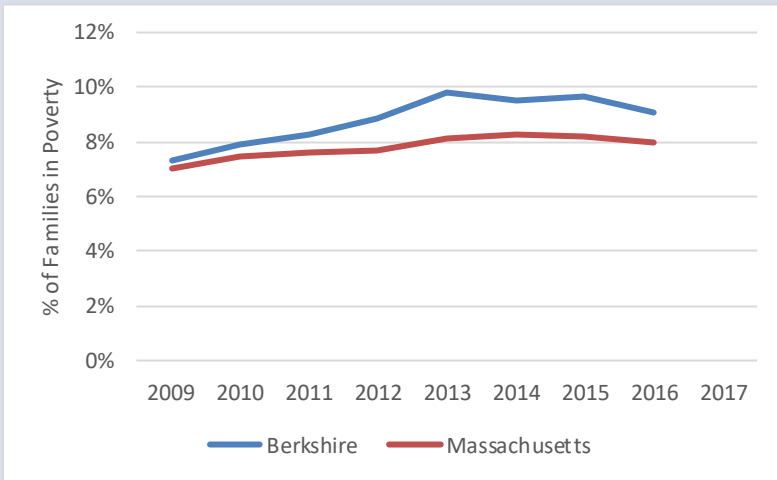
Source: MA Department of Public Health, Berkshire Health Systems

# Economic Prosperity

## Berkshire County

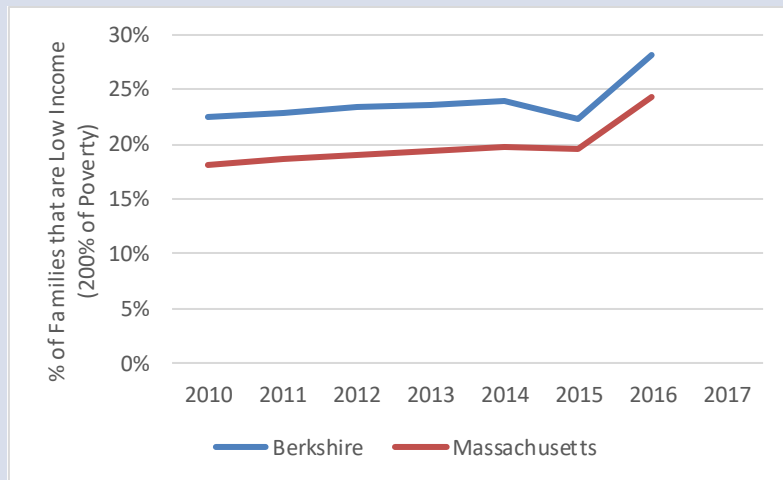
- The unemployment rate is the same as the previous year and is the lowest rate in 10 years, however it is above the state rate.
- The percent of families in poverty has been declining for a few years, but is higher than it was four years ago and is higher than the state.
- The percent of families that are low income saw a significant increase after being stable for the previous 6 years.
- EITC tax returns saw a slight decrease, while the percent of tax returns receiving EITC has declined to the lowest rate in 7 years.
- The percent of households that are paying over 30% of their income towards housing has stayed stable the last three years and are the lowest rates in 8 years.
- All educational attainment measures have been stable to slightly increasing.

**Percent of families in poverty**



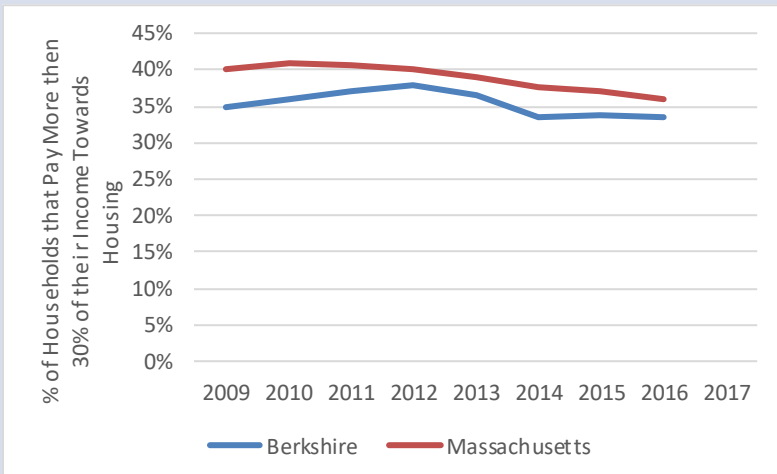
Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey 5-year average

