

School Quality Measures Conference

March 12, 2026

WIFI: MIT GUEST

The event begins at 3:00 pm



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Blueprint Labs



Time	Session
2:30 pm – 3:00 pm	Registration
3:00 pm – 3:15 pm	Welcome
3:15 pm – 4:45 pm	Training: Principles of Causal School Quality Measurement
4:45 pm – 5:00 pm	Break
5:00 pm – 6:00 pm	The Current Policy Landscape Surrounding School Quality Measurement
6:00 pm – 7:30 pm	Dinner

Welcome

Parag Pathak

Class of 1922 Professor of Economics, MIT
Faculty Director, MIT Blueprint Labs



Blueprint Labs



Blueprint Labs is a non-partisan research lab based at MIT with affiliates at universities and institutions around the world.



The MIT Blueprint Labs Education Team conducts rigorous, policy-relevant education research. We aim to **help policymakers** design more **equitable education systems** and improve student outcomes.

Education



Health Care



Workforce



Through our large network of partners, we are committed to conducting policy-relevant research.



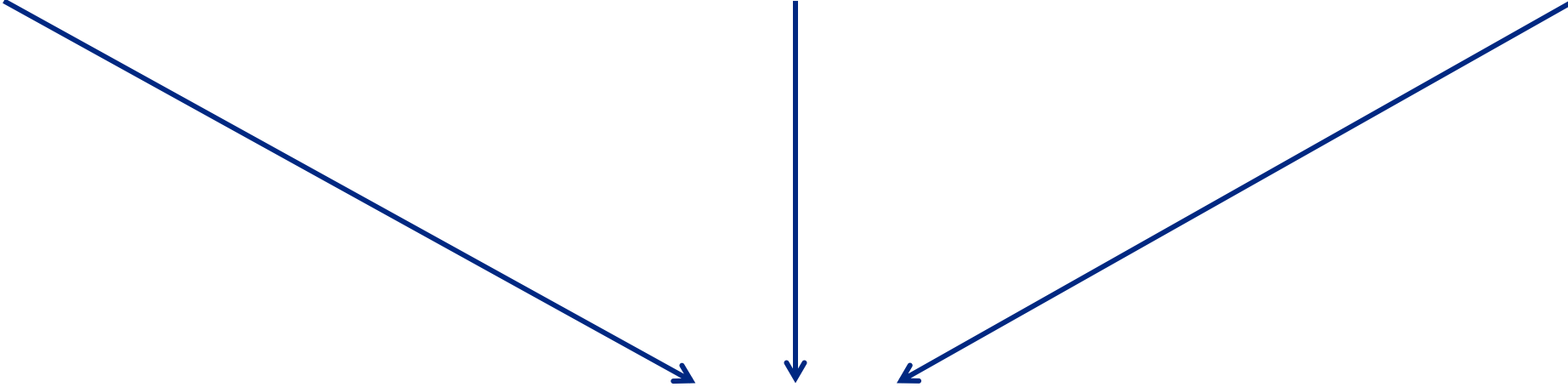
Our research-policy partnerships combine Blueprint's research expertise with our partners' policy influence to create impact.



**Foster a strong
network of
professionals**

**Strengthen relationships
between researchers &
practitioners**

**Increase knowledge
of research and
best practices**



**Create more equitable and fair
school quality measures**

Time	Session
3:00 – 3:15 pm	Welcome & Opening Remarks
3:15 – 4:45 pm	Principles of Causal School Quality Measurement, Josh Angrist and Eric Ashton
5:00 – 6:00 pm	The Current Policy Landscape Surrounding School Quality Measurement, Jennifer Bell-Ellwanger, Pedro Martinez, Brandee Tate, and Dan Weisberg
6:00 pm	Dinner Reception

Time	Session
8:00 – 9:00 am	Breakfast
9:00 – 9:15 am	Welcome and Recap of Day 1
9:15 – 10:30 am	Moving Beyond Test Scores: The Role of Surveys and More, Peter Hull, Fatima Djalalova, and Chris Wohn
11:00 am – 12:00 pm	Communicating Multiple Measures of School Quality, Kevin Shallcross and Pamela Wong
12:00 – 1:15 pm	Lunch
1:15 – 2:15 pm	Involving Communities and Families in School Quality Measurement, Chris Campos
2:15 – 2:45 pm	Closing Plenary: Next Steps and Collaboration Opportunities

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Training: Principles of Causal School Quality Measurement

Josh Angrist

Ford Professor of Economics, MIT
Faculty Director, MIT Blueprint Labs

Eric Ashton

Executive Director for School Performance
New York City Public Schools



Blueprint Labs



Quantifying School Quality

Josh Angrist, MIT Blueprint Labs Director

March 12, 2026



Blueprint Labs



1. Blueprint's approach to quality measurement

2. Race and the mismeasure of school quality

Blueprint research on school quality measurement using admissions lotteries and other quasi-experimental research designs

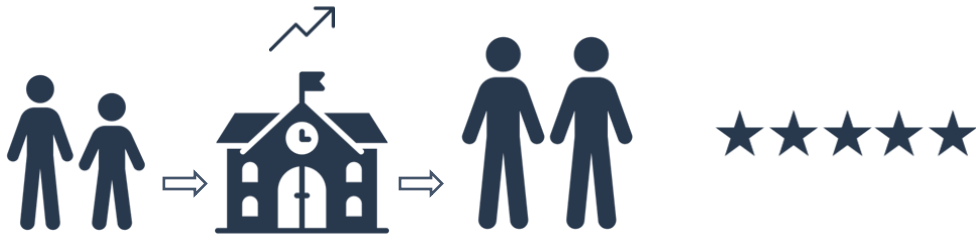


Supports hands-on help for schools and districts that aim to improve accountability systems and deploy new measures



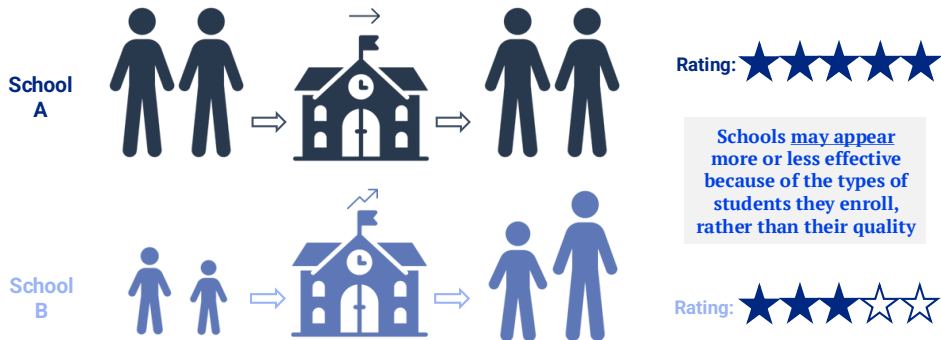
School Quality Measures Conference, 2022

School quality is relative, the difference between what a given student learns at one school versus what this student would learn elsewhere



High-quality schools boost achievement and other outcomes for students of a given background and preparation level

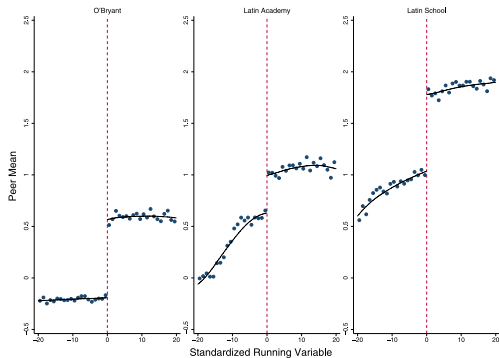
Selection bias: Differences in outcomes due to students' background, motivation, or ability – not caused by schools but strongly correlated with the school attended even so



We tackle selection bias using:

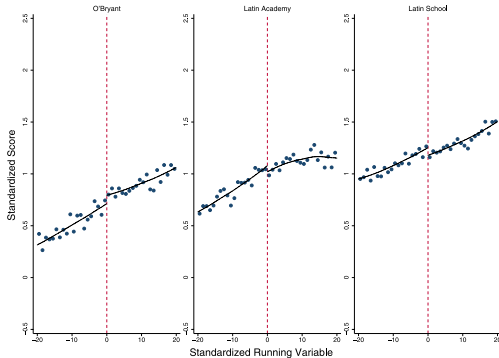
- **Random assignment**, as in our studies of charter schools and traditional public schools in districts like Boston, Chicago, and New Orleans that use centralized assignment with lotteries
- **Quasi-experimental regression discontinuity designs**, as in [our studies](#) of Boston and New York exam schools, New York's many screened schools, and Chicago's selective enrollment high schools that admit students whose entrance exam scores clear a cutoff

Baseline Peer Quality, Boston Exam School Applicants



(a) Baseline peer math score at Boston exam schools for 7th and 9th grade applicants

Math Scores, Boston Exam School Applicants

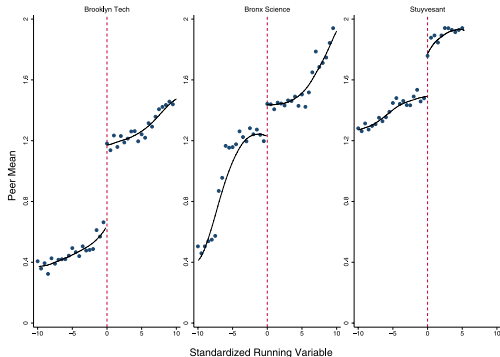


(a) 10th grade math at Boston exam schools for 7th and 9th grade applicants

Note: The figures plot baseline peer math scores (LEFT) and 10th grade math scores (RIGHT) for applicants to Boston exam schools against entrance exam scores relative to school-specific cutoffs.

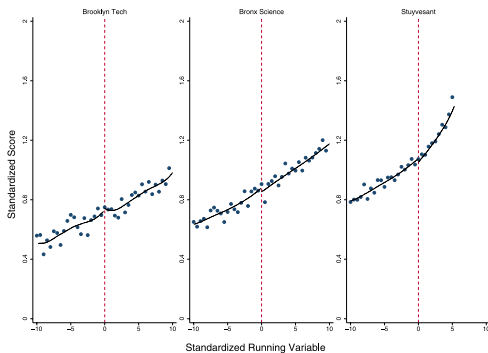
Escaping the Elite Illusion in NYC

Baseline Peer Quality, NYC Exam School Applicants



(a) Baseline peer math score at NYC exam schools

Math Scores, NYC Exam School Applicants

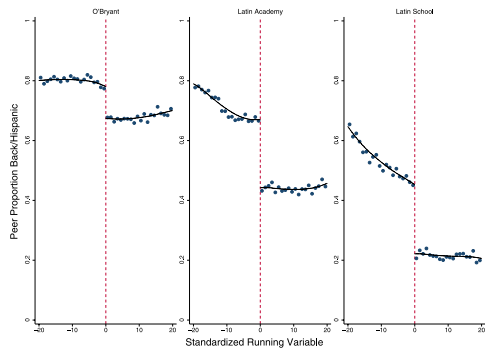


(a) Regents Advanced Math at NYC exam schools

Note: The figures plot baseline peer math scores (LEFT) and Advanced Regents math scores (RIGHT) for applicants to NYC exam schools against entrance exam scores relative to school-specific cutoffs.

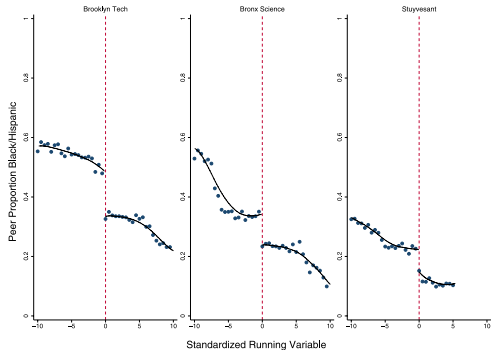
Peer Racial Composition at Exam Schools

Proportion Black/Hispanic, Boston



(a) Proportion Black or Hispanic at Boston exam schools

Proportion Black/Hispanic, NYC



(b) Proportion Black or Hispanic at NYC exam schools

1. Blueprint's approach to quality measurement

2. Race and the mismeasure of school quality

Our research on race and school quality focuses on measures that appear on “school report cards,” distributed through information aggregators like GreatSchools and real estate sites like Zillow

1. **Levels:** Point-in-time achievement score averages or the share of students graded proficient on standardized tests
 - Levels ratings may include non-achievement outcomes like high school graduation

Our research on race and school quality focuses on measures that appear on “school report cards,” distributed through information aggregators like GreatSchools and real estate sites like Zillow

1. **Levels:** Point-in-time achievement score averages or the share of students graded proficient on standardized tests
 - Levels ratings may include non-achievement outcomes like high school graduation
2. **Progress:** Changes in average achievement for newly-enrolled students relative to scores at a former school, or year-to-year achievement growth
 - Progress may be computed using a multivariate regression model to control for lagged scores
 - Many progress ratings convert changes in test scores into *student growth percentiles*

Property Values are Higher Where Schools are "Greatest"



Zillow

3 bd | 4 ba | 1,900 sqft
152 Maple Heights Rd, Pittsburgh, PA 15232

● **Sold**
: \$539,000 | Sold on 11/08/21 | Zestimate®: \$603,800
Est. ref. payment: \$3,562/mo [Refinance your loan](#)

Home value Owner tools Home details **Neighborhood details**

Nearby homes

\$487,900
3 bd | 1 ba | 1.8k sqft
150 Maple Heights Rd, Pittsburgh...
● Off Market

\$528,000
3 bd | 4 ba
154 Maple Heights Rd, Pittsburgh...
● Off Market

Neighborhood stats provided by third party data sources.

Nearby schools in Pittsburgh

Schools provided by the listing agent
District: Pittsburgh

This data may not be complete. We recommend contacting the listing agent to confirm school assignments for this home.

Source: WPMLS

GreatSchools rating

7/10 **Pittsburgh Colfax K-8**
Grades: K-8 Distance: 1.3 mi

4/10 **Pittsburgh Obama 6-12**
Grades: 6-12 Distance: 1.4 mi

4/10 **Pittsburgh Allderdice High School**
Grades: 9-12 Distance: 1.4 mi

Zillow

4 bd | 4.5 ba | 2,591 sqft
126 Thorndike St #2, Brookline, MA 02446

● **Off market**
Zestimate®: \$2,299,200 | Rent Zestimate®: \$9,750
Est. ref. payment: \$14,697/mo [Refinance your loan](#)

Home value Owner tools Home details **Neighborhood details**

Nearby homes

\$1,638,900
8 bd | 6 ba | 5.1k sqft
126 Thorndike St, Brookline, MA...
● Off Market

\$2,100,000
4 bd | 4 ba | 2.8k sqft
126 Thorndike St #1, Brookline...
● For Sale

Neighborhood stats provided by third party data sources.

Nearby schools in Brookline

GreatSchools rating

7/10 **Florida Ruffin Ridley School**
Grades: PK-8 Distance: 0.3 mi

8/10 **Brookline High School**
Grades: 9-12 Distance: 1.1 mi

About GreatSchools

The GreatSchools Summary Rating is based on several metrics.

About the ratings: GreatSchools Ratings are designed to be a starting point to help parents compare schools, and should not be the only factor used in selecting the right school for your family. Zillow and GreatSchools recommend that parents tour multiple schools in-person to inform that choice. As of October 2020, the GreatSchools Ratings methodology continues to move beyond proficiency and standardized test scores. The latest methodology prioritizes student growth through measures of equity and school quality.

Highly-rated schools enroll more white, fewer Black and Hispanic students

What explains this?

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Possible explanation 1: Causal school quality

- Black and Hispanic students attend worse schools

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Possible explanation 2: Selection bias

- Levels ratings reflect student background rather than causal value-added

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What explains this?

Possible explanation 1: Causal school quality

- Black and Hispanic students attend worse schools

Possible explanation 2: Selection bias

- Levels ratings reflect student background rather than causal value-added
- [A recent Blueprint publication](#) disentangles these explanations for schools in Denver and New York

Data

- 6th grade students in Denver (37,000 students in 2013–19 cohorts) and New York City (185,000 students in 2017–19 cohorts)

Outcomes

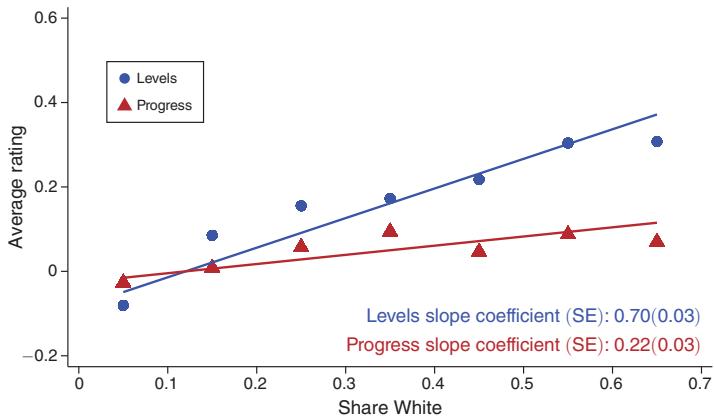
- Math and ELA scores on Colorado and New York state achievement tests
- Data on preferences, priorities, and school assignments from centralized assignment systems:
 - DPS students apply to up to five schools, assigned via deferred acceptance algorithm with single lottery tie-breaker
 - NYC students apply to up to 12 academic programs, assigned via DA with multiple tie-breakers

- We use the random assignment to schools embedded in the Denver and NYC centralized student assignment algorithms to validate alternative measures of school quality

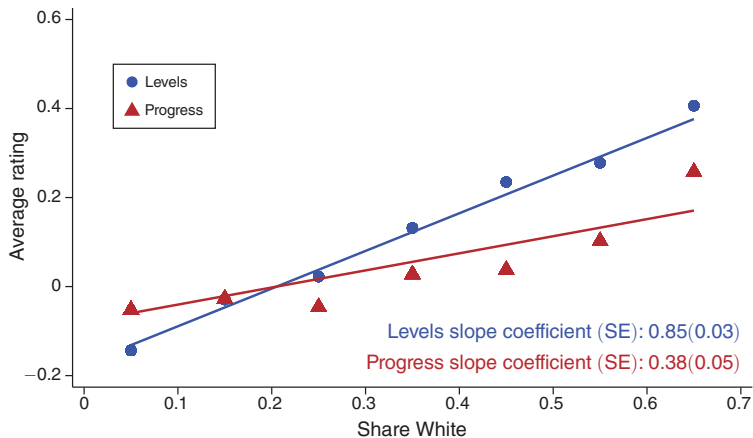
- We use the random assignment to schools embedded in the Denver and NYC centralized student assignment algorithms to validate alternative measures of school quality
- Our findings show that levels ratings are misleading measures of quality; these reflect student background more than causal value-added.
- Progress ratings are a good guide to quality
- Progress ratings are not not highly correlated with race
- We construct a new and improved quality measure called *balanced progress*

