A New Baseline:

Progress in Newark's District and Charter Schools from 2006 to 2018

June 2019
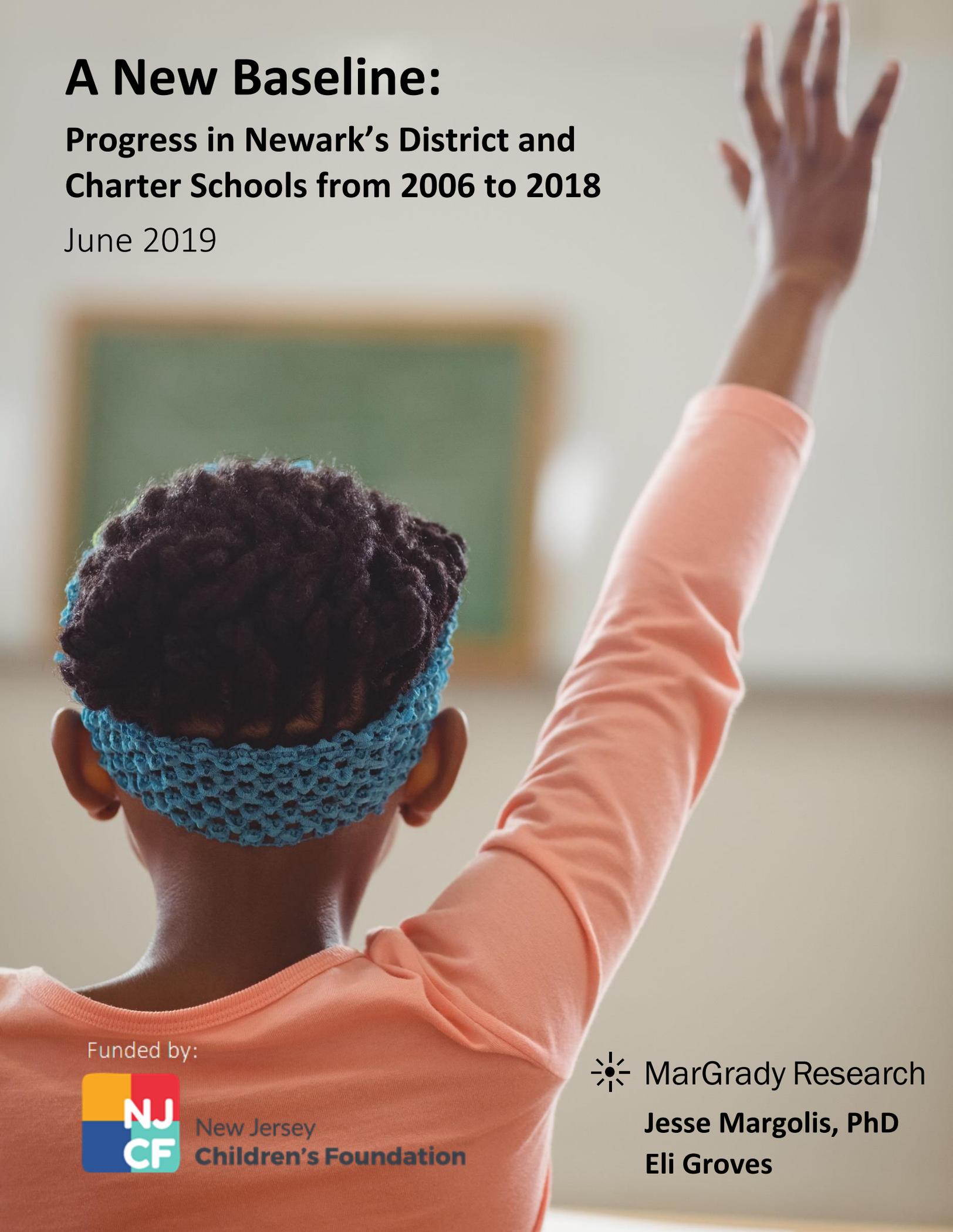
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Acknowledgements

About MarGrady Research

MarGrady Research helps education leaders make better-informed decisions to improve the lives of students. It does this through rigorous analysis of data, clear and insightful presentation of results, and the development of lasting partnerships with the school districts, foundations, and other education organizations it works with. See more at www.margrady.com.

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About the New Jersey Children's Foundation

The report was funded by a new non-profit organization called the New Jersey Children's Foundation (NJCF), which is aimed at promoting a fact-based discussion about public education in Newark. NJCF's mission is to invest in people, programs, and partnerships that will improve public education systems by putting the interests of children first. Its vision is that every child will break down the walls of inequity through the creation of high-quality public education systems. NJCF's theory of change is that when communities are armed with accurate information about public education and given the tools to act, cities will demand great schools for every student.

> See an interactive dashboard with the data from this report at
>
> https://njchildren.org/newbaseline/

Preface from the New Jersey Children's Foundation

Friends:

Newark faces yet another crossroads moment in public education.

After years of tumultuous reforms, Newark children and their educators accomplished something truly historic: they created a citywide system of schools where kids are learning more today than they were when Mayor Cory Booker took office in 2006--and this progress has continued in the four years since Mayor Ras Baraka was first elected.

Moreover, the city school district has bold new leadership with deep local roots and a popularly-elected school board on the path to full control. Gone are the days of us-versus-them-politics, with unity now being the driving theme on the school board and amongst most education stakeholders.

But the work isn't done. The city's schools still face serious challenges, with roughly 15,000 students in 25 district and charter schools where both student growth and student proficiency are well below-average, comprehensive high schools struggling to graduate college-ready students, and chronic absenteeism and deep poverty conspiring to depress student learning.

The data in this report is intended to offer a new baseline for evaluating the progress the city owes its children during this new phase of local control. It's also meant to update, expand, and catalog previously-published analyses so that the city has a full accounting of where it stands in the last year before the schools switched from state to local control. We also added new insights and layers of analysis to previous work: looking at the contributions of both charter and district schools across almost every metric and adding school-level analysis to dive below the city- and sector-wide averages and spot issues.

The key findings contained in this report:

1. Long the victims of inequitable access to good public schools, **African-American students in Newark are now four times more likely to attend a school beating the state average** than they were in 2006;
2. Newark's citywide public school system climbed from the **bottom to the top ranks** of other high-poverty school districts in New Jersey, ending in the top ten;
3. Test scores, graduation rates, and student growth rates are all up at both district and charter schools, even with minor year-over-year fluctuations;
4. There are still 15,000 students attending 25 schools with low growth and proficiency rates--well below the average for demographically similar cities and towns.

The path ahead likely looks different from the path that got us here. The next phase of Newark's school improvement will require a bold vision, new strategies, and a renewed commitment to partnership and common purpose. Our goal with this report to provide Newark's leaders with a comprehensive measuring stick to assess the city's progress as they develop and implement a vision for this next phase of change, and to provide other stakeholders with a benchmark for assessing progress over time. We hope it is useful to the community and welcome your feedback at info@njchildren.org.

Warmly,

Kyle Rosenkrans
Executive Director
New Jersey Children's Foundation

Executive Summary

Over the past two decades, since its school district was taken over by the state of New Jersey, the city of Newark has undertaken numerous large-scale reforms in public education. Charter schools have expanded rapidly and now enroll one-third of the city's students. Supported by $200 million in private philanthropy, the city's school district closed or replaced underperforming schools, embraced the Common Core standards, and negotiated a new teachers contract that tied pay to performance. Working together, the city's school district and charter sector developed a universal enrollment system, where families can submit a single application for almost any school in the city.

While clearly important to the residents of Newark, these reforms have also generated significant national interest for several reasons. First, by announcing his $100 million matching grant on the Oprah Winfrey show in 2010, Mark Zuckerberg – along with Governor Chris Christie and Mayor Cory Booker – turned a local story into national news. Second, the reforms in Newark – particularly those implemented by state-appointed Superintendent Cami Anderson beginning in 2011 – generated considerable upheaval in the city, as documented by Dale Russakoff in a widely read 2014 *New Yorker* article. Finally, because Senator Cory Booker is running for president, many are interested in his education record as mayor of Newark from 2006 to 2013.

Despite this interest, there have been few studies tracking student performance in Newark. The most authoritative study, by the Harvard Center for Education Policy Research, found statistically significant gains in Newark students' English test score value-added in grades 4-8 between 2009-10 and 2015-16, but no significant change in math. However, the study only covered the most recent era of reforms, and since it was completed, two additional years of testing data have been released.

The most recent two years of data mark the final two years in which Newark's school district was under state control. On February 1, 2018, based on improved results and a collaborative agreement between Newark's mayor, Ras Baraka, and the state-appointed superintendent, Chris Cerf, New Jersey returned control of Newark's district schools to the city. On May 23, 2018, the newly empowered Newark Board of Education chose veteran Newark educator Roger León to lead the district. Therefore, the 2017-18 school year (hereafter referred to as 2018) serves as a reasonable end-point to the period of state-control and a useful baseline against which to measure Newark's progress under local control.