**% of families that are low income (200% of poverty)**



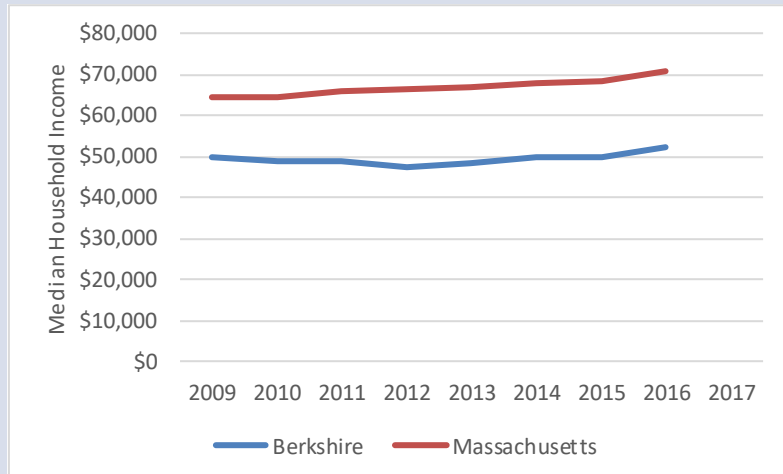
Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey 5-year average

**% of households that pay more than 30% of their income towards housing**



Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey 5-year average

**Median Household Income**



Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey 5-year average

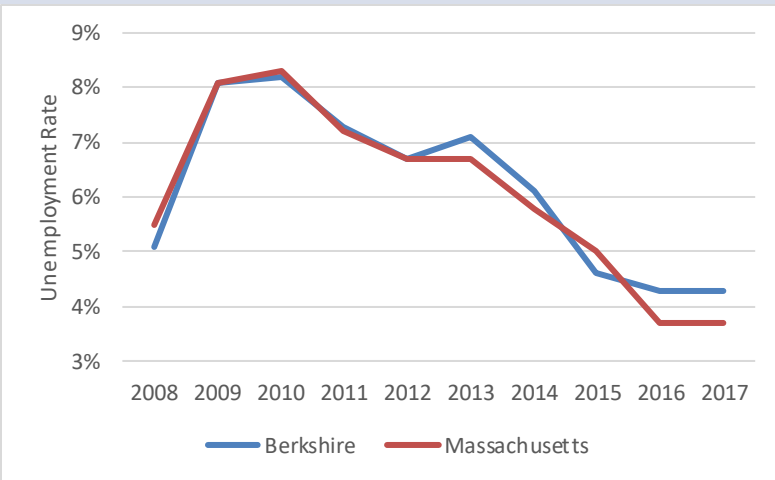
# Additional Data



## Berkshire County

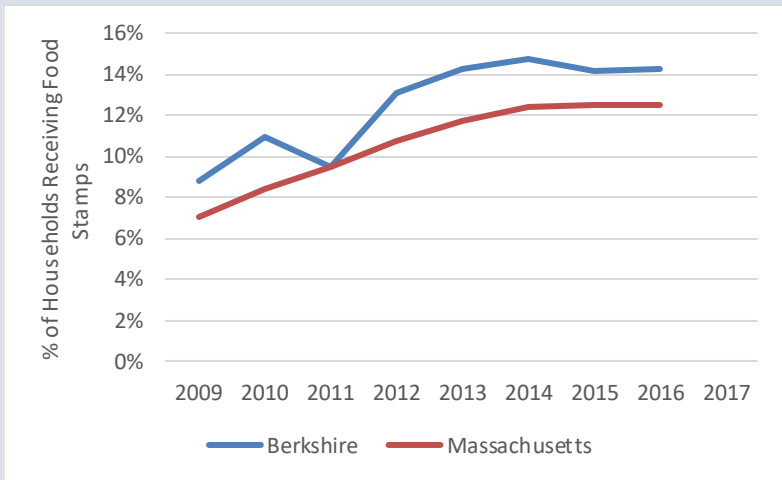
- The percent of families receiving food stamps has been relatively stable the last four years, but remains higher than the state.
- There have been a decline in smokers, continuing a long trend of decrease. Excessive drinking saw a slight increase, but is lower than most previous years. STD's saw a huge drop of 79% over the last year and 70% in the last 8 years.