- We use the random assignment to schools embedded in the Denver and NYC centralized student assignment algorithms to validate alternative measures of school quality
- Our findings show that levels ratings are misleading measures of quality; these reflect student background more than causal value-added.
- Progress ratings are a good guide to quality
- Progress ratings are not not highly correlated with race
- We construct a new and improved quality measure called *balanced progress*
 - Balanced progress is uncorrelated with race by construction
 - Balanced progress predicts learning gains as well or better than even progress

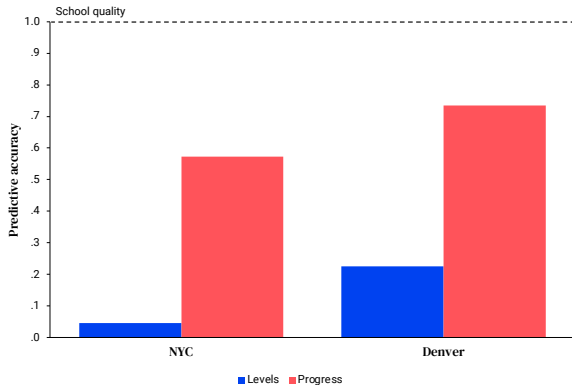
Panel A. NYC



Panel B. Denver



Prediction accuracy ranges from 0-1 according to how well ratings predict school value-added



Race-balanced progress is motivated by two findings:

1. Progress predicts school quality more accurately than levels ratings do
2. Progress is (moderately) racially imbalanced (i.e., correlated with share white), while school quality is unrelated to race

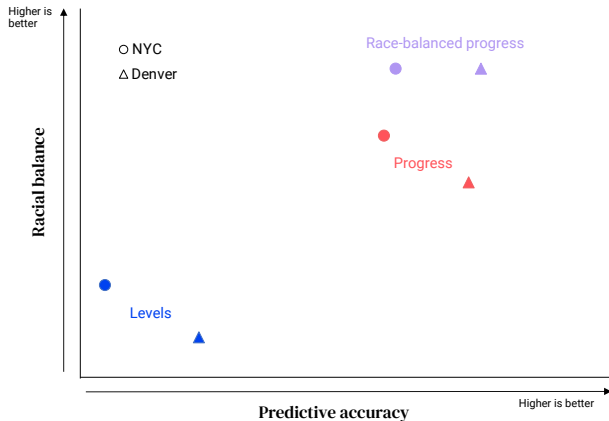
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These two findings suggest a free lunch: progress can be adjusted to remove racial imbalance while maintaining or improving predictive accuracy

- Race-balanced progress is the residual from a school-level regression of progress on share white
- Race-balanced progress predicts school quality as well or better than progress, and is uncorrelated with share white by construction

This figure plots racial balance against predictive accuracy for alternative school quality measures



Learn more in
[the policy brief](#)

- We use the random assignment embedded in school assignment mechanisms to validate measures of school quality
- Estimates for Denver and New York indicate that the positive correlation between school ratings and share white is mostly due to selection bias
- Progress ratings predict school quality better than levels and are much less correlated with race
- Our balanced progress ratings, which are uncorrelated with race, predict school quality even better

- We're exploring these patterns in other districts, with and without centralized assignment
- A randomized trial in NYC aims to gauge the extent to which improved school ratings influence school choice



Questions?



Blueprint Labs





NYC School Quality Reports

Eric Ashton
Executive Director of School Performance
MIT SQM Conference | March 2026



New York City Public Schools 2024-25

- 906k students in 1,597 non-charter public K-12 schools
 - 75k teachers
 - 150k staff total
- 17% English Language Learners
- 22% Students with Disabilities
- 75% Eligible for Free or Reduced Lunch
- 42% Hispanic, 19% Black, 19% Asian, 16% White, 2% Multi-Racial, 1% Native American
- 81% High School Graduation Rate, ~35% College Graduation Rate



2024 NAEP 4th/8th Percent Proficient	NYCPS	National Public	Large Cities
English Language Arts	28%	33%	28%
Mathematics	29%	30%	26%

- 148k students in 281 charter K-12 schools

School Quality vs. Selection Bias

School Quality

The causal effect of attending a particular school on student achievement or other outcomes



High-quality schools boost achievement for students of a given background and preparation level

VS

Selection Bias

Differences in outcomes due to students' background, motivation, or ability — **not caused** by schools but strongly correlated with the school attended

School A



Rating: ★★★★★

School B

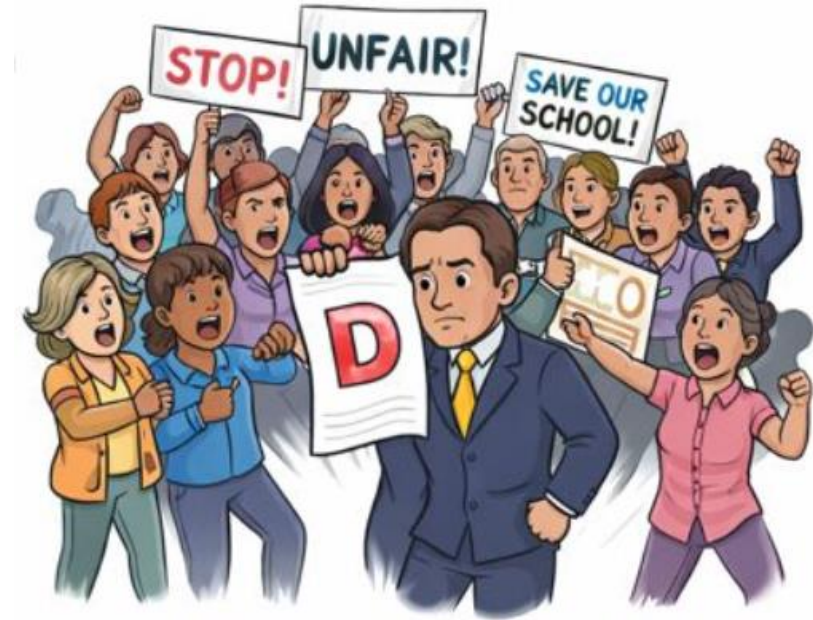


Rating: ★★☆☆☆

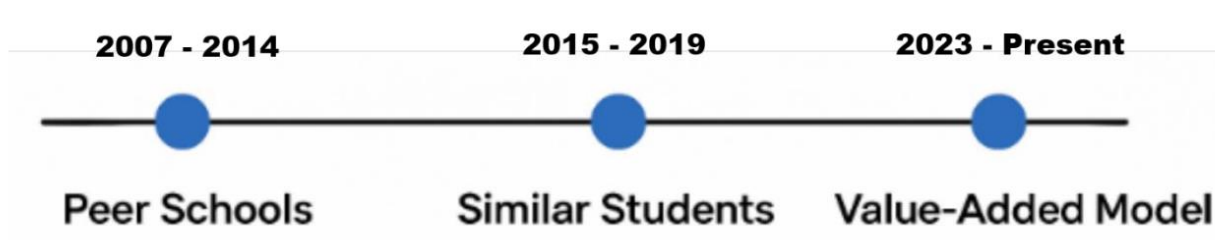
Schools **may appear** more or less effective because of the types of students they enroll, **rather than their quality**

Origins: "Progress Report" Era (2007-2013)

- **A-F Letter Grades:** based heavily on test score growth
- **High Stakes:** Led to closures and principal bonuses
- **Mixed Results:** Modest test gains, but overwhelming backlash
- **The End:** Discontinued after 2013 mayoral election



Blueprint Labs partnership



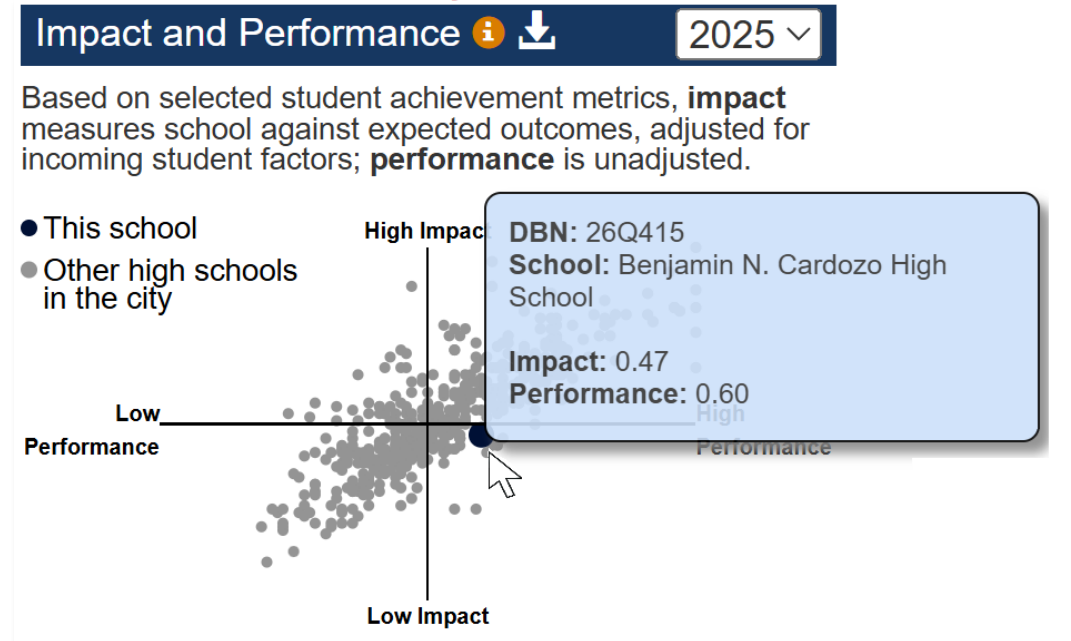
Blueprint Labs has studied school quality for 15 years:

- Developed methods to improve ratings using centralized enrollment systems
- Demonstrated that commonly used ratings are racially biased
- Designed new ratings that are more predictive and equitable

2025 Blueprint validity paper:

[Putting School Surveys to the Test](#)

- Surveys better predict high school graduation
- Value-Added better predicts college attainment



Example: Performance vs. Impact (<https://tools.nycenet.edu>)

What's in a School Quality Report



Three domain ratings (1–4)

Based on multiple measures:

- Student achievement (tests, graduation, readiness)
- NYC School Survey (families, teachers, students)
- Expert review (public version paused since the pandemic)



Overall School Ratings

Instruction and Performance



Safety and School Climate



Relationships with Families



Key:



Excellent



Good



Fair



Needs Improvement

Example: Snapshot ratings from <https://tools.nycenet.edu/>

Purposes:

- School community can focus improvement
- Superintendents and central can prioritize schools
- Families can find effective schools to apply to

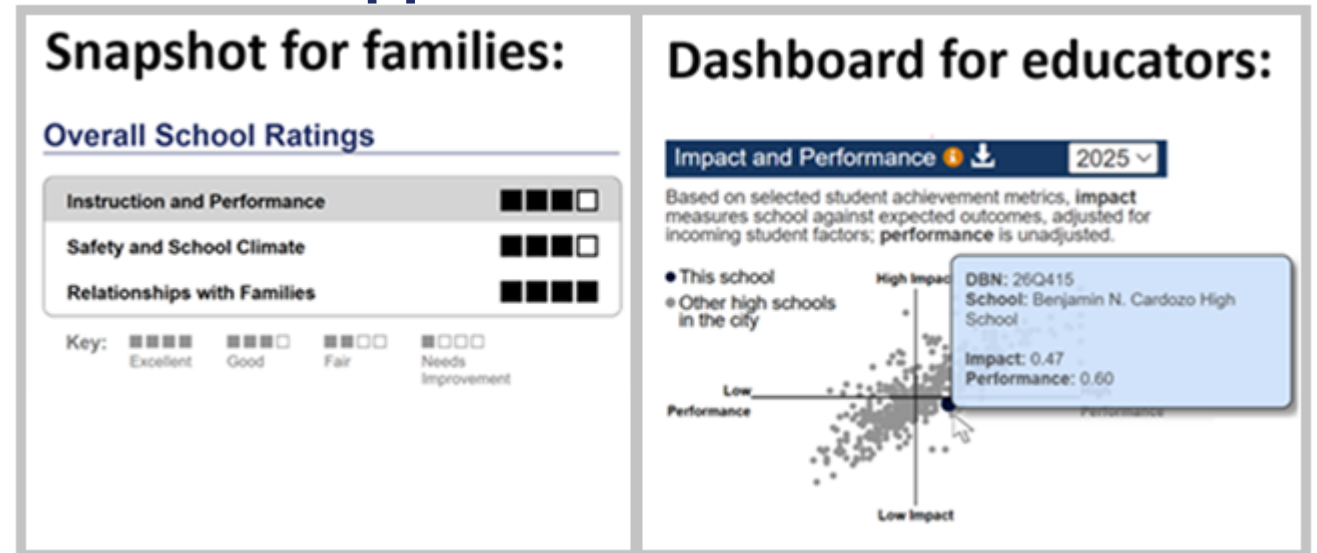
Challenges: Principal Bonuses

- **The Program:** ~\$10M per year to principals / assistant principals
- **2026 Update:** Merit awards restarting based on SQR impact
- **The Challenge:** Principals feel rated on factors outside their control (funding, facilities, transportation, etc...)
- **The Question:** Should we use a different model for individuals vs. schools?

Challenges: Communicating Ratings

➤ **Past Approach:** Letter grades get the most attention but can feel like an attack and create unintended incentives for test prep.

➤ **Current Approach:**



➤ **Question:** How does this compare to successes and lessons learned from other cities and states?

Challenges: Underenrolled Schools

- **Enrollment, Economics, and Quality:** In NYC, schools that are wealthier and have higher perceived quality have higher class size and building utilization.
- **Class Size Law:** In 2022, New York State passed a law requiring NYC to cap class sizes at 20-25 students with a phase-in through 2028. Because the schools with higher class size are wealthier, this risks moving resources from needier to less needy schools.
- **Question:** Could better school quality ratings help by encouraging families to enroll in high-quality but underenrolled “hidden gems?”

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The Current Policy Landscape Surrounding School Quality Measurement

Jennifer Bell-Ellwanger

President and CEO, Data Quality Campaign

Brandee Tate

Senior Program Officer, Gates Foundation

Pedro Martinez

Commissioner, Massachusetts Department
of Elementary and Secondary Education

Dan Weisberg

Former First Deputy Chancellor, New York
City Public Schools



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Welcome

Eryn Heying

Executive Director, MIT Blueprint Labs



Blueprint Labs



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Moving Beyond Test Scores: The Role of Surveys and More

Peter Hull

Professor of Economics, Brown University

Fatima Djalalova

Predoctoral Researcher, MIT Blueprint Labs

Christopher Wohn

Director of Research Services, Baltimore City Public
Schools



Blueprint Labs



Putting School Surveys to the Test

Josh Angrist, MIT
Peter Hull, Brown
Russell Legate-Yang, MIT
Parag Pathak, MIT
Chris Walters, UC Berkeley

March 2026

Differing Dimensions of School Quality

- Districts and parents have long relied on **standardized test scores** to measure student proficiency and school performance

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Differing Dimensions of School Quality

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- School report cards increasingly feature **survey-based measures** of school climate and student engagement
- Policymakers and families often care about **longer-term outcomes**: e.g., do schools boost graduation / college enrollment?
- In this research paper, we ask two main questions:
 - ▶ Do the schools that boost test scores also improve survey responses?
 - ▶ How well do effects on test scores / surveys predict longer-run effects?

Data and Samples

- We study NYC middle and high schools
- The sample includes 8th grade applicants for high school seats in 2012-16, and 5th grade applicants for middle school seats in 2015

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- We study NYC middle and high schools
- The sample includes 8th grade applicants for high school seats in 2012-16, and 5th grade applicants for middle school seats in 2015
- Administrative records cover:
 - ✓ Student demographics, applications, matches, and enrollment
 - ✓ Test scores: Regents math in HS; NY State math and ELA tests in MS
 - ✓ Surveys: individual responses to the annual NYC school survey
 - ✓ Longer-term outcomes: high school graduation and diploma type, college enrollment and persistence

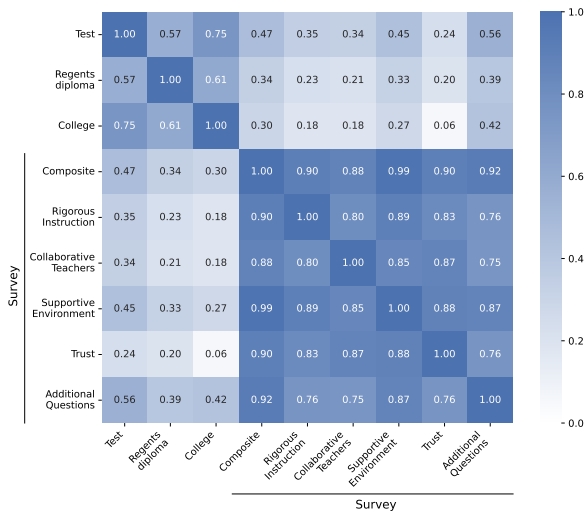
NYC's School Survey

- Aims to measure aspects of school climate relevant for learning
 - ✓ “In how many of your classes, this school year, do YOU feel the following statement is true?...I learn a lot from feedback.”
 - ✓ “How much do YOU agree with the following statements? ...
My classes at this school really make me think critically.”
 - ✓ “How much do YOU agree with the following statements? ...
My teachers treat me with respect.”

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 - ✓ “How much do YOU agree with the following statements? ...
My teachers treat me with respect.”
- We construct a standardized survey composite that averages student item responses for ~ 60 items
 - ✓ Alternative survey aggregates produce similar results

Surveys Differentiate Schools Beyond Test Scores



Notes: This figure displays school-level correlations between measures of average student achievement and survey responses.