To mark this transition, we have updated and expanded our earlier *Moving Up* study to track the performance of Newark's schools from 2006 to 2018. Overall, we find that Newark's citywide test score performance, test score growth, and graduation rate have all increased during the period under study, with gains coming from both the city's charter sector and traditional public schools. Our key findings are shown below:

- Between 2006 and 2018, when compared to other low-income cities and towns in New Jersey, Newark's citywide average test score rank has improved from the 39th to the 78th percentile in both ELA and math (see Figure ES1).
- The share of Black students in Newark attending a school that beat the state proficiency average in their grade has more than quadrupled, from 7% in 2006 to 31% in 2018.
- New Jersey sets a high bar, as low-income students in New Jersey (including those in Newark) earned a higher proficiency rate in Math and ELA than their counterparts in every other PARCC state in 2018.

- Newark's charters have shown particularly strong test score gains, and in 2018, they beat the state proficiency rate for the first time in both math and ELA.
- In high school, the citywide four-year graduation rate has risen from 63% in 2011 to 77% in 2018 and closed the gap with the state by seven percentage points.
- K-12 enrollment has stabilized in district schools while continuing to grow in charters, and citywide enrollment in 2018 topped 50,000 for the first time in at least two decades.
- However, there remains much work to be done:
  - When compared to all cities and towns in New Jersey – not just those with similar populations – Newark's citywide average test score rank is in the 14th percentile (though up from the 4th percentile in 2006).
  - Over 15,000 children in Newark – roughly 30% the city's students – attend low growth, low proficiency schools.

In this study, we do not argue that any single reform or set of reforms *caused* the gains documented here. We do not claim that Cory Booker's election as mayor in 2006, Mark Zuckerberg's gift in 2010, or Ras Baraka's election as mayor in 2014 (and the policy changes that accompanied each) led to the improvement we see in Newark's students' results, though each may have contributed. We simply argue that the gains happened, they are real, and they are meaningful. With Newark's school district having returned to local control in 2018, we hope the results documented here will be useful both as a summary of prior gains and a new baseline against which to gauge further progress.

Figure ES1 – When compared to low-income cities and towns in New Jersey, Newark's citywide test score rank has improved from 2006 to 2018

Newark Citywide Average Scaled Score Rank Relative to DFG A in ELA (2006-2018)

2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
N WLDWD (220)	N WLDWD (217)	N WLDWD (214)	N WLDWD (211)	N WLDWD (209)	N WLDWD (210)	DOVER (210)	DOVER (210)	DOVER (209)	DOVER (750)	DOVER (755)	DOVER (756)	DOVER (757)
QUINTON (219)	QUINTON (216)	QUINTON (210)	QUINTON (208)	QUINTON (208)	QUINTON (204)	N WLDWD (208)	N WLDWD (204)	N WLDWD (205)	QUINTON (742)	LAWRNCE (740)	LAWRNCE (748)	UNION (753)
DOWNE (213)	S SIDE HTS (212)	DOWNE (209)	DOVER (208)	DOVER (207)	FAIRVIEW (205)	LAWRNCE (202)	QUINTON (204)	BUENA (201)	LAWRNCE (740)	QUINTON (748)	QUINTON (747)	QUINTON (752)
FAIRVIEW (213)	DOWNE (212)	DOVER (208)	BUENA (204)	UNION (202)	QUINTON (204)	QUINTON (202)	UNION (201)	LAWRNCE (200)	N WLDWD (738)	UNION (743)	W NY (745)	LAWRNCE (749)
BUENA (211)	COMRCIAL (212)	S SIDE HTS (207)	UNION (204)	BUENA (201)	UNION (203)	UNION (201)	BUENA (201)	VINELAND (200)	W NY (738)	N WLDWD (740)	N WLDWD (743)	LAWRNCE (746)
S SIDE HTS (211)	FAIRVIEW (211)	FAIRVIEW (206)	FAIRVIEW (202)	FAIRVIEW (201)	VINELAND (199)	BUENA (201)	LAWRNCE (201)	W NY (199)	UNION (738)	W NY (743)	ELIZABTH (742)	W NY (744)
UNION (209)	BUENA (210)	LAWRNCE (205)	LAWRNCE (201)	DOWNE (199)	E NEWARK (199)	VINELAND (199)	WOODBINE (198)	QUINTON (198)	FAIRVIEW (735)	E ORANGE (737)	E NEWARK (741)	E ORANGE (743)
W NY (209)	W NY (208)	UNION (205)	VINELAND (201)	VINELAND (199)	LAWRNCE (198)	WOODBINE (198)	ELIZABTH (199)	ELIZABTH (198)	ELIZABTH (734)	FAIRVIEW (738)	E ORANGE (740)	PERTH AM (743)
E NEWARK (208)	DOVER (208)	COMRCIAL (204)	W NY (202)	ELIZABTH (197)	ELIZABTH (197)	E ORANGE (197)	FAIRVIEW (197)	WOODBINE (198)	VINELAND (733)	**NEWARK (736)**	FAIRVIEW (738)	E NEWARK (741)
LAWRNCE (208)	W NY (208)	W NY (204)	KEANSBURG (196)	KEANSBURG (195)	DOWNE (196)	DOWNE (195)	DOWNE (195)	E NEWARK (194)	WOODBINE (731)	E NEWARK (736)	PERTH AM (736)	N WLDWD (740)
DOVER (207)	LAWRNCE (207)	VINELAND (202)	E ORANGE (194)	ORANGE (195)	S SIDE HTS (196)	KEANSBURG (193)	ORANGE (194)	**NEWARK (193)**	**NEWARK (730)**	VINELAND (735)	VINELAND (737)	ORANGE (737)
COMRCIAL (207)	VINELAND (207)	PERTH AM (199)	ELIZABTH (199)	E NEWARK (198)	WOODBINE (194)	E NEWARK (194)	E ORANGE (194)	PERTH AM (193)	PERTH AM (730)	FAIRVIEW (734)	FAIRVIEW (736)	FAIRVIEW (736)
EGG HBR (207)	WOODBINE (207)	VINELAND (202)	ELIZABTH (199)	E ORANGE (194)	E ORANGE (194)	PERTH AM (193)	MILLVILLE (193)	S SIDE HTS (193)	PATERSON (727)	WOODBINE (734)	ORANGE (734)	PASSAIC (734)
KEANSBURG (206)	KEANSBURG (206)	KEANSBURG (201)	EGG HBR (197)	KEANSBURG (195)	KEANSBURG (193)	ORANGE (194)	ATLANTIC (192)	ATLANTIC (192)	ATLANTIC (727)	FAIRVIEW (734)	PERTH AM (736)	PATERSON (734)
VINELAND (205)	EGG HBR (204)	E NEWARK (200)	KEANSBURG (196)	WOODBINE (194)	ORANGE (194)	**NEWARK (193)**	**NEWARK (193)**	S SIDE HTS (192)	PATERSON (727)	ORANGE (734)	PERTH AM (736)	BRUNSWCK (733)
PERTH AM (203)	E NEWARK (204)	E NEWARK (200)	KEANSBURG (196)	E ORANGE (194)	WOODBINE (194)	ATLANTIC (192)	ATLANTIC (192)	E NEWARK (192)	PATERSON (727)	WOODBINE (731)	ORANGE (734)	PLESNTVLE (733)
FAIRFIELD (203)	ELIZABTH (203)	ELIZABTH (200)	ORANGE (196)	KEANSBURG (195)	WOODBINE (194)	MILLVILLE (193)	ATLANTIC (192)	E NEWARK (192)	MILLVILLE (726)	FAIRVIEW (734)	PERTH AM (736)	ORANGE (737)
MILLVILLE (202)	PNNS GRV (202)	PERTH AM (199)	MILLVILLE (196)	ATLANTIC (194)	ORANGE (194)	ATLANTIC (192)	COMRCIAL (191)	ORANGE (191)	COMRCIAL (726)	ORANGE (729)	PASSAIC (731)	ATLANTIC (731)
PNNS GRV (202)	PERTH AM (202)	MILLVILLE (199)	PERTH AM (196)	S SIDE HTS (193)	PERTH AM (192)	ATLANTIC (192)	ORANGE (192)	PATERSON (191)	ORANGE (725)	DOWNE (729)	PATERSON (731)	PLESNTVLE (733)
ELIZABTH (201)	ORANGE (202)	ORANGE (197)	WLDWD (195)	PERTH AM (193)	MILLVILLE (192)	DOWNE (192)	WOODBINE (192)	COMRCIAL (191)	PATERSON (725)	PLESNTVLE (729)	PLESNTVLE (731)	ATLANTIC (731)
WOODBINE (201)	PAULS (197)	PAULS (197)	WLDWD (195)	EGG HBR (192)	PATERSON (193)	WOODBINE (192)	DOWNE (192)	ORANGE (192)	DOWNE (724)	DOWNE (729)	PLESNTVLE (731)	IRVNGTN (730)
PAULS (201)	WLDWD (200)	**NEWARK (197)**	PNNS GRV (195)	WLDWD (192)	PAULS (191)	PNNS GRV (191)	KEANSBURG (191)	DOWNE (191)	BRUNSWCK (724)	COMRCIAL (726)	BRUNSWCK (728)	MILLVILLE (729)
NEWARK (201)	E ORANGE (201)	E ORANGE (197)	PNNS GRV (195)	WLDWD (191)	WLDWD (191)	EGG HBR (190)	PASSAIC (191)	KEANSBURG (191)	IRVNGTN (723)	IRVNGTN (726)	PNNS GRV (728)	KEANSBURG (727)
ORANGE (200)	PAULS (201)	E ORANGE (197)	E NEWARK (194)	MILLVILLE (191)	WLDWD (191)	PASSAIC (191)	PATERSON (191)	MILLVILLE (191)	EGG HBR (723)	IRVNGTN (726)	IRVNGTN (726)	PNNS GRV (727)
PLESNTVLE (199)	WLDWD (200)	ATLANTIC (196)	IRVNGTN (193)	PLESNTVLE (190)	PAULS (190)	PATERSON (191)	S SIDE HTS (190)	PASSAIC (190)	PLESNTVLE (723)	BRUNSWCK (725)	COMRCIAL (726)	TRENTON (725)
PASSAIC (199)	PLESNTVLE (200)	ATLANTIC (196)	IRVNGTN (193)	PASSAIC (189)	PNNS GRV (189)	PASSAIC (190)	PAULS (189)	PASSAIC (190)	PASSAIC (723)	BRUNSWCK (725)	S SIDE HTS (725)	TRENTON (725)
E ORANGE (199)	FAIRFIELD (199)	BRUNSWCK (195)	PAULS (192)	PNNS GRV (189)	PASSAIC (189)	PAULS (189)	PNNS GRV (190)	IRVNGTN (189)	KEANSBURG (722)	KEANSBURG (724)	TRENTON (724)	CAMDEN (724)
BRUNSWCK (199)	PATERSON (198)	BRUNSWCK (195)	PASSAIC (191)	IRVNGTN (188)	PASSAIC (189)	PLESNTVLE (189)	PLESNTVLE (188)	EGG HBR (189)	PAULS (721)	KEANSBURG (724)	CAMDEN (722)	CAMDEN (724)
PATERSON (198)	IRVNGTN (198)	PASSAIC (194)	BRIDGTON (191)	BRIDGTON (188)	IRVNGTN (187)	COMRCIAL (189)	COMRCIAL (189)	FAIRFIELD (189)	TRENTON (719)	TRENTON (722)	PAULS (721)	PAULS (722)
ATLANTIC (197)	BRUNSWCK (198)	PATERSON (193)	PATERSON (190)	PATERSON (188)	BRIDGTON (186)	FAIRFIELD (188)	FAIRFIELD (188)	BRUNSWCK (186)	PNNS GRV (719)	BRIDGTON (719)	WLDWD (721)	BRIDGTON (720)
BRIDGTON (197)	PASSAIC (198)	BRIDGTON (193)	PATERSON (190)	FAIRFIELD (187)	FAIRFIELD (185)	BRUNSWCK (187)	BRUNSWCK (187)	WLDWD (186)	WLDWD (718)	WLDWD (718)	WLDWD (721)	COMRCIAL (720)
IRVNGTN (197)	ATLANTIC (197)	FAIRFIELD (192)	FAIRFIELD (188)	BRUNSWCK (186)	BRUNSWCK (186)	BRIDGTON (185)	BRIDGTON (184)	SALEM (184)	SALEM (718)	EGG HBR (719)	ASBRY PRK (720)	ASBRY PRK (718)
WLDWD (196)	BRIDGTON (197)	FAIRFIELD (192)	FAIRFIELD (188)	TRENTON (183)	TRENTON (185)	WLDWD (189)	SALEM (184)	BRIDGTON (184)	BRIDGTON (717)	CAMDEN (719)	BRIDGTON (720)	TRENTON (717)
TRENTON (195)	SALEM (195)	TRENTON (189)	TRENTON (185)	TRENTON (183)	TRENTON (185)	SALEM (184)	TRENTON (183)	TRENTON (184)	FAIRFIELD (716)	FAIRFIELD (723)	FAIRFIELD (719)	FAIRFIELD (717)
ASBRY PRK (194)	ASBRY PRK (188)	SALEM (188)	SALEM (183)	SALEM (182)	SALEM (184)	CAMDEN (181)	CAMDEN (183)	CAMDEN (183)	CAMDEN (713)	CAMDEN (719)	SALEM (717)	WLDWD (717)
SALEM (193)	TRENTON (193)	CAMDEN (188)	SALEM (183)	ASBRY PRK (180)	ASBRY PRK (182)	FAIRFIELD (188)	ASBRY PRK (180)	ASBRY PRK (180)	FAIRFIELD (716)	FAIRFIELD (718)	EGG HBR (716)	SALEM (717)
CAMDEN (191)	CAMDEN (189)	ASBRY PRK (187)	CAMDEN (181)	CAMDEN (178)	CAMDEN (178)	CAMDEN (180)	ASBRY PRK (180)	ASBRY PRK (180)	ASBRY PRK (713)	ASBRY PRK (715)	EGG HBR (716)	EGG HBR (716)