- Median Household Income and Per Capita Income both increased, however they remain far below state levels.
- Median Rent increased substantially, but remains below the state level.
- Total Population continued to decline, led by the population age 18 to 64.
- The number of households with incomes below \$50,000 saw a decline, while those making over \$50,000 saw an increase.

**Unemployment Rate**



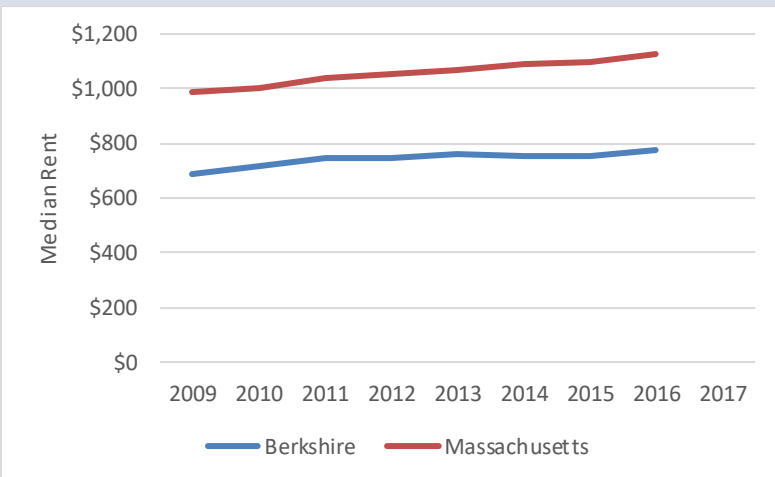
Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey 5-year average

**% of families receiving food stamps**



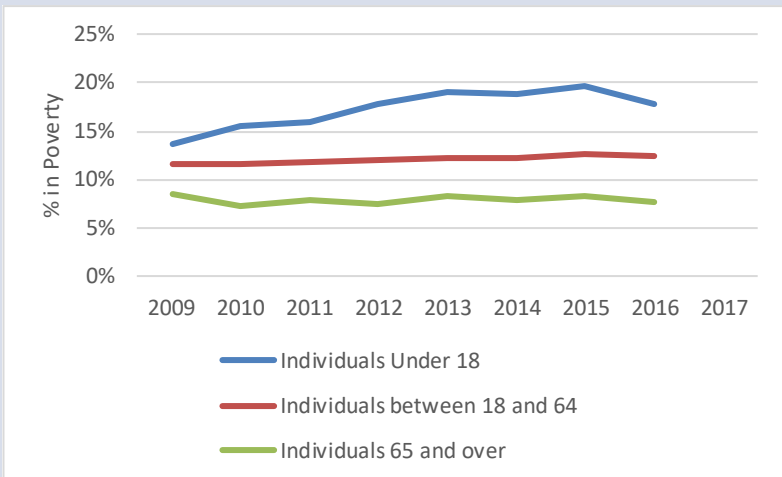
Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey 5-year average

**Median Rent**



Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey 5-year average

**Percent in Poverty**



Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey 5-year average



Funding for this report has been provided by Berkshire United Way