School Effects on Student Outcomes

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- Parents and school leaders are mostly interested in longer-term, consequential outcomes ($k = \text{college, HS grad}$) but may use short-run measures ($k = \text{tests, surveys}$) to predict these
- We estimate value-added β_j^k and measure how well test and survey effects predict college and HS grad effects:

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- Parents and school leaders are mostly interested in longer-term, consequential outcomes ($k = \text{college, HS grad}$) but may use short-run measures ($k = \text{tests, surveys}$) to predict these
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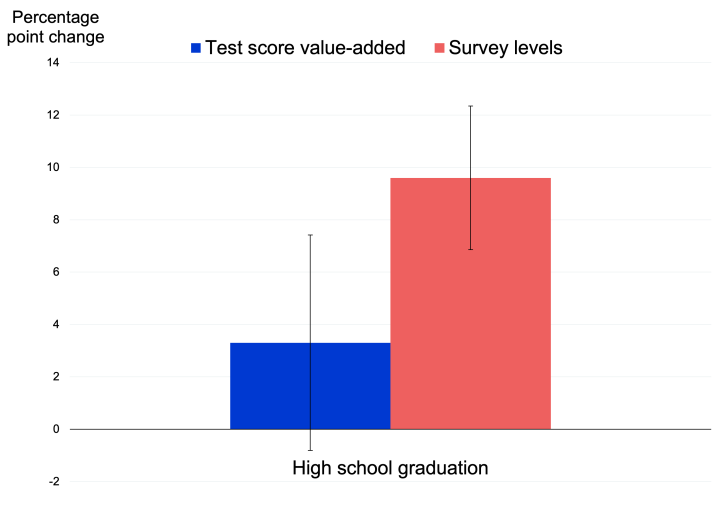
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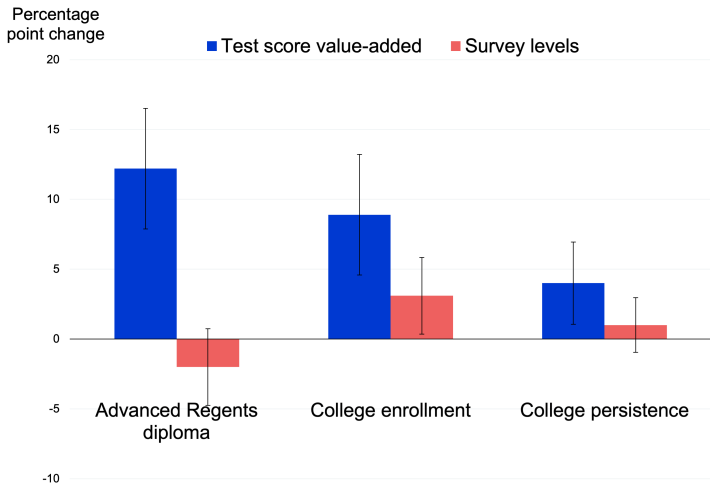
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 - ✓ Estimate a value-added model (VAM) for each outcome
 - ✓ Check VAM validity using quasi-random school assignment
 - ✓ Regress long-term outcome VAMs on test VAMs + survey levels

Surveys Beat Test Scores for High School Graduation



Notes: This table reports regressions of high school graduation value-added on test value-added and survey levels.

Tests Beat Surveys for Advanced HS Diplomas and College



Notes: This table reports regressions of advanced diploma receipt, college enrollment, and college persistence value-added on test value-added and survey levels.

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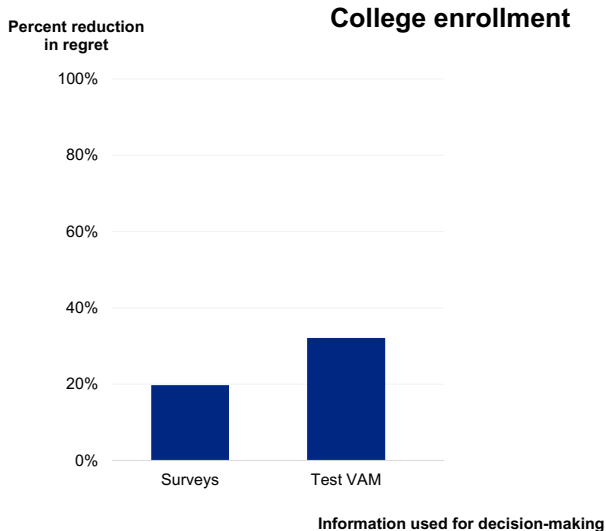
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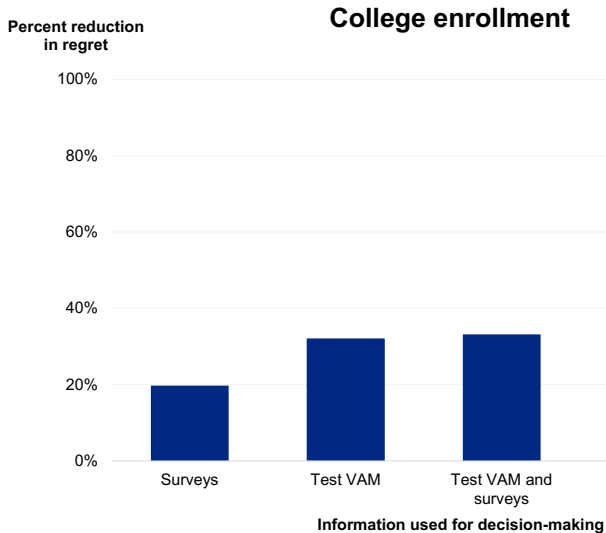
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- Parents choose among borough schools with school quality calibrated to VAM estimates
 - ✓ Simulations ignore school size constraints and assume parents use provided info optimally

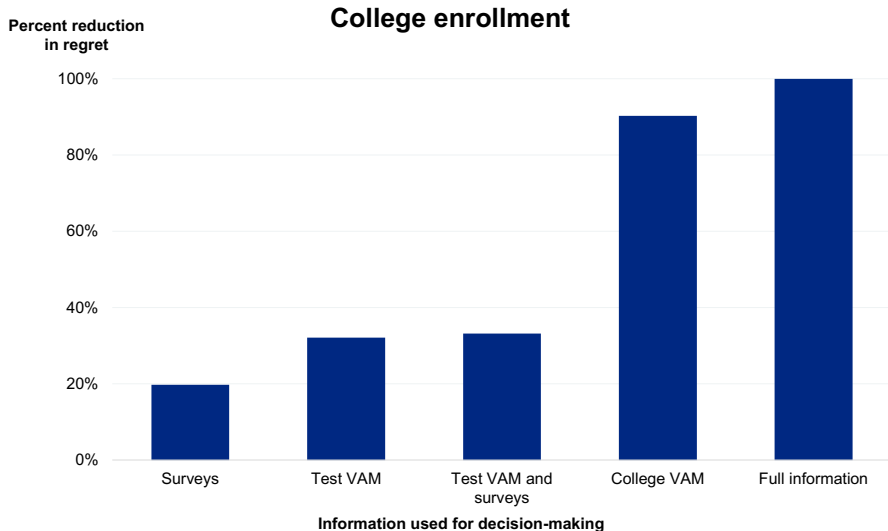
Regret Relative to Full-Information School Choice



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Wrapping Up

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- Still to-do:
 - ✓ How do parents and districts value multiple dimensions of school quality, and what do they know about them?
 - ✓ We plan to examine VAM in other settings and for other measures, whether from surveys (e.g., “grit”) or not (e.g., suspensions)

Blueprint College VAM in the Wild

New York City Public Schools

2022-23 School Performance Dashboard

→Select School:

→Select View: (City includes 501 high schools.)

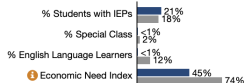
Due to COVID-19, scores and ratings are not available for any schools for the 2019-20, 2020-21, 2021-

Student Population

Grade	9	10	11	12	Total
Enrollment	347	382	378	349	1456

■ School ■ City

Higher-Need Students



Incoming Proficiency Levels

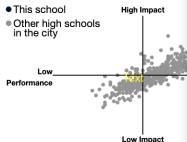


School Demographics

	Students	Teachers	Students Nearby (5.5 miles)
Asian	13%	8%	13%
Black	14%	13%	22%
Hispanic/Latinx	28%	12%	43%
Native American	<1%	N < 5	<1%

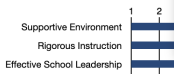
Impact and Performance

Based on all student achievement metrics, this dashboard measures school against expected outcomes based on incoming student factors; **performance** is based on how the school's results compared to the citywide average (without any adjustments based on incoming student factors).



Framework Scores

Categories are measured by Quality Review School Survey. Scores are on a scale of 1 to 5.



Impact is based on how the school's results compared to its Comparison Group of similar students (based on factors such as incoming test scores, IEP status, and economic need).

Performance is based on how the school's results compared to the citywide average (without any adjustments based on incoming student factors).

Example: A school in the upper right quadrant performed above its Comparison Group and above the citywide average.

Note: The simplified scores displayed here were developed in 2023 in collaboration with MIT Blueprint Labs. They use a limited number of Student Achievement metrics to be more predictive of student success and increase the identification of high-quality schools that are under-subscribed. For middle schools, the impact score is "balanced" for student achievement, meaning that it eliminates the correlation between a school's impact and student body characteristics, including race. Please see the [Educator Guide](#) for more information.

Additional Data ▼

Local Support and Admission - HS:

Grad Rate

as a whole
ed course(s)
e(s)

38%
39%
49%

Grad Rate 2014-

quartiles citywide. Points
are in the bottom 25%.

● Percentile rank

Additional Exhibits

Sample Characteristics

	All (1)	With risk (2)
<i>Demographics</i>		
Hispanic	0.433	0.467
Black	0.289	0.275
Asian	0.143	0.146
White	0.126	0.104
Female	0.494	0.504
Free/reduced price lunch	0.786	0.794
Special education	0.189	0.072
English language learner	0.114	0.099
<i>Lagged test scores (std.)</i>		
Math	-0.090	-0.026
ELA	-0.071	0.008
<i>Enrollment</i>		
Lottery tie-breaking	0.869	0.926
Screened (non-lottery tie-breaking)	0.131	0.074
Share enrolled where offered	0.660	0.706
<i>On-time graduation and college</i>		
High school graduation	0.717	0.759
Advanced diploma	0.212	0.204
College enrollment	0.580	0.608
College persistence	0.365	0.371
Share not offered	0.222	0.106
Students	269,492	77,057
Schools	483	483
Lotteries (schools with risk)		429

Notes: This table describes the high school student sample used to estimate school value-added.

Predicting School Effects on HS Graduation

	High school graduation			Advanced diploma		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
<i>Regressors</i>						
Test VAM	0.091 (0.020)		0.033 (0.021)	0.111 (0.020)		0.122 (0.022)
Survey levels		0.106 (0.013)	0.096 (0.014)		0.016 (0.013)	-0.020 (0.014)
R-squared	0.065	0.180	0.187	0.081	0.004	0.086
Schools		452			452	
Outcome mean		0.717			0.212	

Notes: This table reports regressions of high school graduation value-added on test value-added and survey levels.

Predicting School Effects on College Outcomes

	College enrollment			College persistence		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
<i>Regressors</i>						
Test VAM	0.107 (0.019)		0.089 (0.021)	0.046 (0.013)		0.040 (0.015)
Survey levels		0.058 (0.013)	0.031 (0.014)		0.022 (0.009)	0.010 (0.010)
R-squared	0.105	0.060	0.119	0.051	0.024	0.055
Schools		466			466	
Outcome mean		0.580			0.365	

Notes: This table reports regressions of college value-added on test value-added and survey levels.

Predicting School Effects on HS Graduation and College Enrollment by Subgroup

	Black or Hispanic			Female			Free/reduced price lunch			Below mean lagged math		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
Panel A: High school graduation												
<i>Regressors</i>												
Test VAM	0.092 (0.020)		0.044 (0.021)	0.074 (0.020)		0.027 (0.022)	0.097 (0.020)		0.049 (0.021)	0.111 (0.021)		0.065 (0.023)
Survey levels		0.101 (0.014)	0.089 (0.015)		0.083 (0.013)	0.076 (0.015)		0.093 (0.013)	0.079 (0.014)		0.109 (0.016)	0.090 (0.017)
R-squared	0.065	0.150	0.163	0.056	0.159	0.165	0.078	0.147	0.163	0.091	0.151	0.177
Schools		446			433			447			433	
Panel B: College enrollment												
<i>Regressors</i>												
Test VAM	0.112 (0.019)		0.091 (0.021)	0.090 (0.021)		0.076 (0.024)	0.115 (0.019)		0.096 (0.022)	0.106 (0.020)		0.083 (0.023)
Survey levels		0.066 (0.014)	0.039 (0.015)		0.045 (0.014)	0.024 (0.016)		0.061 (0.013)	0.031 (0.015)		0.071 (0.015)	0.045 (0.017)
R-squared	0.116	0.074	0.138	0.072	0.039	0.082	0.121	0.066	0.135	0.102	0.073	0.127
Schools		460			449			461			450	

Notes: This table reports regressions of high school graduation value-added (panel A) and college value-added (panel B) on test score value-added and survey levels, separately by subgroup.

www.baltimorecityschools.org

BALTIMORE CITY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Surveys and Accountability in Baltimore City Public Schools

Christopher Wohn

Director of Research
Baltimore City Public Schools
CRWohn@bcps.k12.md.us

MIT School Quality Measures Conference
March 13, 2026





2025-26 STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

76,841	69.9%	20.1%	7%	<=5%	<=5%
Total enrollment	African American	Hispanic/Latino	White	Asian	Multiracial
<=5%	<=5%	75.9%	14.5%	14.6%	
American Indian	Pacific Islander	Low income	Students with disabilities	Multilingual learner	



BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS: AT A GLANCE

2025-26 SCHOOLS & PROGRAMS

159

Total Schools and Programs

1	40		71	4
Pre-K/K School	Elementary Schools		Elem/Middle schools	Middle Schools
9	24		1	9
Middle/High Schools	High Schools		Elem/Middle/High School	Programs (not schools)

Staff Data

9,823		5,298
Total Staff		Teachers

Presentation Overview

Use of Surveys for Accountability

The Maryland Report Card

- Maryland School Survey for staff and students

Operator/Charter Renewal

- 5Essentials survey for staff and students
- Family survey via Panorama

Lessons Learned

Administration method

Response rate minimums

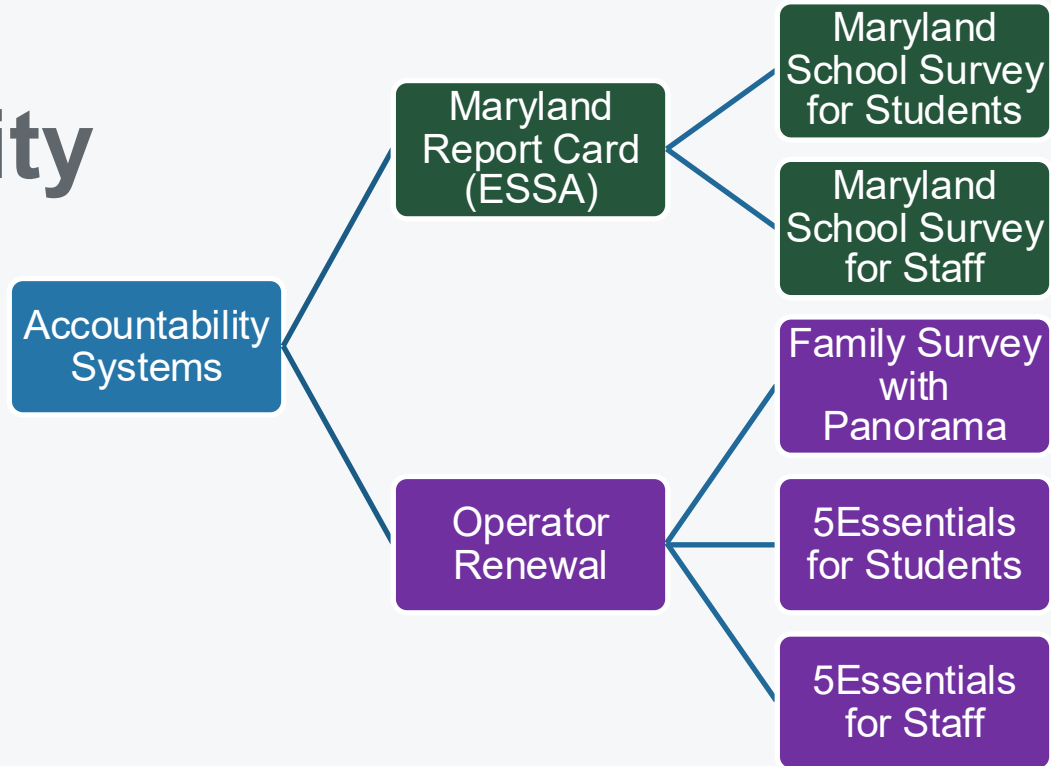
Survey goals: feedback vs. accountability

Reporting and scoring methodology

Special schools and populations



Baltimore's Survey and Accountability Landscape

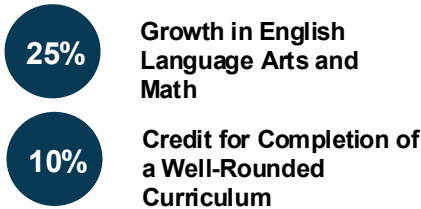


2024-25 Maryland Accountability System Framework: Elementary, Middle Schools

Academic Achievement



Academic Progress

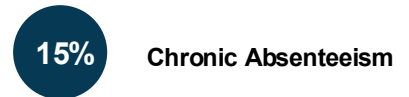


English Language Proficiency



65%

School Quality/Student Success



35%

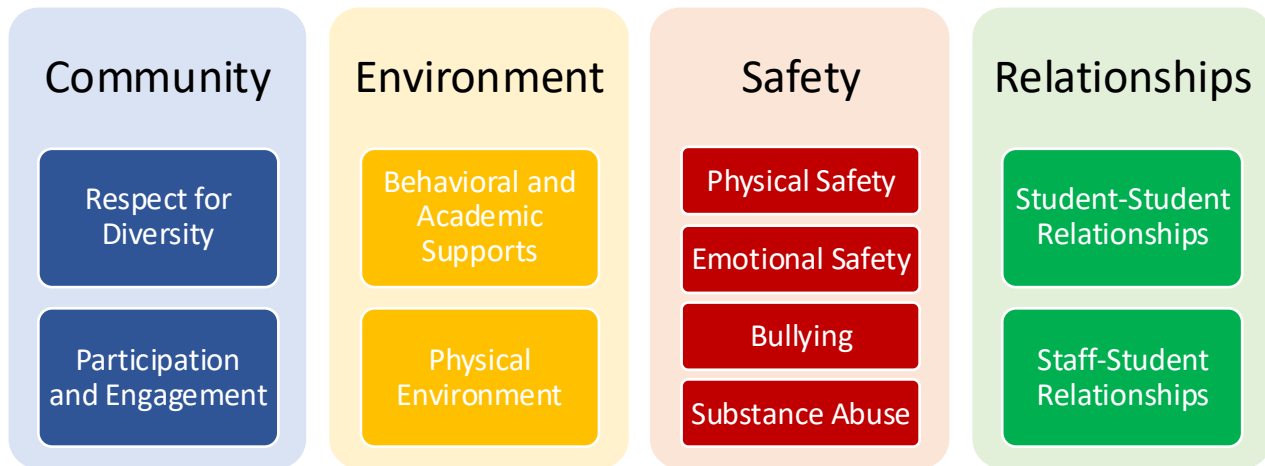
School Quality and Student Success: Maryland School Survey

The Maryland School Survey is worth 10 points: 7 from student survey, 3 from educator survey.

Results are reported from 1 – 10 (least to most favorable, see below).

The survey includes 10 topics for students, and 11 for educators.

Students in grades 5-11 take the survey in the Spring of each year.