Source: analysis of data from the NJDOE website. Note: this figure ranks all 37 cities and towns in District Factor Group A (DFG A) by their average test score on grade 3-8 ELA tests. Each cell in the chart shows the abbreviated city or town name, followed by the average test score in parentheses. Charter schools are included in the city or town results. Results for math are similar and appear in Figure 6.

Introduction

On February 1, 2018, the city of Newark regained local control of its public schools for the first time in more than two decades.[1] After having been taken over by New Jersey in 1995 following a state report that found the district "flagrantly delinquent" in educating children, Newark's district schools (also known as the Newark Public Schools) were led by state-appointed superintendents for nearly 23 years.[2] On May 23, 2018, the newly empowered Newark Board of Education chose veteran Newark educator Roger León to lead the district.

This time of transition is an important moment to review what progress has been made in Newark's schools and take stock of challenges that remain. The most authoritative study on Newark's recent reforms – from Harvard's Center for Education Policy Research – found statistically significant gains in ELA test score value-added between 2009-10 and 2015-16, but no significant change in math.[3] However, their analysis was limited to test score growth in grades 4 through 8 and since their report was finalized, two additional years of test score data have been released. As former Newark Mayor Cory Booker runs for president, there is also significant national interest in understanding what progress, if any, has been made in Newark's schools.

In this report, we contribute to that effort by updating our earlier *Moving Up* study on student performance in Newark's schools.[4] As in our prior report, we review progress along several dimensions: test score performance and test score growth in elementary and middle school, on-time graduation in high school, and student enrollment at all levels. Since our earlier report, one or two additional years of data have been released (depending upon the measure) and we have updated all analyses to run through the 2017-18 school year. As the 2017-18 school year (hereafter referred to as 2018) was the last in which the Newark school district operated largely under state control, these results can serve as both a reasonable end point to the period of state takeover and a baseline against which to measure future progress.[5]

In addition to including the most recent data, this report builds on our prior study in several ways. First, we extend our analysis further back in time. While our previous analysis of test score performance began in 2010, we have added four years of data so that all test score performance analyses now begin in 2006, the first year in which all students in grades 3-8 in New Jersey were tested. Second, we provide a closer examination of the growing charter sector, which now enrolls one third of Newark's students. Third, we compare Newark's test score performance to large districts in other PARCC states. Finally, we explore school-level growth and performance, highlighting significant variation underlying the district-level results.

Overall, we find that Newark's citywide test score performance, test score growth, and graduation rate have all increased during the period under study, with gains coming from both the city's charter sector and traditional

[1] https://www.chalkbeat.org/posts/newark/2018/02/01/all-eyes-are-on-newark-as-the-city-regains-control-of-its-schools-a-look-at-whats-to-come/
[2] https://www.nytimes.com/1994/07/23/nyregion/new-jersey-prepares-a-takeover-of-newark-s-desperate-schools.html

[3] https://cepr.harvard.edu/evaluating-newark-school-reform
[4] http://margrady.com/movingup/
[5] In 2017-18, students took the PARCC test in April 2018, one month prior to the appointment of the new Superintendent.

public schools. Between 2006 and 2018, Newark's citywide test score performance improved relative to other districts in the state, particularly those with similar demographics. Compared to the 37 cities or towns with the highest-need populations in New Jersey, Newark's citywide average test score rank improved from the 39th to the 78th percentile in ELA and math. Since 2012, Newark's citywide test score growth has improved and is now roughly on par with the state. In high school, the citywide four-year graduation rate has risen from 63% in 2011 to 77% in 2018 and closed the gap with the state by seven percentage points.

Since we released our *Moving Up* report in 2017, Newark's citywide performance has held steady in some areas and continued to show gains in others. Notably, in 2018, Newark's charters beat the state proficiency average in both ELA and math for the first time. Moreover, the percentage of Black students attending a school that beat the state proficiency average in their grade increased from 27% in 2017 to 31% in 2018, more than quadruple the percentage (7%) in 2006. Finally, citywide enrollment increased in Newark: the number of students in Newark's district schools stabilized while enrollment continued to grow in charters. In 2018, for the first time in at least two decades, more than 50,000 students in grades K-12 were enrolled in public schools in Newark.

Despite these gains, there remains much work to be done. Although Newark's citywide test growth scores are well above their 2012 level, they have declined over the last year and are now slightly below the statewide average. Furthermore, over 15,000 students – roughly 30% of Newark's schoolchildren – attend low growth, low

proficiency schools. These children may live in a city where test scores and graduation rates are on the rise, where the local school board has regained control of its schools, and where the charter sector, on average, outperforms the state. But until their schools improve, Newark's educational renaissance will be incomplete.

Background

Newark is New Jersey's largest city and there have been numerous efforts to improve its schools in recent decades. Figure 1 lists several key milestones, policy reforms, and leaders who have influenced Newark's schools since 1995.

The state's takeover of the Newark school district can be roughly divided into four periods. The first period, from 1995 to 2006, corresponded to the tenure of first state-appointed superintendent, Beverly Hall, and most of the tenure of the second state-appointed superintendent, Marion Bolden. During this period, the state primarily focused on improving management of the district's finances. As Bolden described her tenure in an interview years later, "the state's intervention in Newark was to oversee the budget."[6]

The second period, from 2006 to 2011, was one of substantial charter school expansion. The Newark Charter School Fund (NCSF) was founded in 2008 with significant financial backing from local and national philanthropies. NCFS's initial goals were "to facilitate growth and improve the quality of the Newark charter school sector."[7] With the support of newly elected Mayor Cory Booker, charter school growth accelerated, and by 2009, charter schools represented 10% of the city's public school enrollment.

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[6] https://www.wnyc.org/story/newark-prepares-take-control-over-its-schools-former-superintendent-looks-back/

[7] https://ncsfund.org/about (retrieved on 2/4/19)

Figure 1 – There have been many important milestones in Newark's school reform efforts since 1995

Period 1: Financial Management

1995	• Newark's district schools are taken over by the state of New Jersey • Beverly Hall is appointed as the Superintendent of Newark's district schools • New Jersey enacts the Charter School Program Act of 1995, allowing for the authorization of charter schools • Christine Todd Whitman begins her second of seven years as Governor of NJ • Sharpe James begins his ninth of twenty years as Mayor of Newark
1997	• Newark's first two charters open (North Star & Robert Treat)
1999	• Marion Bolden is appointed Superintendent of Newark's district schools

Period 2: Charter School Growth

2006	• Cory Booker takes office as Mayor of Newark
2008	• Clifford Janey appointed Superintendent of Newark's district schools • Newark Charter School Fund founded
2009	• Charter enrollment share surpasses 10%
2010	• Chris Christie takes office as Governor of New Jersey • Mark Zuckerberg announces $100 million grant for public education in Newark

Period 3: Educational Reforms in the Newark District Schools

2011	• Cami Anderson appointed Superintendent of Newark's district schools
2012	• New teachers contract and teacher evaluation system established in Newark's district schools
2013	• Newark's district schools implement Common Core-aligned curricula in English and math • Cami Anderson announces significant school portfolio reforms, including school moves or reorganizations, school closures, and targeted school improvement efforts • Charter enrollment share surpasses 20% • The majority of Newark charters agree to participate in a universal enrollment system with Newark's district schools

Period 4: Consolidation of Reforms and Return to Local Control

2014	• Ras Baraka takes office as Mayor of Newark
2015	• Christopher Cerf appointed Superintendent of Newark's district schools • Charter enrollment share surpasses 30% • PARCC exam replaces NJASK as state assessment for New Jersey students
2017	• State Board of Education votes to return the Newark district to local control
2018	• Newark Board of Education regains local control • Roger León selected as Superintendent by the Newark Board of Education • Phil Murphy takes office as Governor of New Jersey

Source: research by the authors.

The third period, from 2011 to 2014, was one of significant educational reform in Newark's district schools. With the appointment of Cami Anderson as superintendent in 2011 by newly-elected Governor Chris Christie, substantial reforms were undertaken in talent, with a new teacher contract, in the portfolio of schools, with school closures and renewals, and in curriculum, with an early and intensive focus on the Common Core State Standards. The Newark district also collaborated with the growing charter sector to create a universal enrollment system, whereby families could submit a single application to most Newark district and charter schools.[8] As documented by Dale Russakoff in 2014, these reforms were controversial and led to significant local backlash.[9]

Finally, the fourth period, from 2014 to 2018, was one of consolidation and transition. Newark elected a new mayor, Ras Baraka, and the state appointed a new district superintendent, Chris Cerf, who had previously served as the state's Commissioner of Education. As the *New York Times* reported, "the two men formed an unexpectedly productive relationship" while working to return the Newark district schools to local control.[10] Many of Anderson's controversial reforms remained, but they were adjusted and implemented with a lighter touch. A new teachers contract was signed in 2017 that closely resembled the transformative contract from 2012 – which tied salary increases to performance for the first time – but garnered little opposition or fanfare.[11] The Newark district continued to operate the universal enrollment system that was implemented as part of Anderson's controversial One Newark program. However, it was

rebranded as Newark Enrolls and the assignment algorithm was adjusted to ensure all schools – whether district or charter – served a more equitable proportion of free-lunch and special education students.[12] In one significant break from Anderson's reforms, however, the Newark district slowed the pace of school closures. After eight Newark district schools and one charter were closed prior to the start of the 2014-15 school year – Anderson's final year as superintendent – only one Newark district school and three charters were closed over the next three school years.

In this report, we focus primarily on the performance of Newark's students during the last three periods, beginning in 2006. These 13 years, from 2006 to 2018, correspond to the expansion of Newark's charters and the implementation and consolidation of intensive reforms in Newark's district schools. We use data that is publicly available on the website of the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) and look at trends as far back as the data allow. While the test score performance data begin in 2006 – the first year New Jersey tested all students in grades 3-8 – the test score growth and graduation data begin more recently. To measure student growth, we use the Student Growth Percentile (SGP), which the NJDOE first calculated in 2012. To measure graduation, we use the adjusted cohort graduation rate, which the NJDOE first calculated using the current methodology in 2011. In all analyses, we combine Newark's district and charter schools into one entity – which we refer to as "Newark" or "Newark citywide" – but also look at results for district and charter schools separately.

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[8] http://margrady.com/newarkenrolls/
[9] https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/05/19/schooled
[10] https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/12/nyregion/20-years-newark-schools-regain-control-baraka.html

[11] https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/17/05/16/newark-teachers-union-inks-new-contract-without-oprah-zuckerberg/
[12] http://margrady.com/newarkenrolls/

Enrollment

For much of the past two decades, citywide enrollment in Newark was fairly flat. As seen in Figure 2, between 1999 and 2015 Newark citywide enrollment generally fluctuated between about 43,000 and 45,000 students.[13] During this time, enrollment gains in the city's charter sector were roughly matched by enrollment declines in district schools. However, over the last several years, charter enrollment has continued to grow (though at a slower rate), while enrollment in the district has stabilized. These trends have led to citywide enrollment gains, with total K-12 enrollment

passing 50,000 for the first time in 2018. By 2018, charter schools enrolled approximately 17,000 students and accounted for 33 percent of Newark's total K-12 enrollment.

Given the large charter enrollment share, any longitudinal analysis of education performance in Newark must take into account both district and charter schools. In the analysis that follows, we do this by combining the results of charters and district schools into "Newark citywide" results, while also considering the performance of the district and the charter sectors separately.

Figure 2 – In 2018, K-12 enrollment in Newark passed 50,000 for the first time, as enrollment continued to grow in charters while stabilizing in district schools.
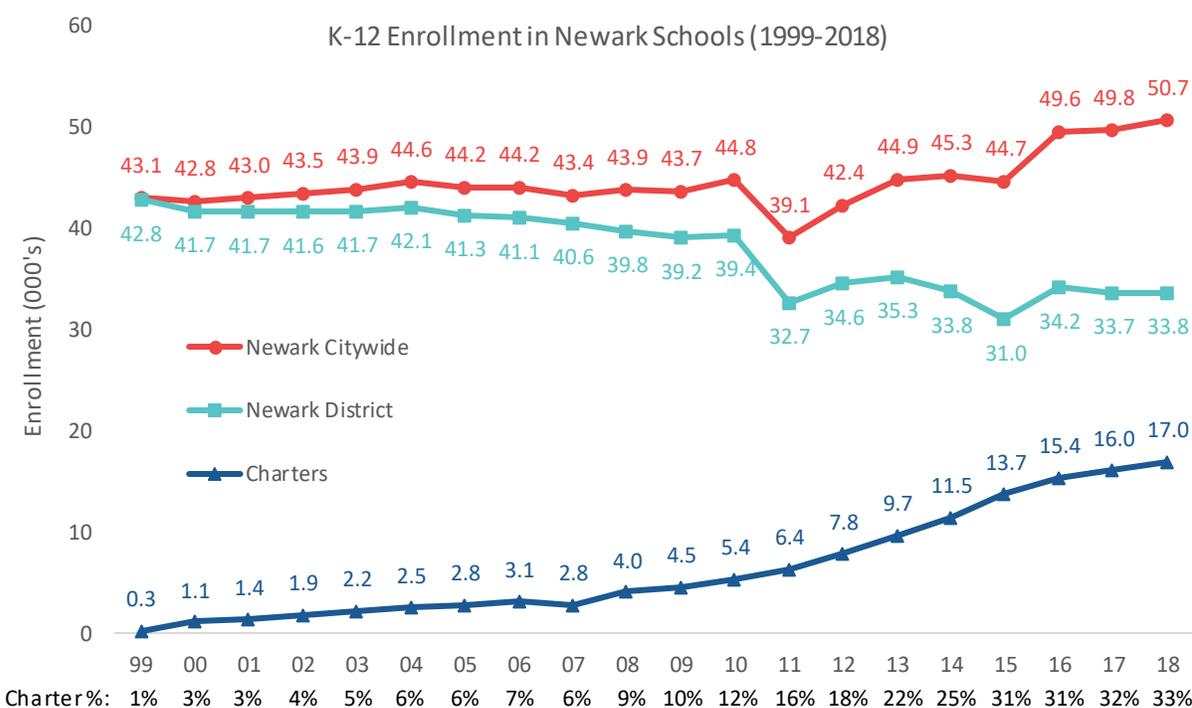
Source: NJDOE website. Note: excludes PK enrollment. 18 refers to the 2017-18 school year.