Topic Range	Benchmark Level and Interpretation
Greater than 9	Most favorable perception of the topic/school
Greater than 5.5 to 9	More favorable perception of the topic/school
Greater than 2 to 5.5	Less favorable perception of the topic/school
Less than or Equal to 2	Least favorable perception of the topic/school

School Quality and Student Success: Maryland School Survey

Topic Name	Score Average
Respect for Diversity	6.7
Participation and Engagement	6.7
Behavioral and Academic Supports	7.7
Physical Environment	2.8
Staff-student Relationships	7.9
Student-student Relationships	3.1
Bullying	3.4
Emotional Safety	6.2
Physical Safety	2.3
Substance Abuse	8.7

Example survey items available [online](#)

MEASURE	RESULTS	EARNED POINTS*
Students not Chronically Absent	69.6%	5 out of 15.0
School Survey - Student	9.4	6.6 out of 7.0
School Survey - Educator	7.6	2.3 out of 3.0
Access to Well Rounded Curriculum	100.0%	10 out of 10.0
		23.9 EARNED POINTS

Operator Renewal Overview

- Assesses the performance of operator-run schools every 3, 5, or 8 years to ensure that our portfolio of schools continues to offer high quality educational options to Baltimore City students.
- Evaluates the efficacy of schools using multiple measures both quantitative and qualitative, inclusive of site visits, focus groups, surveys, and evidence provided by operators in their applications for renewal.
- Aligns to the Board's Charter Policy (IHBJ), the Renewal Rubric includes the key areas of measurement identified in Board policy.
 - Student Achievement/Academic Success (50% of the weight)
 - School Climate
 - Financial Management and Governance

Operator Renewal Metrics

CATEGORY 1. IS THE SCHOOL AN ACADEMIC SUCCESS?		
Sub-Category	Renewal Metric	City Schools Rating
1.1 Absolute Student Achievement	ELA 3-5 Absolute	Developing
	Math 3-5 Absolute	Developing
	ELA 6-8 Absolute	Effective
	Math 6-8 Absolute	Effective
1.2 Student Achievement Growth	ELA 4-5 SGP	Developing
	Math 4-5 SGP	Not Effective
	ELA 6-8 SGP	Developing
	Math 6-8 SGP	Highly Effective
1.3 Fidelity to Charter/Application Overall	The extent to which the school has fully implemented the mission expressed in its charter application and this mission is clear to all and stakeholders. The extent to which the school has delivered high quality programming for all student subgroups. The extent to which the school is gathering data to assess its efficacy and has effectively addressed any challenges evident in the data, particularly in the areas of enrollment, student attendance, dropout rates, attrition, and student choice data/school demand.	Effective
1.4 Effective Programming for All Student Racial/Ethnic Groups	For schools with diverse student populations, the measure looks at a school's data, whether there is a presence of achievement gaps between student groups within the school, and the extent to which the school has provided high quality programming for students in all racial/ethnic groups. The extent to which the school has instructional approaches, processes, and practices in place that seek to ensure students in all groups achieve and to address gaps in achievement between student groups.	Developing
1.5 5Essentials Student and Teacher Survey	The extent to which the school is organized for success.	Highly Effective
Academics Overall Rating		Effective

CATEGORY 2. DOES THE SCHOOL HAVE A STRONG CLIMATE?		
Sub-Category	Renewal Metric	City Schools Rating
2.1 SER, Highly Effective Instruction	School Effectiveness Review Score - Highly Effective Instruction	Developing
2.2 SER, Talented People	School Effectiveness Review Score - Talented People	Developing
2.3 SER, Vision and Engagement	School Effectiveness Review Score - Vision and Engagement	Effective
2.4 Family Survey	Family: School Survey Family Satisfaction Rating	Not Effective
2.5 Cohort Retention	Cohort Retention Rating	Effective
2.6 Student Attendance, Chronic Absence	The extent to which the school has implemented effective strategies that have kept student attendance high and chronic absences low or led to significant decreases in chronic absence over the course of the contract.	Effective
2.7 Suspensions	The extent to which the school has implemented effective strategies that have kept suspensions low or led to significant decreases over the course of the contract.	Developing
2.8 Effective Programming for Students with Disabilities	The extent to which the school has demonstrated a strong trajectory of growth, is aware of its data and responsibilities to students with disabilities, does not have any gaps or has decreased gaps in the data as it relates to performance and climate metrics for students with disabilities over time, and has effectively and consistently implemented processes, interventions, and strategies to support student outcomes over the course of the contract.	Developing
Climate Overall Rating		Developing

[Click here for an example renewal report](#)

5ESSENTIALS STUDENT AND INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF SURVEY



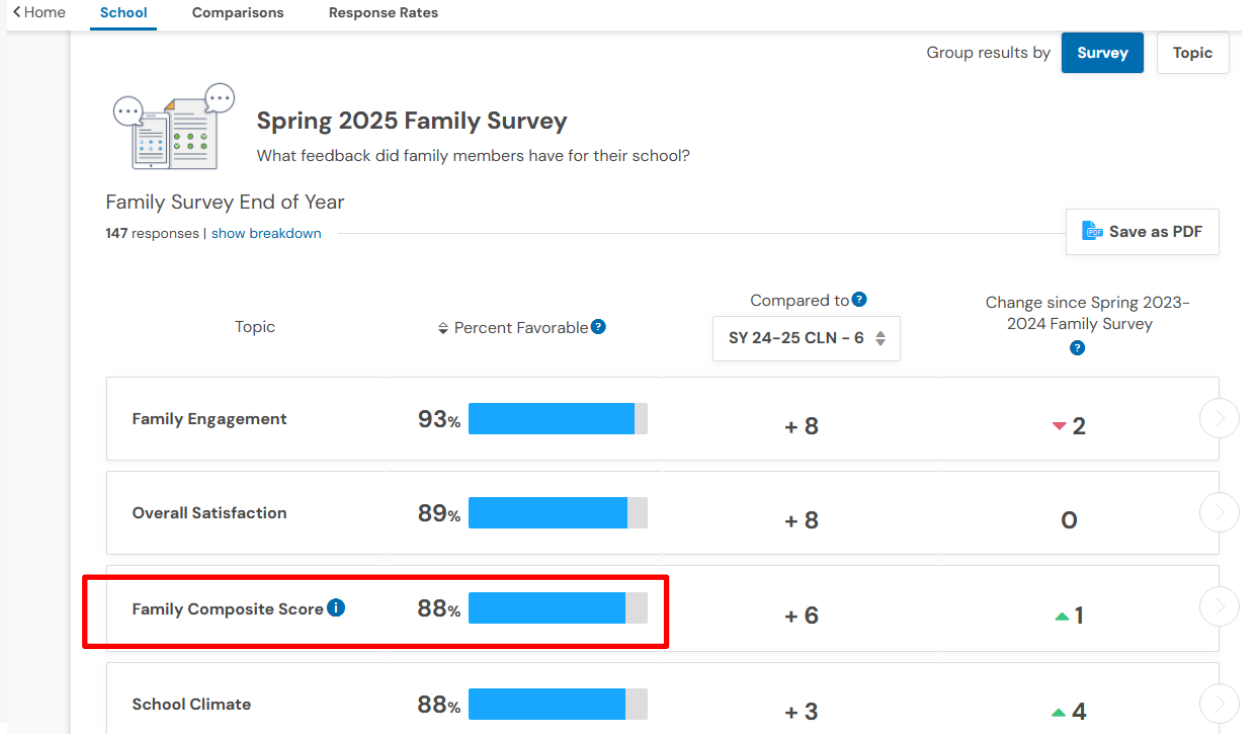
The 5Essentials is a **research-backed diagnostic survey administered to instructional staff and students** that identifies five indicators - **Effective Leaders, Collaborative Teachers, Ambitious Instruction, Supportive Environment, and Involved Families**, that lead to improved outcomes for all students, including improved attendance, graduation rates, 9th grade on track and larger test score gains.

“Research shows **schools strong on at least 3 of the 5 essentials for school improvement were 10 times more likely to show substantial gains in student learning than schools weak on 3 or more of the five essentials. A low score in even just 1 of the 5 essentials reduced the likelihood of improvement to less than 10 percent.**”

5Essentials Survey Scoring

	HIDE ESSENTIALS Very Strong Strong Neutral Weak Very Weak No Data Low Response/Not Applicable				
5E Overall	Ambitious Instruction	Involved Families	Collaborative Teachers	Effective Leaders	Supportive Environment
	69	67	60	58	40
Partially Organized	53	55	44	51	30
Well-Organized	85	96	87	73	48
Partially Organized	69	45	34	18	32
Well-Organized	65	77	51	62	50
Partially Organized	40	53	48	49	29
Organized	80	54	75	76	32
Well-Organized	93	91	83	75	60

City Schools' Spring Family Survey



Family Composite Score Items

1. Overall, how satisfied are you with your child's school?
2. Does your child's school communicate clear expectations for learning?
3. How helpful is communication regarding academic progress from your child's teachers?
4. How welcoming is your child's school to you and your family?
5. Does your child's school believe that all its students have the ability to meet high expectations?
6. How connected is your family to teachers or other staff at your child's school?
7. How well do you feel your child's school is preparing them for their next academic year or college or career?
8. How helpful is the extra academic support your child's school provides to students?
9. Did anyone at your child's school ask about your child's learning needs for this school year?
10. Does your child's school provide opportunities for decision-making and advocacy?

Family Survey Scoring



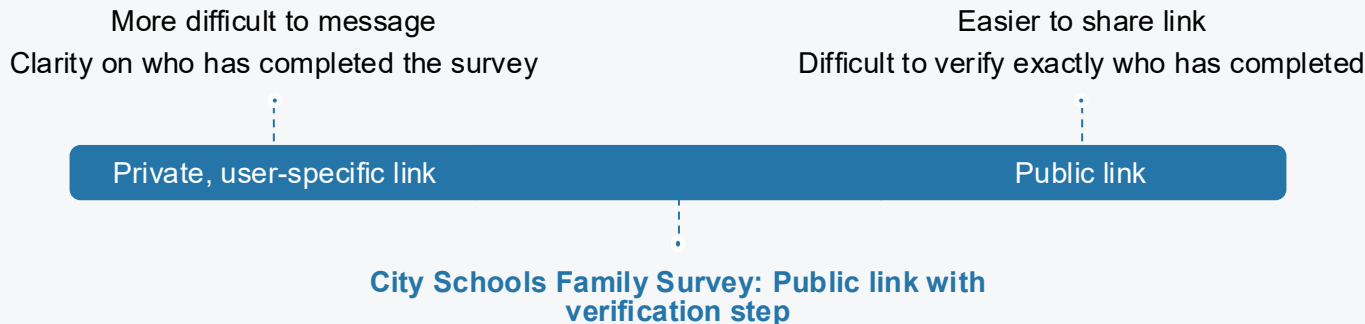
Measures family satisfaction with their student's school, as well as other factors such as communication, expectations setting, preparation and more. Reflects an average of five annual values. If schools do not achieve the required response rate, a score of 50 is imputed for that year.

Highly Effective	Effective	Developing	Not Effective
School's average satisfaction value over the years 2021-22 through 2024-25 is $\geq 90\%$	School's average satisfaction value over the years 2021-22 through 2024-25 is $\geq 80\%$	School's average satisfaction value over the years 2021-22 through 2024-25 is $\geq 70\%$	School's average satisfaction value over the years 2021-22 through 2024-25 is $< 70\%$



Lessons Learned from Surveys in Accountability

Administration Methods



For students, consider appropriate age. We usually start accountability surveys in 5th grade but this results in narrow administration for elementary schools.

For staff, consider job role. Some questions are best suited for educators, others can require support staff for more comprehensive feedback.

Response Rate Minimums

Should student/staff surveys have different expectations than family surveys?

- We use higher thresholds for students and staff in accountability (50%) than families (10% or at least 50 responses)
- Family denominator is tough to accurately calculate (multiple parents, custody, different kids in same school)

Should the purpose of a survey influence response rate minimums?

- Accountability-based surveys generally have higher expectations than those not used for this purpose
- Consider that survey administration can occur simultaneously with other accountability activities, including student testing.

What happens if responses are insufficient?

- Reweight accountability components
- Penalize schools that do not have responses (impute a low score or a “zero”)



IF THIS
IS BAD
MY MOM
WILL BE
FURIOUS

ADMINISTRATOR

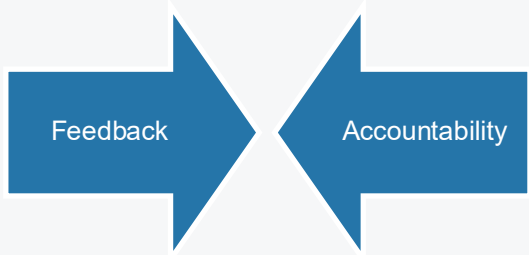
IF THIS
IS BAD
YOUR MOM
WILL BE
FURIOUS

A-F
RANKINGS

REPORT
CARD

REPORT
CARD

Survey Goals



- Respondents can be motivated towards positivity (public ratings, school closure)
- Staff surveys can begin to approximate a self-assessment under certain conditions
- Combine accountability questions with non-accountability questions



Reporting and Scoring

- Scoring methodology (scales, % positive, or categorical labels)
- Percentile ranking vs. Absolute thresholds

Topic Name	Score Average
Respect for Diversity	6.7
Participation and Engagement	6.7
Behavioral and Academic Supports	7.7
Physical Environment	2.8
Staff-student Relationships	7.9
Student-student Relationships	3.1
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Special Schools and Populations



William S. Baer School 2024 - 2025 School Report Card



Percentile Rank: (Elementary) , 0 (Middle), 0 (High)

William S. Baer School (0301)
Grade Levels: Elementary/Middle/High
County: Baltimore City

2001 N Warwick Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21216-0000
Phone: 410-396-0833

HOW DID THIS SCHOOL DO OVERALL?

Overall school performance is determined by a combination of academic and school quality indicators. The total earned points percent is provided as well as a percentile rank and a star designation.

INDICATOR	POSSIBLE POINTS	EARNED POINTS*	ANNUAL TARGET	IMPROVEMENT
Academic Achievement (E/M/H)	20.0 / 20.0 / 30.0	3.8 / 2.5 / 4.3	🟡 / 🟡 / 🟢	🟢 / 🟡 / na
Graduation Rate (E/M/H)	na / na / na	na / na / na	na / na / na	na / na / na
Academic Progress (E/M/H)	na / 6.5 / na	na / 2.7 / na	na / na / na	na / na / na
Progress in Achieving English Language Proficiency (E/M/H)	na / na / na	na / na / na	na / na / na	na / na / na
Readiness for Post-Secondary Success (E/M/H)	na / na / 5.0	na / na / 0.0	na / na / na	na / na / na
School Quality and Student Success (E/M/H)	15.0 / 25.0 / 15.0	1.0 / 1.0 / 1.0	na / na / na	🟡 / 🟡 / 🟡
TOTAL POINTS:	35.0 / 51.5 / 50.0	4.8 / 6.2 / 5.3		

Total Earned Points: **(4.8 + 6.2 + 5.3) 16.3**
Total Points Possible: **(35.0 + 51.5 + 50.0) 136.5**

11.9%

TOTAL EARNED PERCENT

* Earned points may not equal total points due to rounding. 🟢 = Met 🟡 = Not Met



Consider alternative weighting of surveys, or use different instruments



Consider some type of appeals process or reconsideration given special circumstances



Thank You!

Questions?

Contact

Christopher Wohn
CRWohn@bcps.k12.md.us
Director of Research
Baltimore City Public Schools

BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS

Robert Salley, *Board Chair*
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Thomas T. Jones, *Chief Information Technology Officer*
Emily Nielson, *Chief Human Capital Officer*
Alison Perkins-Cohen, *Chief of Staff*
Dr. Lynette Washington, *Chief Operating Officer*

Time	Session
8:00 am – 9:00 am	Breakfast
9:00 am – 9:15 am	Welcome
9:15 am – 10:30 am	Moving Beyond Test Scores: The Role of Surveys and More
10:30 am – 11:00 am	Break
11:00 am – 12:00 pm	Communicating Multiple Measures of School Quality
12:00 pm – 1:15 pm	Lunch
1:15 pm – 2:15 pm	Involving Communities and Families in School Quality Measurement
2:15 pm – 2:45 pm	Closing Plenary: Next Steps and Collaboration Opportunities

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2:15 pm – 2:45 pm	Closing Plenary: Next Steps and Collaboration Opportunities

Communicating Multiple Measures of School Quality

Kevin Shallcross

Data Quality Manager, Chicago Public
Schools

Pamela Wong

Executive Director, Research, Analytics,
Assessment, & Data, Denver Public
Schools



Blueprint Labs



Communicating Multiple Measures within Public Accountability Reporting

Kevin Shallcross, Data Quality Manager
Chicago Public Schools
March 13, 2026

Chicago Public Schools: District Figures

School Year 2025-26



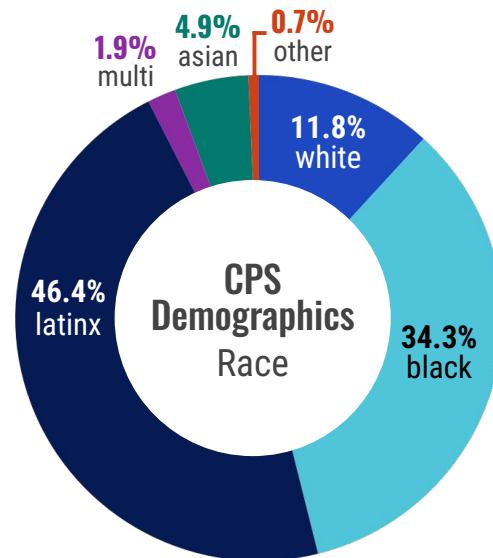
630
Schools



316,224
Students Enrolled

Demographics on Student Enrollment

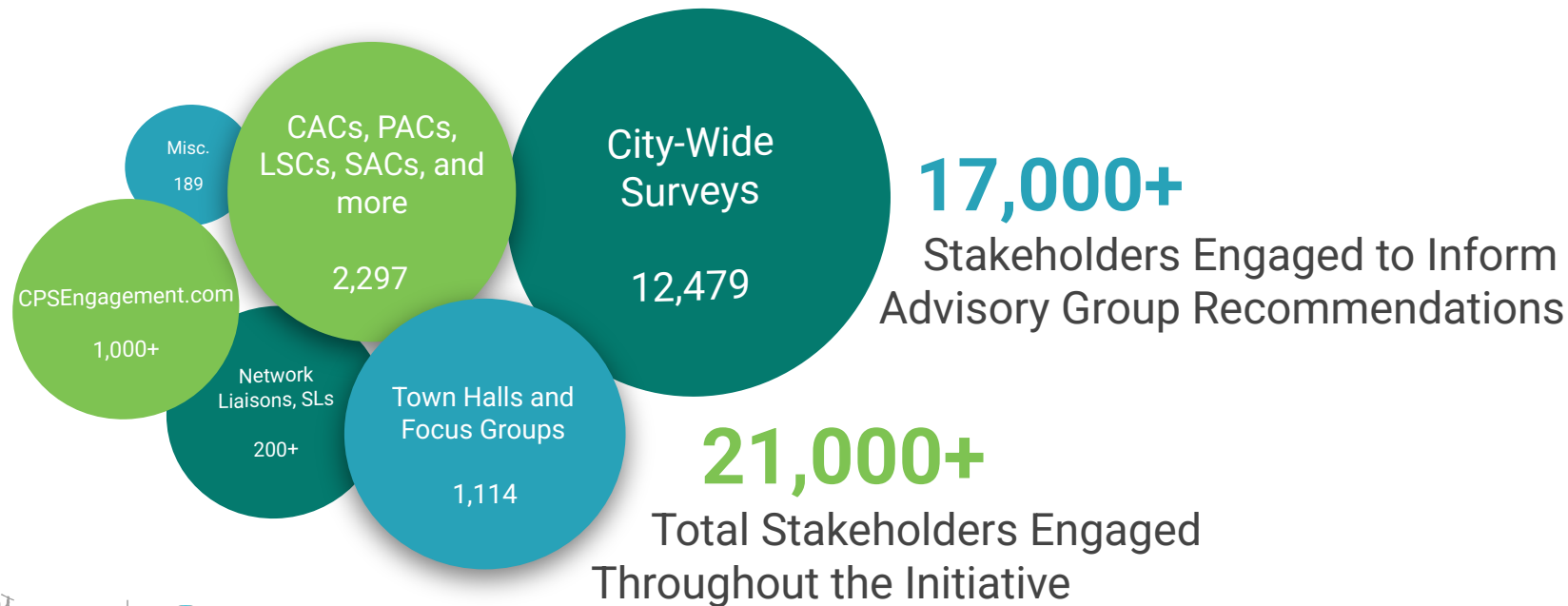
	CPS
Low Income Students	71.8%
English Learners	27.3%
Students with Disabilities	17.3%



Overview of CPS's Updated Accountability System

CPS's multi-year accountability redesign process

From 2019-2023, CPS engaged 21,000+ stakeholders and consulted with education experts to reimagine the District's approach to accountability.