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[13] The one exception was 2010-11, when the state switched to a new student-level data system. Conversations with district officials indicate that data submission difficulties may account for the Newark district's unusually low reported-enrollment-total that year.

Test Score Performance

Proficiency Rate: 2015 to 2018

The most common metric of test score performance is the proficiency rate, which measures the percentage of test takers who achieve a pre-defined proficiency bar. Since 2015, New Jersey has required all students in grades 3-8 to take a test designed by the state consortium known as the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC). Figure 3 shows the grade 3-8 PARCC results for Newark – breaking out Newark charters and district schools – as well as for the rest of New Jersey. The top half of the figure shows the proficiency rate for each group – Newark citywide, Newark charters, Newark district, and the rest of New Jersey – and the bottom half shows the percentage point gap between each group and the rest of New Jersey. ELA results are shown on the left and math results are shown on the right.

Figure 3 reveals a number of interesting insights. For one, since 2015, Newark citywide has made strides in closing the proficiency gap with the state. This trend is particularly evident in ELA, where the gap has decreased by 5.9 percentage points, from 20.4 in 2015 to 14.5 in 2018. The gap in math – which was initially smaller – has declined by a smaller amount. In 2015, Newark was 14.5 percentage points behind the state in math proficiency, and by 2018, that number had dropped to 12.6 percentage points, an overall decrease in the gap of 1.9 percentage points.

Also notable is that in the most recent school year, Newark charters had a higher average PARCC proficiency rate than the rest of the state in both ELA and math. In 2018, charters exceeded the proficiency rate in the rest of the state by 1.9 percentage points in ELA and 2.2 percentage points in math. This marked the first time that charters scored above the state for ELA, and the second time for math. When coupled with increasing enrollment, these results are particularly encouraging for Newark's charters; more students are enrolling in charters and proficiency continues to rise at a faster rate than the state.

Figure 3 – Since the PARCC test was introduced in 2015, both Newark's district and charter schools have narrowed or closed the gap with the state.

Grade 3-8 Proficiency Rates on the PARCC Test (2015 to 2018)

| | English Language Arts | | | | | Math | | | | |
| | % Proficient | | | | Change | % Proficient | | | | Change |
	2015	2016	2017	2018	3 Yr	2015	2016	2017	2018	3 Yr
Newark Citywide	30.0%	36.7%	40.8%	43.9%	13.9%	25.1%	28.0%	32.3%	33.4%	8.3%
Newark Charters	46.4%	52.3%	55.8%	60.3%	14.0%	39.3%	41.8%	44.5%	48.2%	8.8%
Newark District	22.2%	28.9%	32.5%	34.8%	12.6%	18.8%	21.6%	26.1%	26.0%	7.2%
Rest of New Jersey	50.4%	53.7%	56.8%	58.4%	8.0%	39.6%	44.0%	44.3%	46.0%	6.4%

| | Gap with New Jersey | | | | Change | Gap with New Jersey | | | | Change |
	2015	2016	2017	2018	3 Yr	2015	2016	2017	2018	3 Yr
Newark Citywide	20.4%	17.0%	16.0%	14.5%	-5.9%	14.5%	16.0%	12.0%	12.6%	-1.9%
Newark Charters	4.0%	1.4%	1.0%	-1.9%	-6.0%	0.3%	2.2%	-0.2%	-2.2%	-2.4%
Newark District	28.2%	24.8%	24.3%	23.6%	-4.6%	20.8%	22.4%	18.2%	20.0%	-0.8%

Source: NJDOE website. Note: includes all years of PARCC testing.

Figure 4 – Between 2006 and 2018, Newark's test score proficiency rank in ELA improved compared to cities and towns with similar socioeconomic status.

Newark Citywide Average Proficiency Rank Relative to DFG A in ELA (2006 - 2018)

2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
QUINTON (86%)	QUINTON (83%)	N WLDWD (75%)	N WLDWD (75%)	N WLDWD (69%)	N WLDWD (70%)	DOVER (71%)	DOVER (69%)	DOVER (68%)	DOVER (51%)	DOVER (58%)	DOVER (60%)	UNION (61%)
N WLDWD (83%)	N WLDWD (80%)	QUINTON (73%)	QUINTON (70%)	DOVER (65%)	DOVER (67%)	N WLDWD (69%)	QUINTON (61%)	N WLDWD (66%)	N WLDWD (43%)	QUINTON (49%)	LAWRNCE (51%)	UNION (57%)
FAIRVIEW (79%)	DOWNE (78%)	DOWNE (71%)	DOVER (66%)	QUINTON (64%)	QUINTON (62%)	LAWRNCE (65%)	N WLDWD (60%)	BUENA (57%)	LAWRNCE (41%)	LAWRNCE (46%)	UNION (49%)	LAWRNCE (53%)
DOWNE (77%)	S SIDE HTS (78%)	FAIRVIEW (70%)	DOWNE (62%)	UNION (58%)	FAIRVIEW (56%)	QUINTON (57%)	UNION (57%)	VINELAND (53%)	QUINTON (40%)	UNION (44%)	QUINTON (49%)	ELIZABTH (53%)
BUENA (75%)	COMRCIAL (78%)	DOVER (69%)	UNION (61%)	FAIRVIEW (56%)	UNION (59%)	UNION (56%)	BUENA (57%)	LAWRNCE (53%)	W NY (37%)	W NY (43%)	N WLDWD (49%)	ELIZABTH (47%)
S SIDE HTS (74%)	FAIRVIEW (77%)	BUENA (67%)	BUENA (59%)	BUENA (56%)	BUENA (59%)	BUENA (55%)	W NY (56%)	WOODBINE (54%)	WOODBINE (35%)	N WLDWD (38%)	**NEWARK (41%)**	**NEWARK (44%)**
W NY (74%)	W NY (75%)	S SIDE HTS (66%)	LAWRNCE (59%)	W NY (54%)	W NY (55%)	FAIRVIEW (54%)	WOODBINE (54%)	W NY (52%)	ELIZABTH (33%)	**NEWARK (37%)**	FAIRVIEW (40%)	PERTH AM (43%)
LAWRNCE (71%)	BUENA (74%)	W NY (64%)	FAIRVIEW (58%)	VINELAND (51%)	VINELAND (52%)	VINELAND (51%)	VINELAND (51%)	FAIRVIEW (51%)	FAIRVIEW (33%)	FAIRVIEW (36%)	E ORANGE (39%)	E ORANGE (43%)
UNION (71%)	UNION (73%)	COMRCIAL (63%)	W NY (57%)	LAWRNCE (51%)	ELIZABTH (50%)	ELIZABTH (51%)	ELIZABTH (51%)	ELIZABTH (50%)	VINELAND (31%)	E ORANGE (36%)	E NEWARK (36%)	WOODBINE (43%)
E NEWARK (71%)	DOVER (72%)	WOODBINE (62%)	VINELAND (54%)	COMRCIAL (50%)	E NEWARK (48%)	E ORANGE (46%)	DOWNE (51%)	DOWNE (47%)	**NEWARK (30%)**	VINELAND (33%)	VINELAND (37%)	FAIRVIEW (40%)
DOVER (69%)	VINELAND (69%)	LAWRNCE (61%)	EGG HBR (53%)	DOWNE (49%)	KEANSBURG (48%)	DOWNE (44%)	E NEWARK (45%)	E NEWARK (44%)	PERTH AM (28%)	PERTH AM (35%)	BUENA (35%)	ORANGE (37%)
EGG HBR (68%)	LAWRNCE (68%)	KEANSBURG (58%)	ELIZABTH (51%)	ORANGE (48%)	ORANGE (48%)	KEANSBURG (48%)	MILLVILLE (44%)	MILLVILLE (44%)	E NEWARK (28%)	WOODBINE (33%)	PERTH AM (35%)	VINELAND (36%)
COMRCIAL (67%)	E NEWARK (67%)	VINELAND (58%)	ORANGE (49%)	KEANSBURG (48%)	WOODBINE (50%)	ORANGE (43%)	**NEWARK (43%)**	COMRCIAL (43%)	E ORANGE (27%)	ORANGE (33%)	E NEWARK (32%)	ORANGE (36%)
KEANSBURG (67%)	KEANSBURG (67%)	EGG HBR (56%)	WLDWD (48%)	ATLANTIC (46%)	S SIDE HTS (45%)	**NEWARK (42%)**	ATLANTIC (43%)	**NEWARK (43%)**	PATERSON (25%)	ATLANTIC (30%)	WOODBINE (32%)	PATERSON (34%)
VINELAND (66%)	PNNS GRV (64%)	ELIZABTH (56%)	KEANSBURG (47%)	MILLVILLE (45%)	MILLVILLE (45%)	MILLVILLE (42%)	MILLVILLE (44%)	MILLVILLE (41%)	S SIDE HTS (21%)	MILLVILLE (28%)	ORANGE (33%)	MILLVILLE (29%)
PERTH AM (62%)	WOODBINE (63%)	PERTH AM (55%)	NEWARK (46%)	S SIDE HTS (45%)	PERTH AM (41%)	PERTH AM (41%)	COMRCIAL (42%)	ATLANTIC (40%)	PATERSON (25%)	ORANGE (28%)	PATERSON (31%)	PLESNTVLE (29%)
FAIRFIELD (62%)	EGG HBR (63%)	MILLVILLE (54%)	ATLANTIC (46%)	E NEWARK (45%)	E ORANGE (44%)	COMRCIAL (42%)	ATLANTIC (40%)	ORANGE (40%)	S SIDE HTS (21%)	MILLVILLE (28%)	PASSAIC (28%)	ATLANTIC (29%)
WOODBINE (60%)	ELIZABTH (62%)	E NEWARK (53%)	PERTH AM (46%)	E ORANGE (44%)	S SIDE HTS (43%)	KEANSBURG (41%)	ORANGE (41%)	PNNS GRV (40%)	ORANGE (24%)	ORANGE (28%)	PLESNTVLE (29%)	IRVNGTN (29%)
PNNS GRV (60%)	PERTH AM (62%)	UNION (52%)	E NEWARK (45%)	E ORANGE (44%)	PERTH AM (41%)	WOODBINE (41%)	KEANSBURG (41%)	PATERSON (39%)	S SIDE HTS (21%)	WOODBINE (25%)	ATLANTIC (29%)	MILLVILLE (29%)
ELIZABTH (59%)	MILLVILLE (62%)	ORANGE (51%)	E ORANGE (44%)	PNNS GRV (40%)	COMRCIAL (40%)	PATERSON (38%)	PATERSON (40%)	PATERSON (39%)	DOWNE (22%)	PLESNTVLE (26%)	PNNS GRV (26%)	BUENA (28%)
MILLVILLE (59%)	PERTH AM (62%)	**NEWARK (50%)**	PLESNTVLE (41%)	MILLVILLE (40%)	PATERSON (38%)	EGG HBR (40%)	PAULS (40%)	KEANSBURG (37%)	EGG HBR (19%)	PASSAIC (25%)	COMRCIAL (26%)	KEANSBURG (27%)
ORANGE (57%)	ORANGE (62%)	PAULS (50%)	PAULS (39%)	PAULS (40%)	COMRCIAL (40%)	PASSAIC (38%)	PAULS (40%)	KEANSBURG (37%)	PLESNTVLE (21%)	KEANSBURG (22%)	IRVNGTN (25%)	TRENTON (25%)
NEWARK (56%)	WLDWD (60%)	PLESNTVLE (50%)	IRVNGTN (39%)	WLDWD (39%)	WLDWD (37%)	WLDWD (37%)	S SIDE HTS (37%)	PASSAIC (36%)	IRVNGTN (23%)	BRUNSWCK (21%)	BRUNSWCK (25%)	PNNS GRV (25%)
PASSAIC (55%)	E ORANGE (59%)	E ORANGE (50%)	PATERSON (38%)	PNNS GRV (39%)	PATERSON (36%)	COMRCIAL (36%)	PNNS GRV (37%)	E NEWARK (36%)	PLESNTVLE (21%)	KEANSBURG (22%)	DOWNE (26%)	DOWNE (26%)
PAULS (55%)	NEWARK (59%)	ATLANTIC (50%)	PLESNTVLE (41%)	PLESNTVLE (38%)	PAULS (36%)	PLESNTVLE (35%)	FAIRFIELD (36%)	PLESNTVLE (35%)	PNNS GRV (20%)	BRUNSWCK (21%)	KEANSBURG (24%)	CAMDEN (25%)
BRUNSWCK (54%)	PAULS (57%)	IRVNGTN (49%)	PATERSON (38%)	IRVNGTN (37%)	IRVNGTN (36%)	PAULS (36%)	PLESNTVLE (35%)	IRVNGTN (35%)	BRUNSWCK (19%)	EGG HBR (19%)	TRENTON (21%)	CAMDEN (25%)
E ORANGE (54%)	PLESNTVLE (56%)	WLDWD (48%)	PATERSON (38%)	PATERSON (37%)	PASSAIC (35%)	IRVNGTN (35%)	IRVNGTN (34%)	WLDWD (32%)	SALEM (17%)	EGG HBR (18%)	S SIDE HTS (23%)	S SIDE HTS (23%)
PLESNTVLE (54%)	FAIRFIELD (56%)	PNNS GRV (47%)	PASSAIC (38%)	PASSAIC (36%)	PAULS (34%)	PAULS (34%)	PAULS (34%)	BRUNSWCK (29%)	CAMDEN (18%)	CAMDEN (18%)	CAMDEN (22%)	PAULS (22%)
PATERSON (54%)	IRVNGTN (55%)	BRUNSWCK (47%)	BRIDGTON (38%)	BRIDGTON (34%)	FAIRFIELD (34%)	FAIRFIELD (34%)	WLDWD (32%)	SALEM (17%)	TRENTON (17%)	CAMDEN (18%)	PAULS (21%)	BRIDGTON (20%)
WLDWD (52%)	BRUNSWCK (55%)	PASSAIC (46%)	BRIDGTON (38%)	BRUNSWCK (32%)	BRUNSWCK (31%)	BRUNSWCK (31%)	WLDWD (29%)	SALEM (17%)	SALEM (17%)	WLDWD (18%)	BRIDGTON (18%)	COMRCIAL (19%)
IRVNGTN (52%)	PASSAIC (55%)	PATERSON (45%)	BRUNSWCK (38%)	SALEM (31%)	BRUNSWCK (31%)	SALEM (31%)	SALEM (31%)	SALEM (17%)	BRIDGTON (14%)	S SIDE HTS (18%)	ASBRY PRK (18%)	WLDWD (17%)
ATLANTIC (51%)	SALEM (53%)	BRIDGTON (45%)	FAIRFIELD (33%)	BRIDGTON (33%)	SALEM (31%)	BRIDGTON (29%)	BRIDGTON (28%)	WLDWD (29%)	CAMDEN (14%)	WLDWD (17%)	WLDWD (16%)	WLDWD (17%)
BRIDGTON (51%)	BRIDGTON (52%)	SALEM (40%)	TRENTON (30%)	SALEM (31%)	BRIDGTON (28%)	BRIDGTON (29%)	TRENTON (28%)	CAMDEN (26%)	CAMDEN (14%)	FAIRFIELD (15%)	FAIRFIELD (15%)	SALEM (15%)
TRENTON (48%)	ATLANTIC (52%)	TRENTON (39%)	SALEM (28%)	TRENTON (30%)	TRENTON (29%)	TRENTON (28%)	BRIDGTON (26%)	CAMDEN (26%)	PAULS (14%)	SALEM (18%)	SALEM (16%)	FAIRFIELD (14%)
ASBRY PRK (44%)	TRENTON (48%)	CAMDEN (38%)	ASBRY PRK (27%)	ASBRY PRK (24%)	ASBRY PRK (24%)	CAMDEN (26%)	ASBRY PRK (24%)	ASBRY PRK (22%)	ASBRY PRK (12%)	ASBRY PRK (13%)	EGG HBR (12%)	SALEM (15%)
SALEM (43%)	ASBRY PRK (48%)	FAIRFIELD (37%)	CAMDEN (25%)	ASBRY PRK (24%)	SALEM (27%)	CAMDEN (26%)	CAMDEN (26%)	PAULS (14%)	FAIRFIELD (15%)	FAIRFIELD (15%)	SALEM (16%)	FAIRFIELD (14%)
CAMDEN (43%)	CAMDEN (42%)	ASBRY PRK (35%)	CAMDEN (25%)	CAMDEN (24%)	CAMDEN (23%)	CAMDEN (23%)	ASBRY PRK (24%)	ASBRY PRK (22%)	ASBRY PRK (12%)	ASBRY PRK (13%)	EGG HBR (12%)	EGG HBR (11%)

Source: analysis of data from the NJDOE website. Note: this graph ranks all 37 cities and towns in District Factor Group A (DFG A) by their average proficiency rate on grades 3-8 ELA tests. Each cell in the chart shows the abbreviated city or town name, followed by the proficiency rate in parentheses. Charter schools are included in the city or town results. Newark is highlighted in the shaded boxes.

Performance Relative to Other Cities and Towns: 2006 to 2018

Overall, the proficiency results in Figure 3 are positive and present an upward trend. However, it is important to note that these results are restricted to the PARCC test and thus, only represent test scores over the last four school years. Prior to 2015, New Jersey used the NJASK as the primary annual standardized test, which had a significantly lower standard for proficiency (and thus higher proficiency rates). Given the changed standards – documented in Figure A1 in the appendix – proficiency rates between the two tests cannot be directly compared.

Nonetheless, due to the changes taking place in Newark's schools between 2006 and 2018, it is of great interest to assess the city's performance over a longer time period. One simple solution is to compare Newark's test results to those of other cities and towns in New Jersey whose students also transitioned from the NJASK test to the PARCC test. By making comparisons relative to other cities and towns, the change in the proficiency standard is accounted for because all public schools in New Jersey underwent the transition.