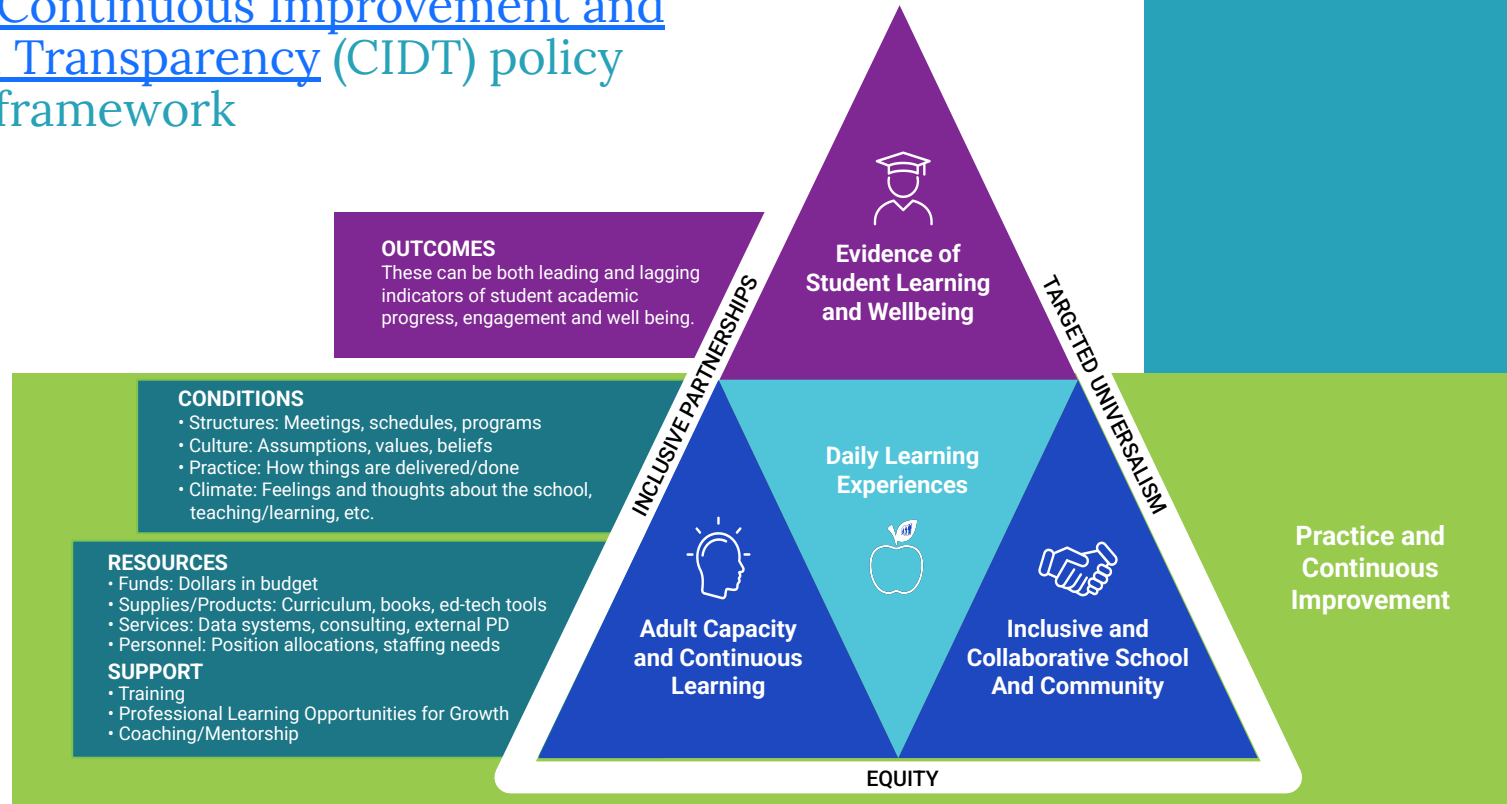
Key findings from redesign process:

Balancing complexity with accessibility

What We Heard	Advisory Group's Recommendations
Embrace complexity	• Do not produce a single, summative rating • Use a dashboard approach
Equity is key	• Reflect and support the District's Equity Framework • Include community context
Avoid punitive accountability	• Do not rank or produce an overall rating for schools • Identify where schools need help and provide support
Reciprocal accountability	• Start with District accountability • Show the connection between school performance and resources from the District
Outcomes AND experiences	• Focus on conditions and supportive learning environments • Complement above information with outcome data
Coherence and accessibility	• Align and integrate with other District initiatives • Ensure all information is transparent and understandable • Clearly explain how data should be interpreted and used

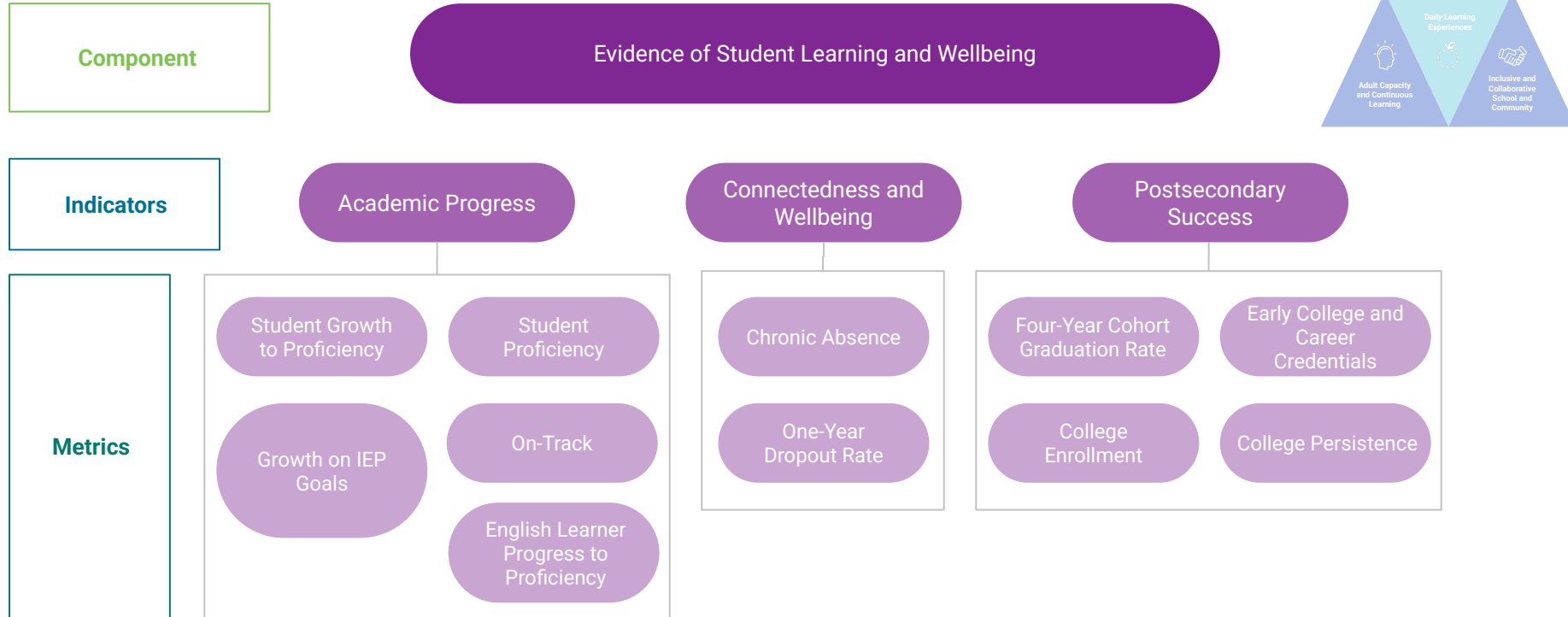
Outcome of Redesign Process:

The Continuous Improvement and Data Transparency (CIDT) policy and framework



Evidence of Student Learning and Wellbeing:

Student outcomes



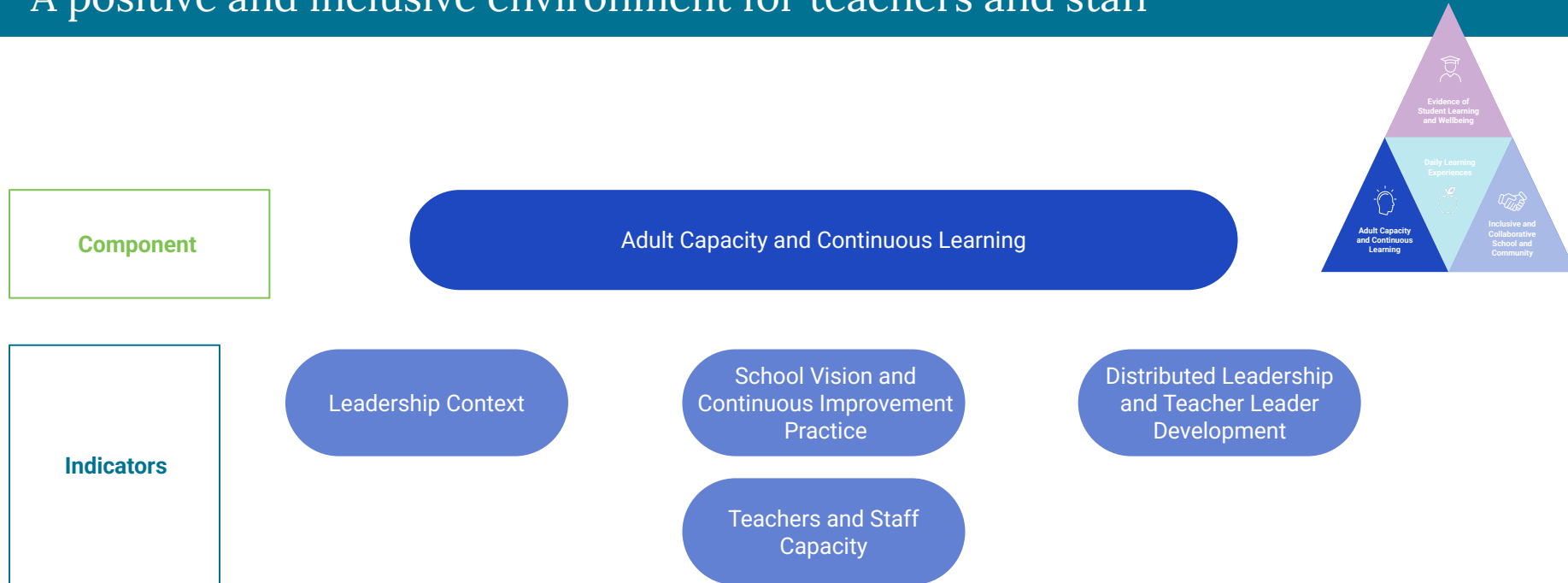
Daily Learning Experiences:

The quality of a student's day-to-day experience



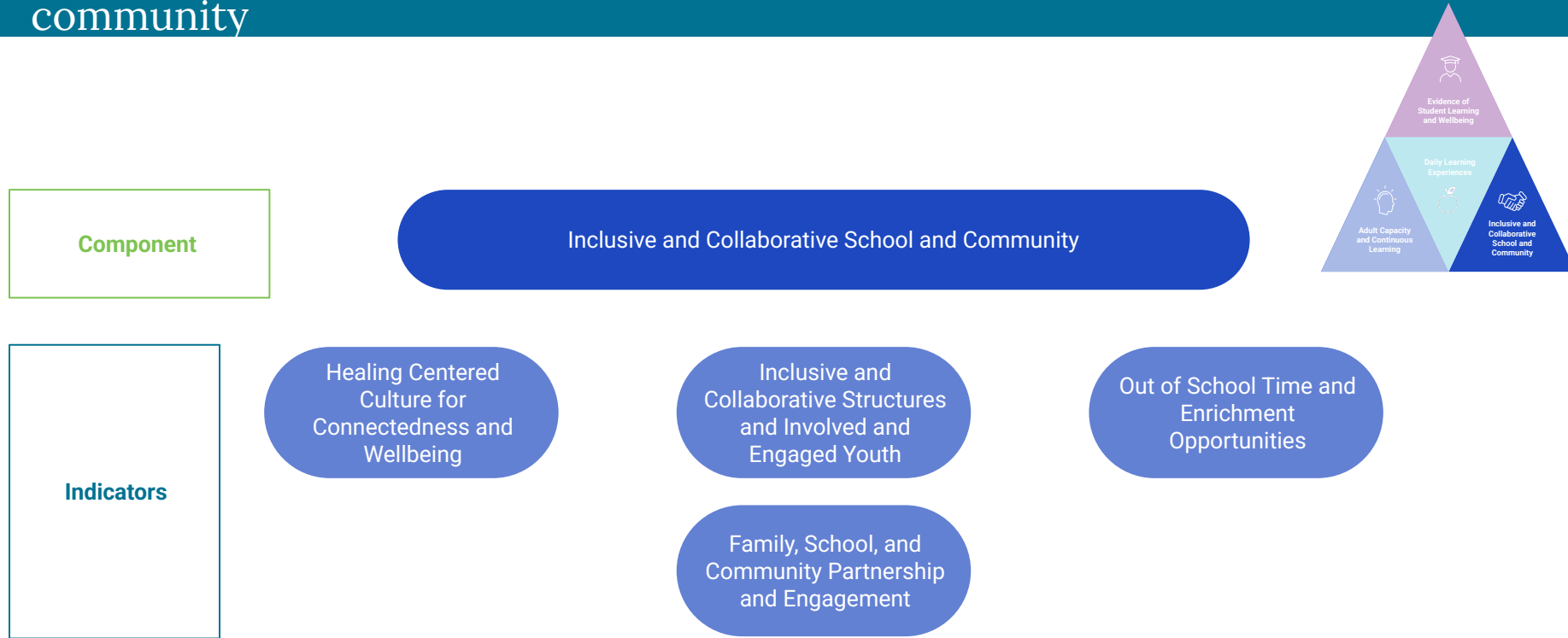
Adult Capacity and Continuous Learning:

A positive and inclusive environment for teachers and staff



Inclusive and Collaborative School and Community:

A welcoming and supportive environment for students, families, and the community



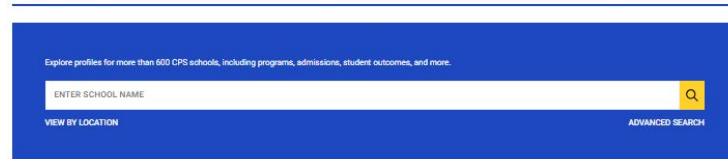
Public reporting of accountability measures: CPS school profile pages

Accountability measures communicated on [school profile pages](#) alongside:

- Operational information (e.g. school schedule, public transit options)
- Admissions process
- District investments (e.g. staff funding and capital investments)



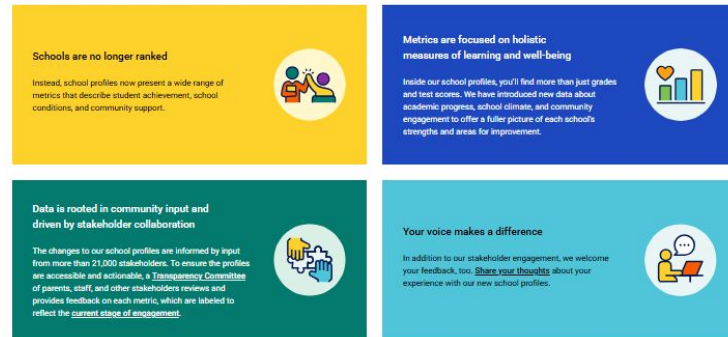
School Profiles



Exploring Our New School Profiles

As you browse our school profiles you may notice that a lot has changed. We've made major updates to the data and information included in the profiles to support CPS' new approach to analyzing school practices and student outcomes. This new approach, called Continuous Improvement and Data Transparency (CIDT), will begin to be implemented in the 2024-25 school year. In addition to the information you're used to seeing, profiles will now begin to include expanded data about how the District and schools support the whole child.

Here are a few more changes you'll notice:

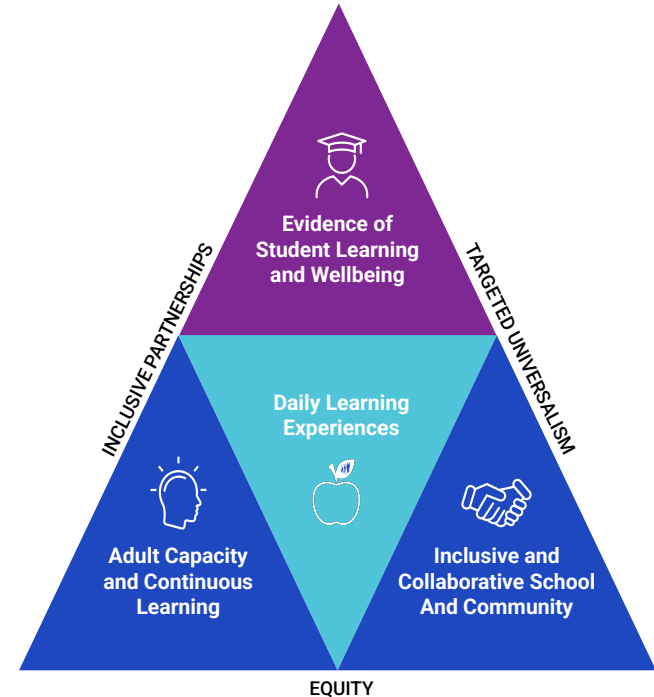


Public Reporting: Feedback and Learnings

Feedback: Framework unintuitive for public and internal stakeholders

While CIDT framework is useful for organizing policy and project management:

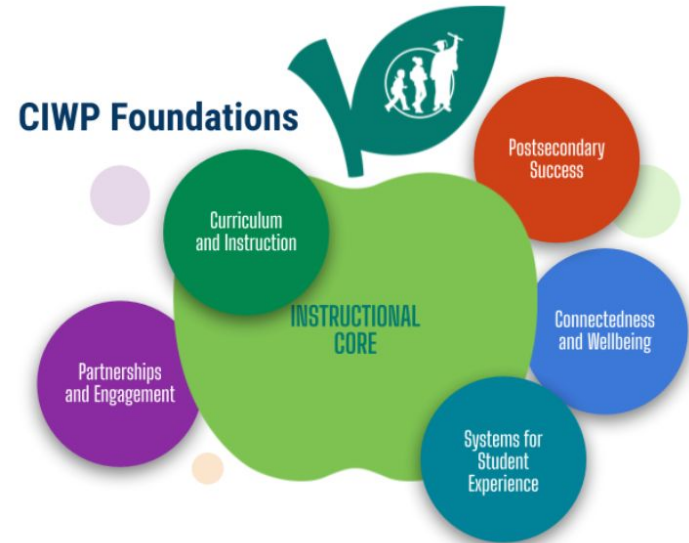
- This framework made it difficult to tell a public narrative across different measures
- School leaders needed to translate between this new framework and their existing Continuous Improvement (CI) framework



Learning: Find the right framework based on use case

Reorganizing public reporting around existing, school-based CI framework:

- Leveraged a framework that was already built into school operational cadences, and that school leaders were used to communicating publicly
- Resonated with many of the most engaged public stakeholders due to prior exposure
- Provides an opportunity to further highlight specific measures based on how they are prioritized in local school CI plans



Feedback: Users needed to click too many times to find desired data

In an effort to prevent information overload, CPS over-rotated and made reporting too compartmentalized.

School Overview ^① >

District Investments ^① >

Curriculum & Instruction ^① >

Inclusive & Supportive Learning Environment ^① >

Connectedness & Wellbeing ^① >

Chronic Absence

One-Year Dropout Rate

Clubs and Activities

Out of School Time and Enrichment Opportunities

Creative Schools Certification

Healthy CPS Metrics

Behavior and Discipline

Postsecondary Success ^① >

Partnerships & Engagement ^① >

Behavior and Discipline

Behavior and discipline data shows how often serious incidents lead to exclusion from school.

Behavior and Discipline Data

To learn more about disciplinary practices at this school and at the district level, access the 'Suspensions and Expulsions' report on the [district's metrics page](#).

	2024 - 2025	2023 - 2024
Number of out-of-school suspensions per 100 students	4.7	4.0
Percent of misconducts resulting in out-of-school suspension	13.0 %	9.8 %
Average length of out-of-school suspensions	1.9 days	1.8 days

Learning: Guide user experience from interrelated themes to specific measures

Page navigation starts by highlighting relationships and connections between measures.

Drilling into specific measures provides more detailed context, interpretations, and data.

Postsecondary Success

Every student deserves a strong plan for what comes after high school. This section shows how well the school supports students in graduating, earning early skills or credentials, staying in college, and finding a meaningful path—whether that's college, job training, employment, the military, or transition programs for students with significant disabilities.

These measures work together to show whether students leave high school with **real choices** and the support they need to succeed in the next stage of life.

How the Pieces Fit Together

- **Graduation** tells us who finishes high school.
- **Early career and college opportunities** show who gets a head start while still in high school.
- **College enrollment and persistence** show who continues into college after high school.
- **Transition and pathway data** show how students with disabilities move into adult life.

Together, they give a clear picture of whether students are prepared for their future.



Graduation Rate

Are students earning diplomas on time?

Four-Year Graduation Rate 91.4%

Freshmen who graduate within four years

1.9% increase from previous school year

[LEARN MORE >](#)

Five-Year Graduation Rate 92.2%

Freshmen who graduate within five years

1.5% decrease from previous school year

[LEARN MORE >](#)

College Enrollment and Persistence

Are graduates starting and staying in college?

College Enrollment 79%

Graduates who go to college after high school

0.1% decrease from previous school year

[LEARN MORE >](#)

College Persistence 84.2%

Graduates who remain enrolled in college

2.9% increase from previous school year

[LEARN MORE >](#)

Graduation Rate

This data shows the percentage of freshmen who graduate within four or five years.

Four-Year Graduation Rate

91.4%

1.9% increase from previous school year

[VIEW CHART >](#)

Five-Year Graduation Rate

92.2%

1.5% decrease from previous school year

[VIEW CHART >](#)

Why This Matters

Earning a diploma is as important step toward success in college, careers, and other future goals. Tracking graduation rates helps schools and the district identify where students need more support to stay on track.



What It Can & Cannot Tell You

It Can Tell You:

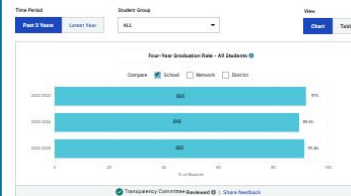
- Can show whether most students are completing high school on time
- Can highlight schools where students may need more help to reach graduation

It Cannot Tell You:

- Cannot explain why some students do not graduate on time - reasons may include attendance challenges, course failures, or personal circumstances
- Cannot be used alone to judge school quality since other measures (like learning growth and engagement) also matter

Four-Year Graduation Rate

The percentage of students who start high school as freshmen and graduate within four years.



Questions You May Ask the School



Feedback: Content is unengaging

While intended to inform the public around new measures, profile pages instead became:

- Text-heavy
- Full of jargon
- Disconnected from parents' needs

Balanced Assessment System

School-level information about how well assessment plans meet district standards for balanced assessment systems across grades, subjects, and types of assessments.

What is a Balanced Assessment System?

CPS Assessment Plan Process

Each spring school teams collaboratively develop and approve an assessment plan for the following school year. To support this process, CPS provides guidance, resources, and recommended assessments paid for by the district and aligned to the CPS balanced assessment framework. School teams use the CPS balanced assessment guides for [elementary school](#) and [high school](#) to create plans that help advance their school improvement goals, making informed decisions that take into account their local school contexts (e.g. grade levels, programs, school priorities, languages spoken by students, etc.). These plans are a supplement to the required assessments in the SY25 CPS assessment calendar.

Professional Learning

CPS provides comprehensive, research-based professional learning to support educators in designing and implementing a balanced assessment system. During the 2023-2024 school year, the district engaged thousands of educators across hundreds of professional learning sessions.

SY26 Balanced Assessment Systems

The tables provide information about the alignment of schools' assessment plans for School Year 2025-2026 (SY26) with the CPS balanced assessment framework. For each recommendation, a school could earn a designation of "Fully Meeting," "Partially Meeting," or "Not Meeting." Schools earn this designation based on 1) the assessment the school uses 2) the grade-levels it is administered to and 3) the number of assessment administrations. The table only includes assessments that are included in schools' yearly assessment plan process; it does not include required assessments, such as those required by the state or those mandated as a part of specific programs (e.g. AP, IB, observational assessments in Pre-K classrooms, etc.). Refer to the [SY26 Guide to the CPS Assessment Landscape](#) or visit the [CPS Assessment page](#) for more information.

This plan data is updated as of 5/22/25.

ASSESSMENT TYPE:

Common Unit Assessments

Common unit assessments help teachers, students, and families understand how well students are demonstrating mastery of the curriculum's unit objectives.

Learning: Tailor content to the user and use case

Web pages were redesigned to remove barriers to engagement, featuring:

- Publicly accessible language
- Aids to assist with interpreting metrics and discussing with schools
- Visually engaging and welcoming graphics

Cultivate Student Survey

This data shows how many students participate in the survey and whether they believe the school listens to their feedback.

Where This Data Comes From



The Survey

The *Cultivate Survey*, which asks students how they feel about their learning experiences.



Student Participation

How many students in grades 5-12 complete the *Cultivate Survey*.



Impact Number

How many students believe their feedback will lead to real changes at their school.



Why This Matters

Students learn best when they feel safe, supported, and heard. This survey helps schools understand what students experience each day—what is working well and what needs attention. When students believe their voice matters, they are more engaged, more connected, and more confident in their learning.



What It Can & Cannot Tell You

It Can Tell You:

- ✓ Can show how many students shared their experiences.
- ✓ Can show whether students feel their school listens to them.

It Cannot Tell You:

- ✗ Can not explain how individual students are feeling or performing.
- ✗ Can not explain exactly why students feel the way they do without more conversations and follow-up.



Questions You May Ask the School

1. How is student feedback used to improve the school?
2. What changes have been made because of past *Cultivate* results?
3. How does the school make sure all students feel safe sharing their experiences?
4. Are there groups of students whose voices are not being heard, and how is the school addressing that?



Thank You



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Assessment, & Data

Conceptualizing School Quality at Denver Public Schools

March 13, 2026

Agenda

- About Denver Public Schools
- School Performance Framework
- DPS Strategic Roadmap
- Other Metrics and Looking Ahead





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About Denver Public Schools (DPS)



Our Vision

Every
Learner
Thrives

Our Mission

Educational equity is our collective responsibility. We prepare students for career, college and life. We create conditions and partnerships where students, families and team members belong and thrive.

Our Core Shared Values

Students First • Integrity • Equity • Collaboration • Accountability • Fun

Denver Public Schools (DPS)

At-a-Glance

Denver Public Schools is the largest school district in Colorado, serving 10% of the students that live in Colorado.



- Superintendent: Dr. Alex Marrero
- 7-member DPS Board of Education



Key Facts & Figures

- 89,210 students
 - Ethnicity/Race:
 - 52.1% Hispanic/Latine
 - 24.8% White
 - 13.2% Black/African-American
 - 5.2% Multiracial
 - 3.3% Asian
 - 1.0% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
 - 0.5% American Indian
 - 65.1% Free/Reduced Price Lunch-eligible
 - 27.9% Multilingual Learner
 - 14.6% Students with Disabilities
- Over 9,850 full-time employees
- Over 200 languages spoken by DPS students and families
- 198 schools
 - 157 district-run
 - 55 charter
- Over \$1.5 billion budget



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School Performance Framework (SPF)

School Performance Framework (SPF)

- Annual school accountability reports issued by the Colorado Department of Education (CDE)
- Goal: Let districts, schools, and their communities know how well they are doing
- Primary indicator of school quality across the state
- Cutpoints are set and growth model looks at performance across the state
- Request to Reconsider process
- CDE maintains a dashboard of SPF results



What is in an SPF Rating?

Cut-Points for Plan/Category Type Assignment			
Total Framework Points	District	School	Accreditation Category/Plan Type
	74.0%	not applicable	Accredited w/Distinction (District only)
	56.0%	53.0%	Accredited (District) or Performance Plan (School)
	44.0%	42.0%	Accredited w/Improvement Plan (District) or Improvement Plan (School)
	34.0%	34.0%	Accredited w/Priority Improvement Plan (District) or Priority Improvement (School)
	25.0%	25.0%	Accredited w/Turnaround Plan(District) or Turnaround Plan (School)

Total Possible Points by Performance Indicator			
Indicator	Total Possible Points	Elementary/Middle	High/District
Achievement	36 points (8 per subject for all students, 4 per subject by disaggregated group)	40%	30%
Growth	28 total points (8 per subject for all students, 4 per subject by disaggregated group, 2 for ELP growth, 2 for ELP On Track Growth)	60%	40%
Postsecondary Readiness	52 total points (16 for graduation, 4 for matriculation, 16 for dropout, 8 per CO SAT subject)	not applicable	30%

CDE SPF Reporting



2025 Final School Performance Framework

2398: East High School | 0880: Denver County 1

Grade Levels: H - (1 Year)

Plan Type Official Rating based on SINGLE-YEAR SPF Report

Performance Plan

70.7/100
Points Earned

70.7%

The performance framework evaluates district and school performance on Academic Achievement, Academic Growth, and Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness indicators. The percentage of points earned across all indicators determines the final accreditation rating for a district or the final plan type for a school, which is displayed above. The cut points for final ratings established by the State Board of Education are shown at the right. meet finance, assessment, and safety assurances may result in a lowered rating. Refer to the end of this report for more details on how ratings are determined.

Indicator Rating Totals

Performance Indicator	Percent of Points Earned	Points Earned/Eligible
Academic Achievement	68.1%	20.4/30
Academic Growth	65.2%	26.1/40
Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness	80.8%	24.2/30

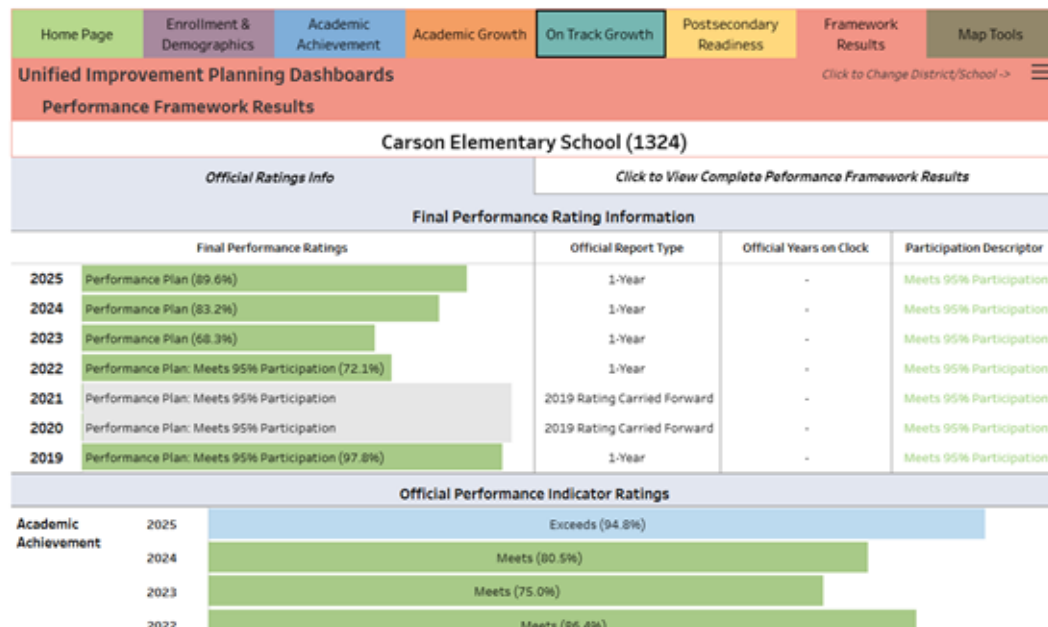
Assurances

Participation



Careers Superintendents About CDE Contacts, Offices & Staff Log In Translate Traducir Search

District Dashboard and School Dashboard



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Impact of SPF Ratings

- **Green** Schools
 - Top rating that a school can earn
 - The most widely known label for quality in the state
- Performance Watch - “on the clock”
 - Ratings in the bottom two categories
 - Longer on the clock, increased scrutiny
 - Data MINE
 - Elevate Network
 - District and state action
 - Hard to counter narrative



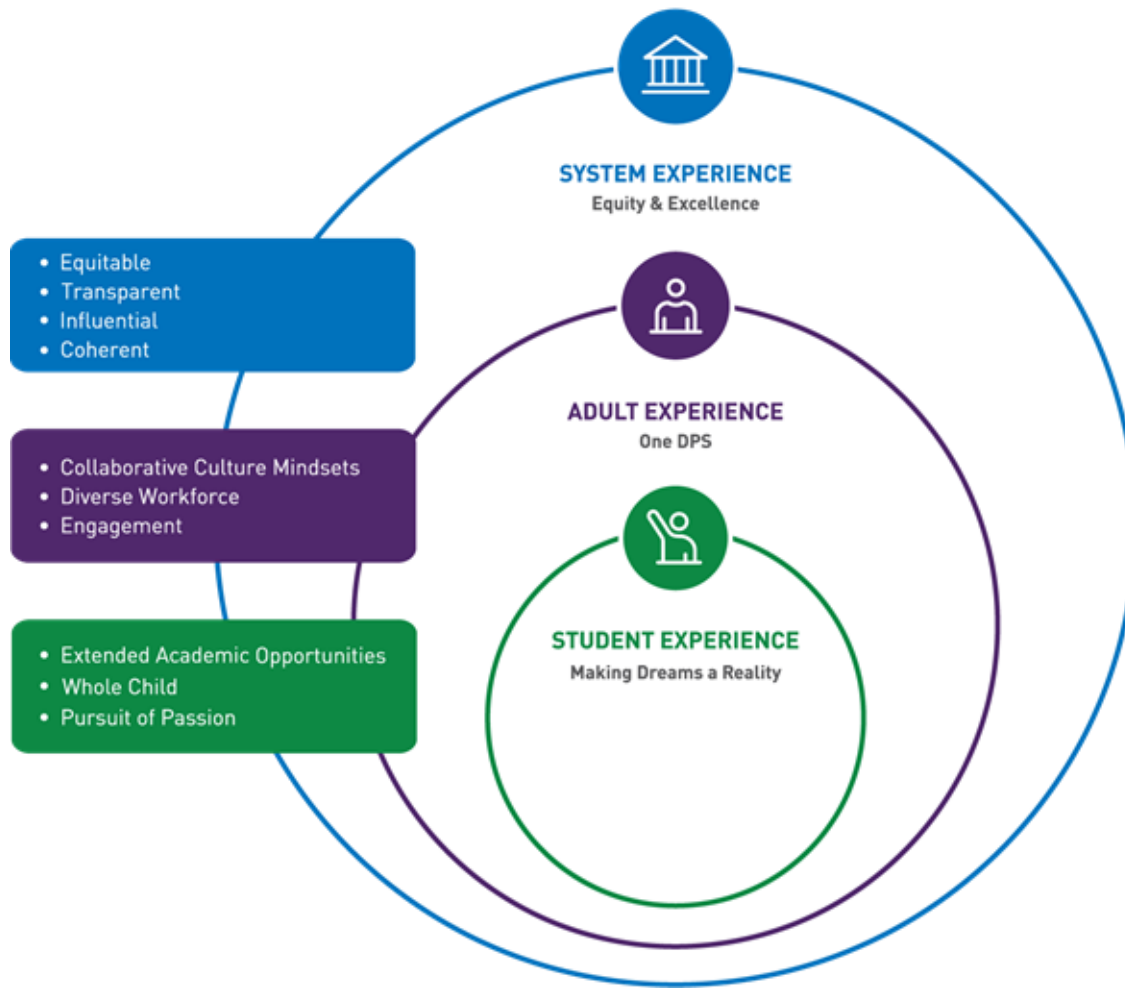


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DPS Strategic Roadmap

2022-2026 DPS Strategic Roadmap



Strategic Roadmap Progress Measures

- Student Experience
 - Improve Grade-Level Achievement
 - READ, CMAS, CO SAT
 - Improve Post-Pandemic Workforce Readiness
 - Graduation Rate
 - Seal of Biliteracy
 - Work-based Learning & industry certifications
- Adult Experience
 - Staffing
 - Family engagement and experience
- System Experience
 - SRM-aligned budgets
 - SRM-connected school-based strategic plans