Figure 4 shows one such comparison. Each column in the figure shows the 37 cities or towns in New Jersey's District Factor Group A (DFG A) ranked based on their grade 3-8 proficiency rate in ELA from 2006 to 2018.[14] District Factor Groups are groups of cities or towns that the state has determined present in the surrounding years. In this analysis, the number of students tested is necessary to combine

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[14] On the NJDOE web site, the number of students tested was frequently missing in 2007 despite being

are demographically similar and "represent an approximate measure of a community's relative socioeconomic status."[15] Newark is in DFG A, which comprises cities or towns with the highest-need populations in New Jersey.[16] To calculate the proficiency rates shown in Figure 4, charter schools in all districts – including Newark – have been mapped back to the city or town where they are geographically located, and their students have been included in the city's rate. The proficiency rate for Newark then, is what we refer to as the Newark citywide proficiency rate, which includes both charter and district schools. The same is true for every other city or town on the list.

As shown in Figure 4, Newark's relative ranking in ELA compared to the demographically similar cities and towns in DFG A has improved over time.[17] In 2006, Newark was ranked 23rd out of 37 cities and towns in ELA proficiency, putting it in the 39th percentile in DFG A.[18] By 2018, Newark was ranked 8th out of 37 cities or towns in ELA proficiency, putting it in the

81st percentile in DFG A. Despite the dramatic change in the proficiency standard, this chart shows a relatively smooth upward trajectory in Newark's relative rank between about 2011 and 2017. While Newark's citywide proficiency rate improved between 2017 and 2018, its rank among DFG A cities and towns held steady, as cities and towns with similar socioeconomic status improved as well.

Figure 5 shows a similar analysis using a different underlying measure of test score performance: the average scaled score. Like percent proficient, the average scaled score is a measure of test score performance, not growth. However, the average scaled score has several properties that make it more attractive to education researchers and policymakers.[19] Chief among these is that year-to-year gains (or declines) by any student will affect a district's average scaled score. By contrast, a district's proficiency rate is only affected by those

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test scores across both grades and sectors (e.g. combining district and charter results for Newark). To estimate the number of students tested in 2007, we used data on the number of students tested in the same district in the same grade in 2006 and 2008. In cases where data was available in both years, we used the average number of students tested in 2006 and 2008 as the estimate for 2007. In cases where data was available in only 2006 or 2008, we used that year's data. And in cases where neither of the adjacent years had data available, we excluded the observation.

[15] New Jersey actually assigns a DFG to a school district, not a city or town. Charter schools are not assigned a DFG. However, because we map all charter schools back to their geographic district, we refer to the geographic districts as "cities and towns" for clarity. More information on DFGs can be found here: https://www.nj.gov/education/finance/rda/dfg.shtml

[16] Figure A2 in the appendix shows the full list of DFG A districts, including information on the size of the district and the student population.

[17] During this time, the percentage of students in both Newark district and charter schools qualifying for free or reduced-price lunch remained fairly steady and similar to the DFG A average. See Figure A3 in the appendix.

[18] The percentile calculation is as follows. Let R = Newark's rank. Let N = the number of districts in the comparison group (e.g. 37, if the comparison group is DFG A). Percentile = (N − R) / (N − 1). This gives results identical to Excel's PERCENTRANK.INC function and has the attractive property that Newark receives a 100 if it is the highest scoring district in the comparison group and a 0 if it is the lowest. Other common methods of calculating percentiles show identical trends with slightly different numbers.

[19] See this 2016 letter to the U.S. Department of Education by 93 education researchers, educators, and other interested parties recommending the use of average scaled score instead of proficiency rate to measure test score performance for accountability: https://morganpolikoff.com/2016/07/12/a-letter-to-the-u-s-department-of-education/

Figure 5 – Newark shows gains against low-income cities and towns when using the average scaled score as the underlying test score performance measure.

Newark Citywide Average Scaled Score Rank Relative to DFG A in ELA (2006-2018)