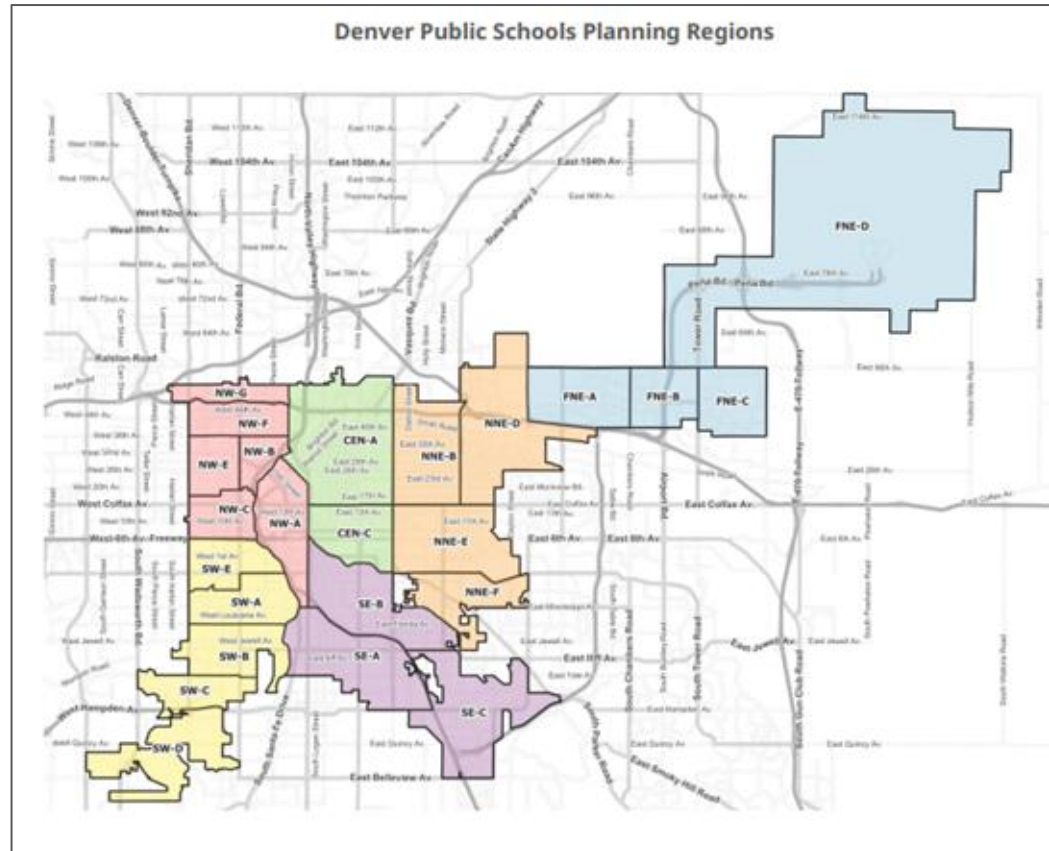
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Other Metrics & Looking Ahead

Other School Quality Measures

- Districtwide survey results
 - Your Voice/Tu Voz Student & Family Surveys
- BESS results
- Board Meeting Reports & Presentations
- [Strategic Regional Analysis](#) report



Shifting Landscape

- Declining enrollment
 - Lower birth rates
 - More exits than entries
 - Influx of new-to-country students has dissipated
- Shifting populations in different parts of the city
- Budget cuts
- 2024-2025: 7 schools closed, 3 partially closed



Expanding Definition of School Quality

As our context changes, we are considering more attributes

- School choice data and enrollment declines
- Boundary reside data
- Building utilization rates
- Attendance and chronic absenteeism
- Unique programming offerings
 - GT
 - TNLI
 - ECE
 - AN Centers
- After school programming
- Age of buildings, AC, parking, square footage
- Staff turnover and retention
- Populations served





Thank you!

Pamela Wong

Executive Director, Research, Analytics, Assessment, & Data

pamela_wong@dpsk12.net



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Blueprint Labs



Lunch

The event resumes at 1:15 pm.

Time	Session
8:00 am – 9:00 am	Breakfast
9:00 am – 9:15 am	Welcome
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Involving Communities and Families in School Quality Measurement

Chris Campos

Assistant Professor of Economics and John E. Jeuck Faculty Fellow, University of Chicago Booth School of Business



Blueprint Labs



Making School Quality Visible Evidence from Los Angeles

Christopher Campos — University of Chicago Booth

School Quality Measurement Conference

Imagine a mother in East LA choosing between two high schools.

One has higher-performing students walking through the door.

The other actually *moves* students further.

She picks the first — not because she doesn't care about quality,
but because **peer composition is visible and school effectiveness is not.**

Do Parents Know What Makes a School Effective?

Every state publishes some kind of school quality data.

Do Parents Know What Makes a School Effective?

Every state publishes some kind of school quality data.

But do parents actually **understand** these measures?

Do Parents Know What Makes a School Effective?

Every state publishes some kind of school quality data.

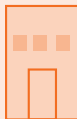
But do parents actually **understand** these measures?

And if they did, would it change the schools they pick?

Two Ways to Measure a “Good School”

Incoming Achievement

Where students start



Two Ways to Measure a “Good School”

Incoming Achievement

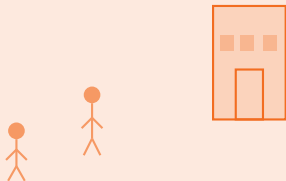
Where students start



Two Ways to Measure a “Good School”

Incoming Achievement

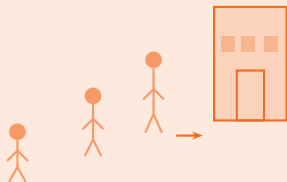
Where students start



Two Ways to Measure a “Good School”

Incoming Achievement

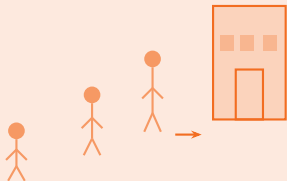
Where students start



Two Ways to Measure a “Good School”

Incoming Achievement

Where students start



Achievement Growth

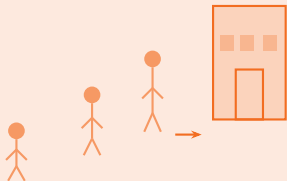
How much students grow



Two Ways to Measure a “Good School”

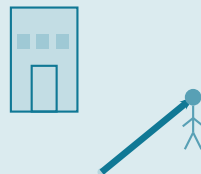
Incoming Achievement

Where students start



Achievement Growth

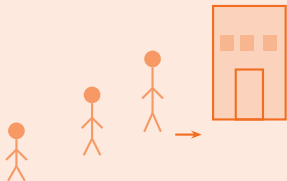
How much students grow



Two Ways to Measure a “Good School”

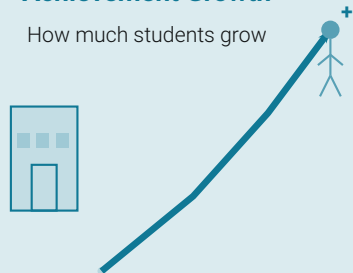
Incoming Achievement

Where students start



Achievement Growth

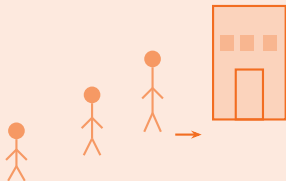
How much students grow



Two Ways to Measure a “Good School”

Incoming Achievement

Where students start

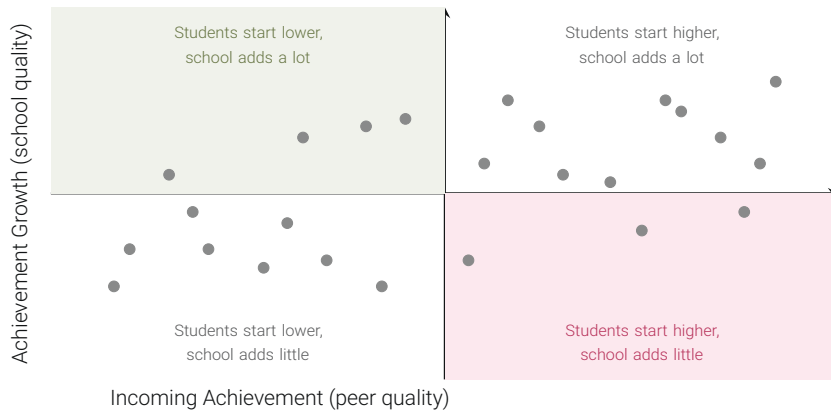


Achievement Growth

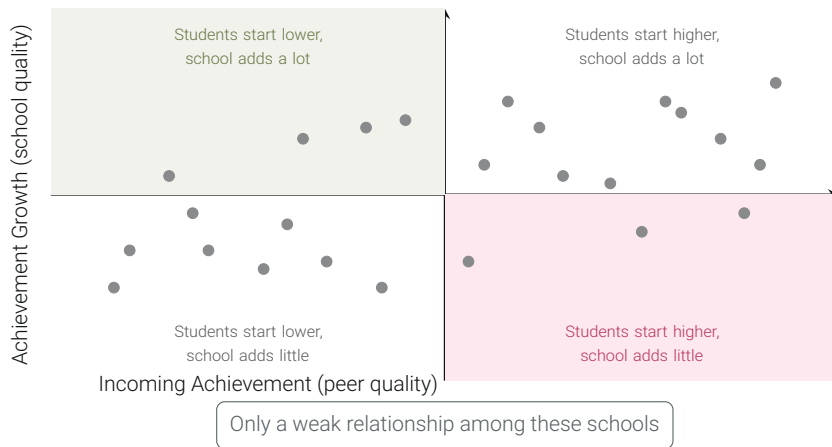
How much students grow



These Two Measures Are Barely Related



These Two Measures Are Barely Related



An Experiment in Los Angeles

I ran a large-scale experiment in LA's **Zones of Choice** program to test whether teaching parents the difference changes their school choices and their children's outcomes.

- Neighborhood-based school choice for high schools
- 8th graders rank nearby high schools
- Two study rounds: 2019 and 2021

The Setting

~**20,000** 8th graders

104 middle schools

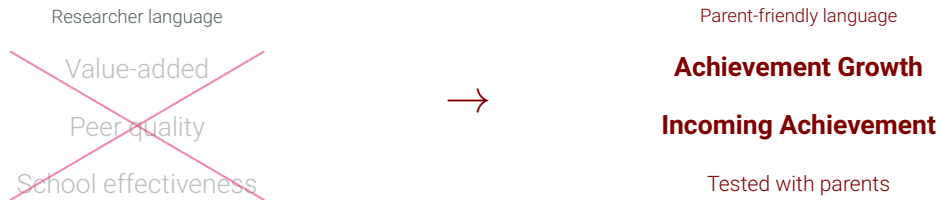
90% Hispanic

94% economically disadvantaged

12% of parents college-educated

*Students enter high school scoring ~22%
below the district average*

Translating the Jargon



But language alone is not enough — we also created 2-minute explainer videos that visually explain both concepts.

Explainer Video: What Parents Saw

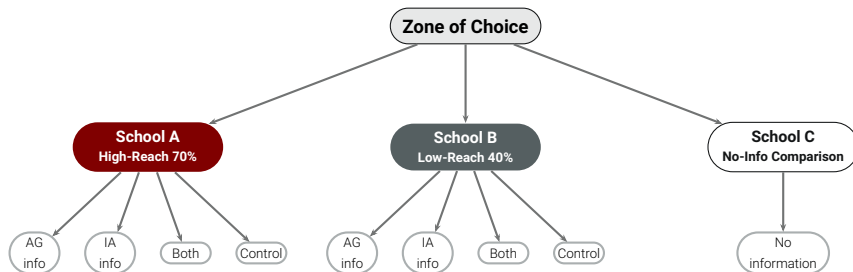


2-minute video

Available in English and Spanish

The Experiment

The Experimental Design



Schools randomly sorted into three groups. Within schools that received information, individual families randomly assigned to get Achievement Growth info, Incoming Achievement info, or both.

What Parents Received

A one-page letter, co-branded with LAUSD:

- Listed every school in the family's zone
- Showed each school's percentile ranking (e.g., "this school is in the top 20%")
- School order **randomized** in each letter
- Available in English and Spanish
- Linked to the explainer video

Simple enough to read in two minutes.

We are providing information about schools within your Zone of Choice to ensure you have the best information available prior to your upcoming decision.



Bell Zone of Choice

We determine the quality of a school based on students' average scores on state exams.

This measure has been used to identify schools that are high performing and to identify schools that need improvement.

Therefore, schools with higher quality are listed first in the list of schools in your zone.

We hope you use this information when choosing the right school for your student.

Increasing Achievement
Improving achievement is the purpose of the state of California's education system.

Achievement Growth
The measure of achievement growth is the difference between a student's score on a state exam and the score on the previous state exam.

Therefore, schools with higher achievement growth are listed first in the list of schools in your zone.

We hope you use this information when choosing the right school for your student.

School	Increasing Achievement	Achievement Growth	Percentile Ranking	Type of School
Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts & Health (STEAM) High School	78	98	100th	Small School
Visual Performing Arts (VPA) High School	74	87	100th	Small School
Health Academy	88	88	100th	Small Learning Community
Intelligent Teacher Academy	63	50	100th	Small Learning Community
STEAM	87	82	100th	Small Learning Community
Information Technology Academy	49	63	100th	Small Learning Community
Art & Language & Performance (ALP) Academy	62	50	100th	Small Learning Community
Hi-Care Academy	87	82	100th	Small Learning Community
Wellness Studio	62	50	100th	Small Learning Community

Estamos proporcionando información sobre las escuelas dentro de su Zona de Opción, para asegurarnos de que tenga la mejor información disponible antes de su próxima decisión.



Zona de Opción Bell

Determinamos la calidad de una escuela en función de los puntajes promedio de los estudiantes en los exámenes estatales.

Este indicador se ha utilizado para identificar escuelas que son de alta calidad y escuelas que necesitan mejorar.

Por lo tanto, las escuelas de mayor calidad se listan primero en la lista de escuelas de su zona de opción.

Esperamos que utilice esta información al elegir la escuela adecuada para su estudiante.

Medición del Crecimiento
El crecimiento del aprendizaje es la diferencia entre el puntaje de un estudiante en un examen estatal y el puntaje en el examen estatal anterior.

Por lo tanto, las escuelas con mayor crecimiento del aprendizaje se listan primero en la lista de escuelas de su zona de opción.

Esperamos que utilice esta información al elegir la escuela adecuada para su estudiante.

Escuela	Medición del Crecimiento del Aprendizaje	Medición del Crecimiento del Aprendizaje	Medición del Crecimiento del Aprendizaje	Medición del Crecimiento del Aprendizaje	Medición del Crecimiento del Aprendizaje
Preparatoria de Ciencias, Tecnología, Ingeniería, Artes y Matemáticas (PTI)	78	98	100th	Small School	Small School
Preparatoria de Artes y Visualización y Tecnología (PAVT)	74	87	100th	Small School	Small School
Academia de Salud	88	88	100th	Small Learning Community	Small Learning Community
Academia de Aprendizaje y Enseñanza (AAE)	63	50	100th	Small Learning Community	Small Learning Community
Academia de Ciencias, Tecnología, Ingeniería, Artes y Matemáticas (ATIAM)	87	82	100th	Small Learning Community	Small Learning Community
Academia de Información Tecnológica	49	63	100th	Small Learning Community	Small Learning Community
Academia de Artes, Música, y Tecnología y Artes (ATA)	62	50	100th	Small Learning Community	Small Learning Community
Academia del PP Grate	87	82	100th	Small Learning Community	Small Learning Community
Estudio de Salud	62	50	100th	Small Learning Community	Small Learning Community

What Parents Received

We are providing information about schools within your Zone of Choice to ensure you have the best information available prior to your upcoming decision.



Bell Zone of Choice

We determine the quality of a school based on students' average scores on state exams

This measure has two parts you should consider, one which measures the school's ability of attracting high scoring students, and the second is the school's impact on test score growth.

Therefore, a school's observed quality is a combination of both their students' **incoming achievement** and the **achievement growth** they obtain while at the school. Some parents may prefer schools with high incoming achievement, and others may prefer schools with high achievement growth. The table below provides each school's district-wide ranking.

We hope you use this information when choosing the right school for your student.

School	Incoming Achievement*	Achievement Growth*	Campus Location	Type of School
Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts & Math (STEAM) High School	76	94	Legacy HS	Small School
Visual & Performing Arts (VAPA) High School	74	67	Legacy HS	Small School
Health Academy	58	58	Elizabeth LC	Small Learning Community
Multilingual Teacher Academy	63	50	Bell HS	Linked Learning Academy
STEAM	47	82	Maywood Academy	Small Learning Community
Information Technology Academy	49	53	Elizabeth LC	Small Learning Community
Arts Language & Performance Humanities Academy	63	50	Bell HS	Linked Learning Academy
9th Grade Academy	47	82	Maywood Academy	Small Learning Community
Bell Global Studies	63	50	Bell HS	Small Learning Community

Incoming Achievement

Incoming achievement is the average test scores of school's incoming students at the time they enter school.



Achievement Growth

We measure a school's ability improve test scores by measuring the growth of their students' test scores between entry into the school and eleventh grade.



Estamos proporcionando información sobre las escuelas dentro de su Zona de Opción, para asegurarnos de que tenga la mejor información disponible antes de su próxima decisión.



Zona de Opción Bell

Determinamos la calidad de una escuela en función de los puntajes promedio de los estudiantes en los exámenes estatales

Esta medida tiene dos partes que debe considerar, una que mide la capacidad de la escuela para atraer a estudiantes con altas calificaciones, y la segunda es el impacto de la escuela en el crecimiento de las calificaciones de las pruebas.

Por lo tanto, la calidad observada de una escuela es una combinación tanto del **rendimiento entrante** de sus estudiantes como del **crecimiento de logros** o **crecimiento del rendimiento** que obtienen mientras están en la escuela. Algunos padres pueden preferir escuelas con alto rendimiento entrante, y otros pueden preferir escuelas con alto crecimiento de logros. A continuación, proporcionamos la clasificación de cada escuela comparado a todas escuelas en el distrito.

Esperamos que utilice esta información al elegir la escuela adecuada para su estudiante.

Rendimiento Entrante

El rendimiento entrante de una escuela es el puntaje promedio de sus estudiantes cuando ingresan a la escuela.



Crecimiento de logros

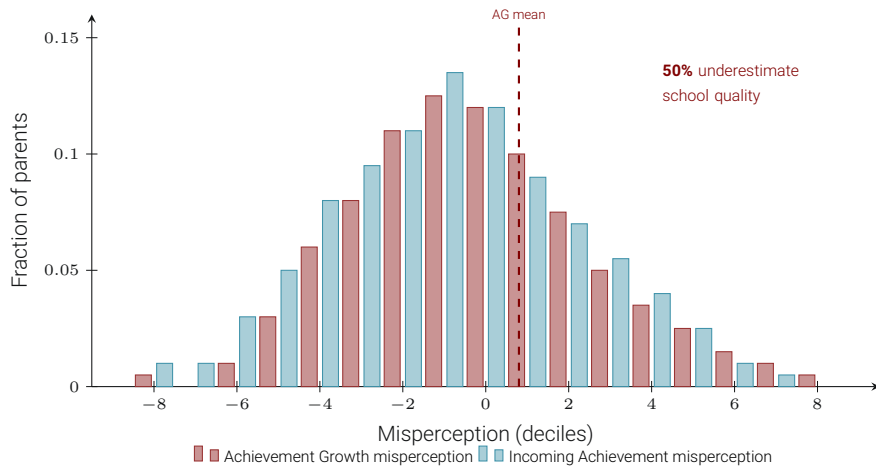
Medimos la capacidad de una escuela para mejorar los puntajes de los exámenes midiendo el crecimiento de los puntajes de los exámenes de sus estudiantes entre el ingreso a la escuela y el onceavo grado.



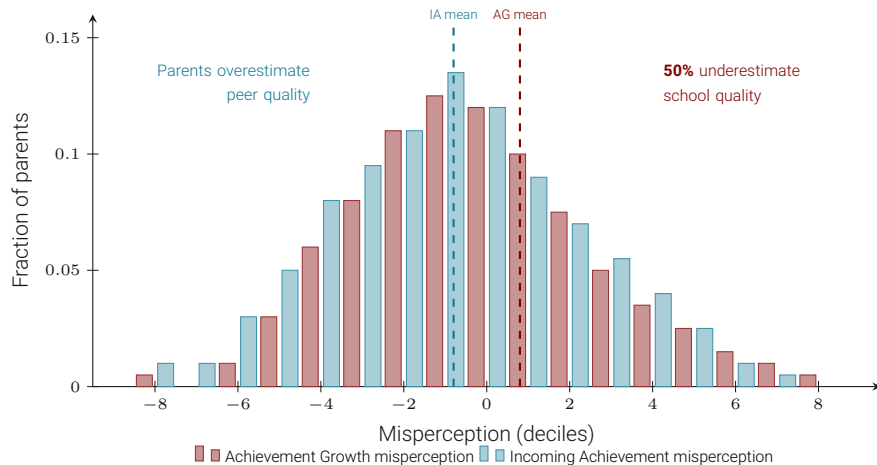
Escuela	Rendimiento Entrante*	Crecimiento de logros*	Ubicación del campus	Tipo de escuela
Preparatoria de Ciencia, Tecnología, Ingeniería, Artes y Matemáticas (STEAM)	76	94	Legacy HS	Escuela Pequeña
Preparatoria de Artes Visuales y Técnicas (VAPA)	74	67	Legacy HS	Escuela Pequeña
Academia de Salud	58	58	Elizabeth LC	Comunidad Educativa Pequeña (SLC)
Academia de Aprendizaje Enlazado/ Carrera de Profesores Multilingües	63	50	Bell HS	Academia de Aprendizaje Enlazado
Academia de Ciencia, Tecnología, Ingeniería, Artes y Matemáticas (STEAM)	47	82	Maywood Academy	Comunidad Educativa Pequeña (SLC)
Academia de Información Tecnológica	49	53	Elizabeth LC	Comunidad Educativa Pequeña (SLC)
Academia de Artes, Idiomas, Artes Escénicas y Humanidades	63	50	Bell HS	Academia de Aprendizaje Enlazado
Academia del 9º Grado	47	82	Maywood Academy	Comunidad Educativa Pequeña (SLC)
Estudios Globales	63	50	Bell HS	Comunidad Educativa Pequeña (SLC)

What We Found

Parents Underestimate School Quality

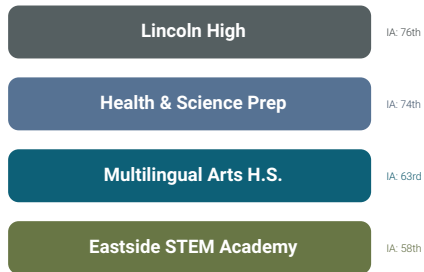


Parents Underestimate School Quality



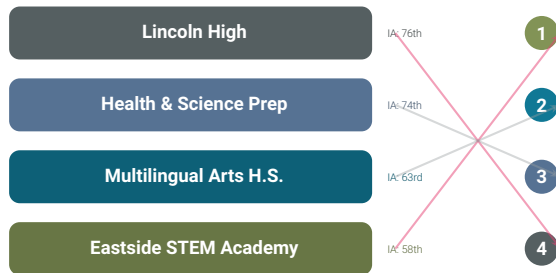
These Misperceptions Can Change Where Kids Go To School

With misperceptions

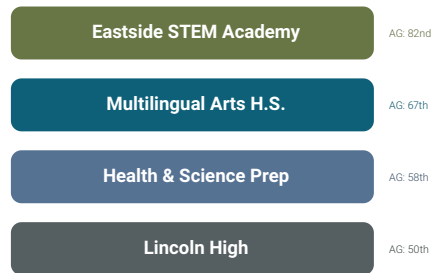


These Misperceptions Can Change Where Kids Go To School

With misperceptions

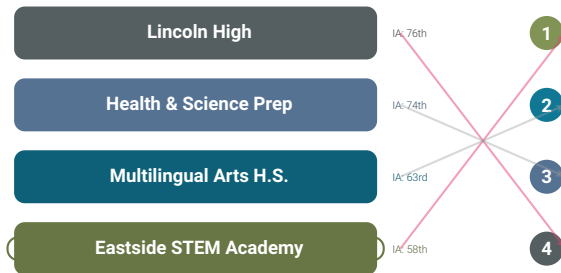


With accurate beliefs

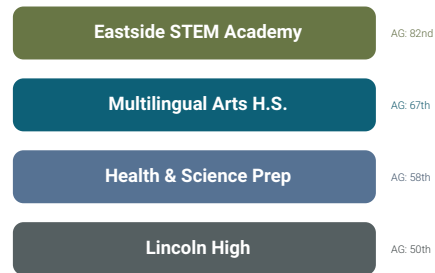


These Misperceptions Can Change Where Kids Go To School

With misperceptions



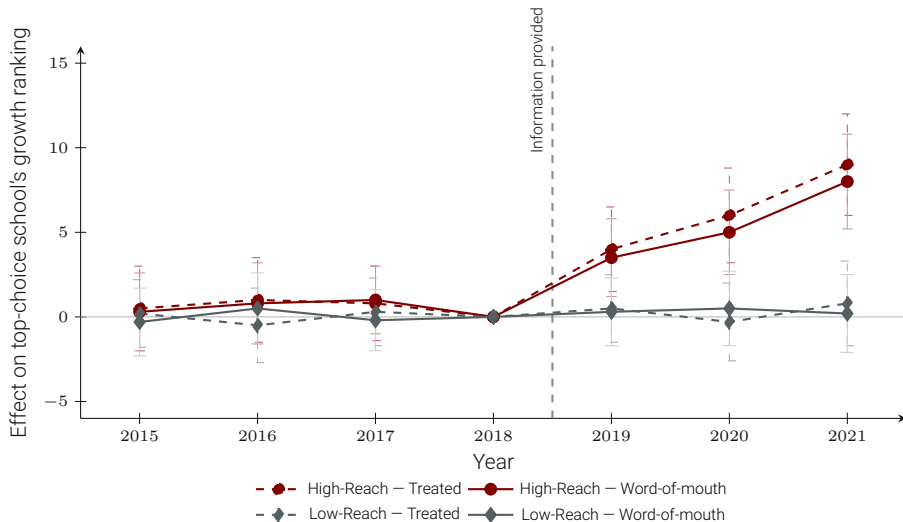
With accurate beliefs



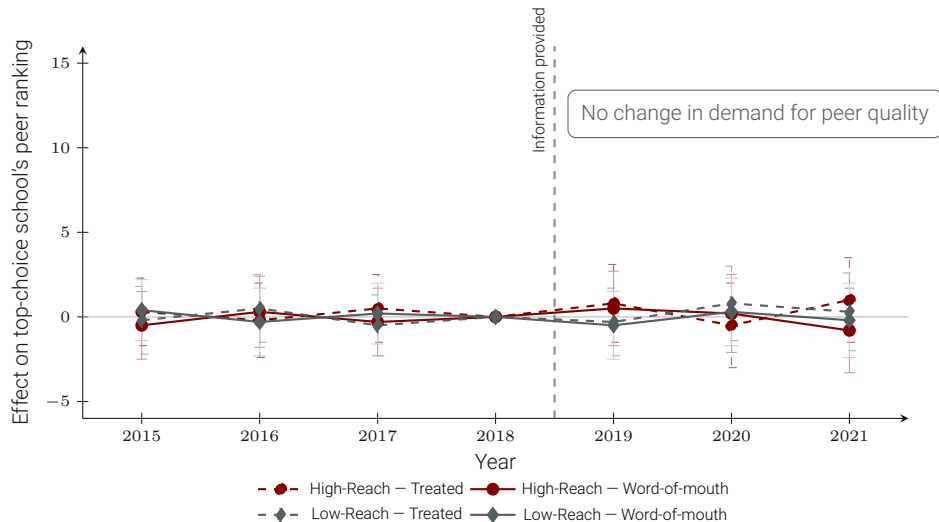
The most effective school is ranked **#4** by parents — it should be **#1**

Different ranking → different school → different trajectory

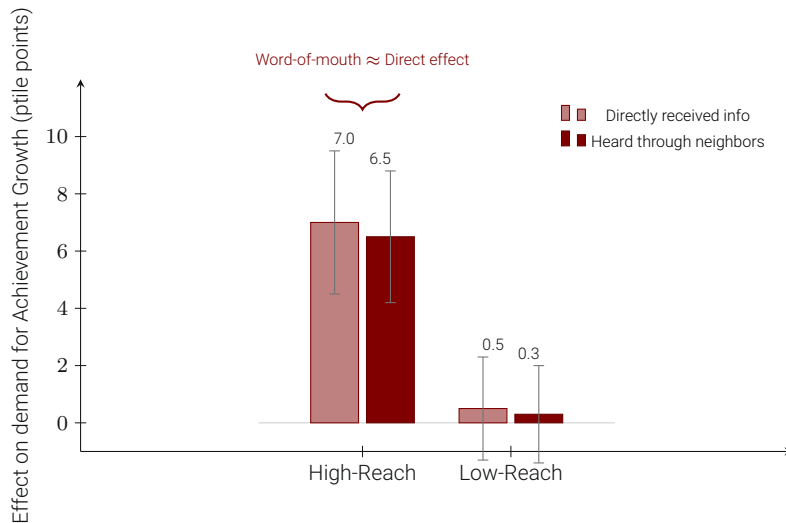
Information Shifts Demand Toward More Effective Schools



No Change in Demand for Peer Quality



Information Spreads Through Parent Communities



Why Social Interactions Matter

72%

of parents talked to other parents during their school search

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72%

of parents talked to other parents during their school search

83%

relied on conversations to interpret and judge the credibility of school data

Why Social Interactions Matter

72%

of parents talked to other parents during their school search

83%

relied on conversations to interpret and judge the credibility of school data

70%

were more likely to trust district information after discussing it with peers

Better Information → Better Schools → Higher Test Scores

**Students enrolled in
higher-growth schools**

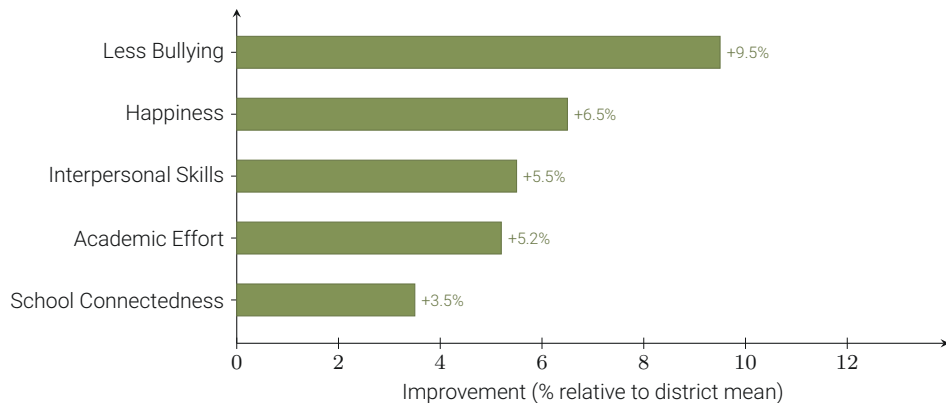
More effective at improving
student learning

**+1 to 2 months
of additional learning**

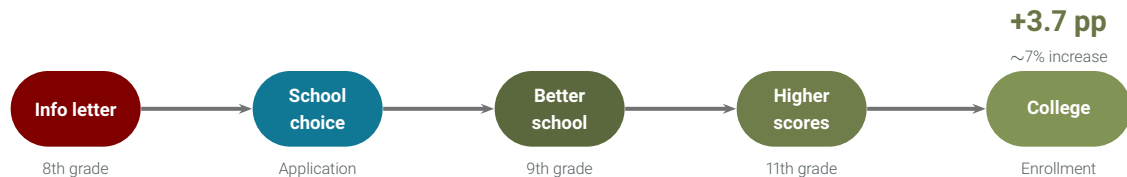
English Language Arts, 2021 cohort
High-reach schools

First evidence that **school quality information** — not peer quality information — improves achievement.

Schools That Grow Achievement Also Grow Well-Being



A Letter in 8th Grade Changed the College Trajectory



A one-page letter in 8th grade changed the trajectory

College enrollment rose by 3.7 percentage points — roughly a 7% increase over the pre-program rate. In a cohort of 10,000 students, that is ~370 more walking onto a college campus.

What This Means for Policy

Three Takeaways

1. Families misperceive school effectiveness

Parents confuse high-achieving peers with high-quality teaching

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1. Families misperceive school effectiveness

Parents confuse high-achieving peers with high-quality teaching

2. Parents value effective schools when they understand the measures

Information shifts demand toward growth, not just levels

Three Takeaways

1. Families misperceive school effectiveness

Parents confuse high-achieving peers with high-quality teaching

2. Parents value effective schools when they understand the measures

Information shifts demand toward growth, not just levels

3. Information is a community resource, not just an individual one

Reaching 40% of parents was not enough. Reaching 70% was.
Social interactions amplify everything — there is a tipping point.

Four Actions for Leaders

1. Unbundle the Measures

Separate growth from levels on report cards.

2. Lead with Growth

Make growth the headline metric —
not a buried footnote.

3. Invest in Explanation

Short videos, plain language, home languages.
A 2-minute video moved the needle.

4. Design for Communities

Saturate schools and zones — don't sprinkle
thinly across a district. Reach the tipping point.

*That mother in East LA?
After a one-page letter, she picked the school
that **moves** students further.*

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She was never indifferent to quality —
she just couldn't **see** it.

*That mother in East LA?
After a one-page letter, she picked the school
that **moves** students further.*

She was never indifferent to quality —
she just couldn't **see** it.

We know how to measure school quality.
We now know parents will use it.

The bottleneck isn't data — it's **delivery**.

Thank you!

Christopher.Campos@chicagobooth.edu

Reference

Campos, Christopher (2025). "Social Interactions, Information, and Preferences for Schools: Experimental Evidence from Los Angeles." *Working Paper*.

Time	Session
8:00 am – 9:00 am	Breakfast
9:00 am – 9:15 am	Welcome
9:15 am – 10:30 am	Moving Beyond Test Scores: The Role of Surveys and More
10:30 am – 11:00 am	Break
11:00 am – 12:00 pm	Communicating Multiple Measures of School Quality
12:00 pm – 1:15 pm	Lunch
1:15 pm – 2:15 pm	Involving Communities and Families in School Quality Measurement
2:15 pm – 2:45 pm	Closing Plenary: Next Steps and Collaboration Opportunities

Closing Plenary: Next Steps and Collaboration Opportunities

Eryn Heying

Executive Director, MIT Blueprint Labs



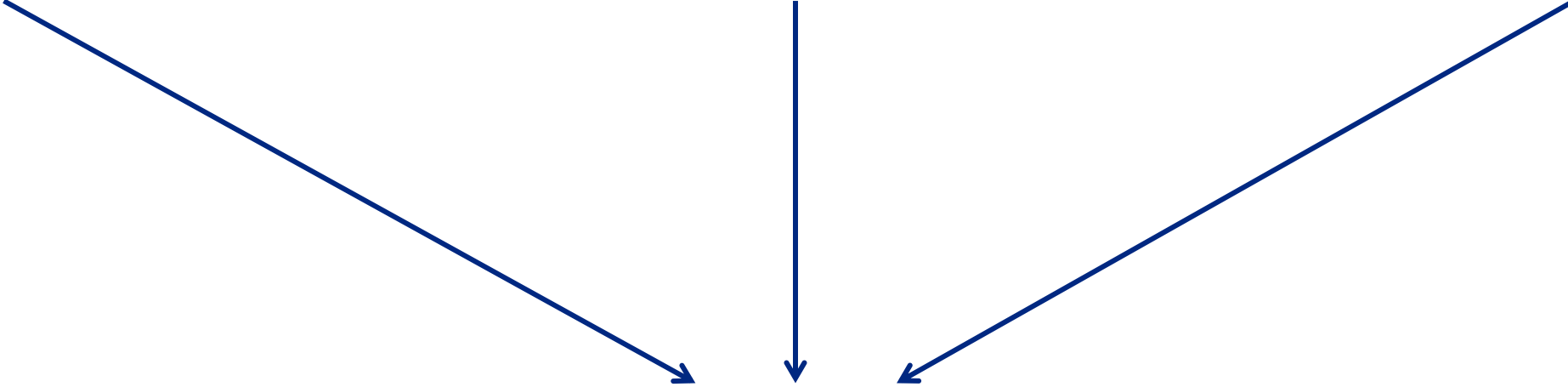
Blueprint Labs



**Foster a strong
network of
professionals**

**Strengthen relationships
between researchers &
practitioners**

**Increase knowledge
of research and
best practices**



```
graph TD; A[Foster a strong network of professionals] --> D[Create more equitable and fair school quality measures]; B[Strengthen relationships between researchers & practitioners] --> D; C[Increase knowledge of research and best practices] --> D;
```

**Create more equitable and fair
school quality measures**

1. What is one idea or insight from the past two days that challenged or shifted your thinking?
2. What is one concrete step you could take in the next 6 months to act on these ideas?
3. What challenges do you foresee in doing that?



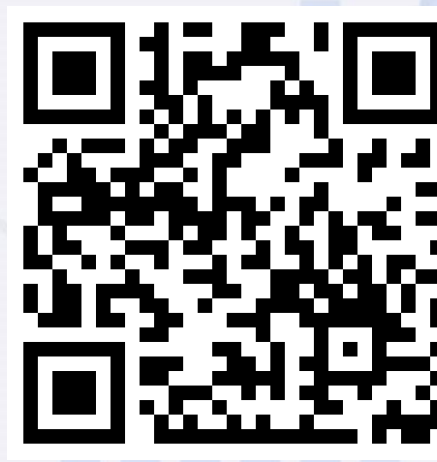
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Thank you for attending



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survey



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