2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
N WLDWD (220)	N WLDWD (217)	N WLDWD (214)	N WLDWD (211)	N WLDWD (209)	N WLDWD (210)	DOVER (210)	DOVER (210)	DOVER (209)	DOVER (750)	DOVER (755)	DOVER (756)	DOVER (757)
QUINTON (219)	QUINTON (216)	QUINTON (210)	QUINTON (211)	QUINTON (208)	DOVER (208)	N WLDWD (208)	N WLDWD (204)	N WLDWD (205)	QUINTON (742)	QUINTON (748)	LAWRNCE (748)	UNION (753)
DOWNE (216)	S SIDE HTS (212)	DOWNE (209)	DOVER (208)	DOVER (207)	FAIRVIEW (205)	QUINTON (204)	LAWRNCE (202)	BUENA (201)	LAWRNCE (740)	LAWRNCE (747)	UNION (748)	QUINTON (752)
FAIRVIEW (213)	DOWNE (212)	DOVER (208)	BUENA (204)	UNION (202)	QUINTON (204)	UNION (201)	QUINTON (202)	LAWRNCE (200)	BUENA (739)	BUENA (747)	QUINTON (747)	LAWRNCE (749)
BUENA (211)	COMRCIAL (212)	S SIDE HTS (207)	UNION (204)	BUENA (201)	UNION (203)	UNION (201)	UNION (201)	UNION (200)	UNION (738)	N WLDWD (738)	N WLDWD (745)	ELIZABTH (746)
S SIDE HTS (211)	FAIRVIEW (211)	BUENA (207)	FAIRVIEW (202)	FAIRVIEW (201)	BUENA (202)	BUENA (201)	BUENA (201)	VINELAND (200)	W NY (738)	UNION (743)	W NY (743)	PERTH AM (743)
UNION (209)	BUENA (210)	FAIRVIEW (206)	DOWNE (202)	VINELAND (199)	LAWRNCE (200)	FAIRVIEW (200)	LAWRNCE (201)	QUINTON (198)	FAIRVIEW (735)	ELIZABTH (740)	**NEWARK (743)**	**NEWARK (743)**
W NY (209)	UNION (209)	UNION (205)	LAWRNCE (201)	W NY (199)	W NY (200)	VINELAND (199)	W NY (200)	ELIZABTH (198)	ELIZABTH (734)	ELIZABTH (740)	ELIZABTH (742)	W NY (743)
E NEWARK (208)	DOVER (208)	LAWRNCE (205)	LAWRNCE (201)	DOWNE (199)	E NEWARK (199)	VINELAND (199)	WOODBINE (198)	QUINTON (198)	E NEWARK (733)	E ORANGE (737)	FAIRVIEW (738)	E ORANGE (743)
LAWRNCE (208)	W NY (208)	COMRCIAL (204)	S SIDE HTS (200)	LAWRNCE (198)	ELIZABTH (197)	E NEWARK (197)	FAIRVIEW (197)	ELIZABTH (198)	E ORANGE (733)	N WLDWD (740)	BUENA (737)	E NEWARK (741)
DOVER (207)	LAWRNCE (207)	W NY (204)	COMRCIAL (200)	E NEWARK (198)	S SIDE HTS (196)	E ORANGE (195)	E ORANGE (195)	WOODBINE (198)	VINELAND (733)	PERTH AM (735)	FAIRVIEW (738)	WOODBINE (740)
COMRCIAL (207)	VINELAND (207)	WOODBINE (202)	ELIZABTH (199)	ELIZABTH (198)	KEANSBURG (195)	ORANGE (194)	DOWNE (195)	E ORANGE (194)	**NEWARK (730)**	PERTH AM (730)	VINELAND (737)	FAIRVIEW (736)
EGG HBR (207)	WOODBINE (207)	VINELAND (202)	EGG HBR (197)	KEANSBURG (195)	DOWNE (196)	E NEWARK (194)	E NEWARK (194)	ORANGE (193)	PERTH AM (730)	VINELAND (735)	PERTH AM (736)	VINELAND (736)
KEANSBURG (206)	KEANSBURG (206)	KEANSBURG (201)	WOODBINE (197)	ORANGE (195)	KEANSBURG (195)	KEANSBURG (193)	E ORANGE (194)	ORANGE (193)	E ORANGE (729)	FAIRVIEW (734)	ORANGE (734)	FAIRVIEW (736)
VINELAND (205)	EGG HBR (204)	E NEWARK (200)	KEANSBURG (196)	E ORANGE (194)	ATLANTIC (194)	MILLVILLE (193)	MILLVILLE (193)	S SIDE HTS (192)	ATLANTIC (727)	ATLANTIC (731)	PERTH AM (736)	ORANGE (736)
PERTH AM (203)	E NEWARK (204)	ELIZABTH (200)	ORANGE (196)	WOODBINE (194)	ORANGE (194)	ATLANTIC (193)	**NEWARK (193)**	PERTH AM (193)	BUENA (727)	WOODBINE (731)	DOWNE (733)	PASSAIC (734)
FAIRFIELD (203)	ELIZABTH (203)	MILLVILLE (199)	PERTH AM (196)	ATLANTIC (194)	ORANGE (192)	COMRCIAL (192)	PERTH AM (193)	ATLANTIC (192)	PATERSON (727)	PATERSON (729)	PERTH AM (736)	PATERSON (734)
MILLVILLE (203)	PERTH AM (202)	ORANGE (197)	ATLANTIC (195)	S SIDE HTS (193)	PERTH AM (192)	**NEWARK (193)**	ATLANTIC (192)	E NEWARK (192)	MILLVILLE (726)	ORANGE (729)	MILLVILLE (732)	PLESNTVLE (733)
PNNS GRV (202)	MILLVILLE (202)	PERTH AM (199)	WLDWD (195)	PERTH AM (193)	S SIDE HTS (193)	WOODBINE (192)	COMRCIAL (192)	COMRCIAL (191)	COMRCIAL (726)	DOWNE (729)	PATERSON (731)	BUENA (732)
ELIZABTH (202)	ORANGE (202)	ATLANTIC (195)	PNNS GRV (197)	**NEWARK (193)**	MILLVILLE (192)	ORANGE (192)	**NEWARK (192)**	PATERSON (191)	ORANGE (725)	DOWNE (729)	PLESNTVLE (731)	DOWNE (731)
WOODBINE (201)	NEWARK (201)	PNNS GRV (197)	ORANGE (196)	WLDWD (192)	WLDWD (191)	DOWNE (192)	ORANGE (192)	KEANSBURG (191)	PASSAIC (724)	PLESNTVLE (729)	PLESNTVLE (731)	ATLANTIC (731)
PAULS (201)	**NEWARK (201)**	PAULS (197)	**NEWARK (195)**	MILLVILLE (191)	PAULS (191)	PNNS GRV (191)	EGG HBR (191)	DOWNE (191)	BRUNSWCK (724)	MILLVILLE (729)	BRUNSWCK (728)	MILLVILLE (729)
NEWARK (201)	E ORANGE (201)	E ORANGE (197)	E NEWARK (194)	WLDWD (191)	PNNS GRV (191)	PAULS (191)	EGG HBR (191)	**NEWARK (193)**	IRVNGTN (723)	IRVNGTN (726)	PNNS GRV (728)	KEANSBURG (727)
ORANGE (200)	PAULS (201)	E ORANGE (197)	E NEWARK (194)	PAULS (191)	WLDWD (191)	PATERSON (190)	PASSAIC (191)	PASSAIC (191)	EGG HBR (723)	BRUNSWCK (726)	COMRCIAL (726)	PNNS GRV (727)
PLESNTVLE (199)	WLDWD (200)	IRVNGTN (195)	PLESNTVLE (192)	PLESNTVLE (190)	MILLVILLE (191)	PATERSON (190)	PATERSON (190)	MILLVILLE (191)	PLESNTVLE (723)	PNNS GRV (725)	IRVNGTN (726)	TRENTON (725)
PASSAIC (199)	PLESNTVLE (200)	PLESNTVLE (192)	PLESNTVLE (192)	COMRCIAL (190)	COMRCIAL (190)	PASSAIC (190)	S SIDE HTS (190)	PASSAIC (190)	PASSAIC (723)	PASSAIC (723)	BRUNSWCK (726)	S SIDE HTS (725)
E ORANGE (199)	FAIRFIELD (199)	ATLANTIC (196)	E NEWARK (194)	MILLVILLE (191)	E ORANGE (190)	PAULS (189)	PLESNTVLE (189)	PLESNTVLE (189)	KEANSBURG (722)	S SIDE HTS (724)	S SIDE HTS (725)	CAMDEN (725)
BRUNSWCK (199)	PATERSON (198)	WLDWD (194)	BRUNSWCK (191)	IRVNGTN (188)	PNNS GRV (189)	PLESNTVLE (188)	WLDWD (189)	EGG HBR (189)	PAULS (721)	TRENTON (722)	TRENTON (724)	CAMDEN (724)
PATERSON (198)	BRUNSWCK (198)	PASSAIC (194)	PASSAIC (191)	BRIDGTON (188)	IRVNGTN (187)	COMRCIAL (186)	PLESNTVLE (188)	EGG HBR (189)	TRENTON (719)	TRENTON (722)	CAMDEN (722)	CAMDEN (724)
ATLANTIC (198)	IRVNGTN (198)	PATERSON (193)	BRUNSWCK (191)	PATERSON (188)	BRIDGTON (186)	FAIRFIELD (188)	IRVNGTN (188)	BRUNSWCK (186)	PNNS GRV (719)	BRIDGTON (719)	PAULS (721)	BRIDGTON (720)
BRIDGTON (197)	PASSAIC (198)	BRIDGTON (193)	PATERSON (190)	FAIRFIELD (187)	FAIRFIELD (186)	BRUNSWCK (187)	BRUNSWCK (187)	WLDWD (186)	WLDWD (718)	SALEM (719)	WLDWD (721)	COMRCIAL (720)
IRVNGTN (197)	ATLANTIC (197)	FAIRFIELD (192)	BRIDGTON (190)	BRUNSWCK (186)	BRUNSWCK (186)	BRIDGTON (185)	BRIDGTON (184)	BRIDGTON (184)	SALEM (718)	SALEM (719)	ASBRY PRK (720)	ASBRY PRK (718)
WLDWD (196)	BRIDGTON (197)	TRENTON (189)	TRENTON (185)	TRENTON (183)	TRENTON (185)	TRENTON (185)	SALEM (184)	BRIDGTON (184)	BRIDGTON (717)	CAMDEN (719)	BRIDGTON (720)	PAULS (717)
TRENTON (195)	FAIRFIELD (197)	SALEM (188)	ASBRY PRK (184)	SALEM (182)	FAIRFIELD (188)	SALEM (184)	SALEM (184)	TRENTON (184)	FAIRFIELD (716)	WLDWD (718)	FAIRFIELD (719)	SALEM (717)
ASBRY PRK (194)	ASBRY PRK (194)	CAMDEN (188)	SALEM (183)	ASBRY PRK (180)	ASBRY PRK (182)	PAULS (182)	CAMDEN (181)	CAMDEN (183)	ASBRY PRK (716)	FAIRFIELD (718)	SALEM (717)	ASBRY PRK (718)
SALEM (193)	TRENTON (193)	WLDWD (194)	CAMDEN (181)	CAMDEN (178)	BRIDGTON (180)	CAMDEN (180)	ASBRY PRK (180)	SALEM (184)	FAIRFIELD (713)	CAMDEN (718)	EGG HBR (716)	WLDWD (717)
CAMDEN (191)	CAMDEN (189)	ASBRY PRK (187)	ASBRY PRK (181)	CAMDEN (178)	CAMDEN (178)	CAMDEN (180)	ASBRY PRK (180)	ASBRY PRK (180)	ASBRY PRK (713)	ASBRY PRK (715)	EGG HBR (716)	EGG HBR (716)

Source: analysis of data from the NJDOE website. Note: this graph ranks all 37 cities and towns in District Factor Group A (DFG A) by their average scaled score on grades 3-8 ELA tests. Each cell in the chart shows the abbreviated city or town name, followed by the average scaled score in parentheses. Charter schools are included in the city or town results. Newark is highlighted in the shaded boxes.

students who move across the proficiency cut point in one way or the other. Gains or declines by students well above, or well below, the proficiency cut point are not captured.

As shown in Figure 5, the ELA results using the average scaled score are similar to those using the proficiency rate. Newark's citywide ranking – including both districts and charters – was 23rd out of 37 DFG A cities and towns in 2006 (39th percentile) and rose to 9th out of 37 cities and towns in 2018 (78th percentile). When compared to other DFG A cities and towns, Newark's rank showed modest gains through 2011, after which it increased more rapidly through 2017. As with the earlier analyses

based on proficiency rates, Newark's citywide ranking based on grade 3-8 average scaled score held steady between 2017 and 2018.

When extending this analysis to math and to other comparison groups, as we do in Figure 6, Newark's percentile rank also shows positive gains. The left side of Figure 6 displays Newark's percentile rank based on the average ELA scaled score against three groups: DFG A, DFG A and B combined, and all cities and towns in New Jersey.[20] The top-most line represents Newark's percentile rank against DFG A. The trend against DFG A cities and towns is identical to that shown in Figure 5, as Figure 6 is simply a line graph representation of the

[20] Technically, these are all school districts in New Jersey, where all charters schools have been mapped back to their geographic district. Because they

include charter schools, we refer to them as "cities and towns" for clarity.

ranking analysis shown in Figure 5. The middle line shows Newark's percentile rank against the 100 cities and towns in DFG A and B, where DFG B includes those cities and towns with the second-lowest socioeconomic status. As the figure shows, Newark's ELA rank against DFG A and B rose from the 18th percentile in 2006 to the 47th percentile in 2018. Newark's upward trend is present when compared to all cities and towns as well. From 2006 to 2014 Newark slowly improved from the 4th to the 6th percentile in ELA. Since then, the city has seen steeper gains, rising to the 14th percentile against all New Jersey cities and towns in 2017 and holding steady in 2018. While Newark's ranking against all cities

well below students in the typical city or town in New Jersey.

The right side of Figure 6 shows similar trends for math. When compared to the 37 cities and towns in DFG A, Newark's average math test score increased from the 39th percentile in 2006 to the 78th percentile in 2018. When compared to the 100 cities and towns in DFG A and B, Newark's average math test score increased from the 18th percentile in 2006 to the 51st percentile in 2018. Finally, when compared to all cities and towns in New Jersey, Newark's average math test score increased from the 4th percentile in 2006 to the 14th percentile in 2018. Newark's citywide results based on

Figure 6 – Citywide, Newark has made gains in average test score percentile rank in both ELA and math against various comparison groups.
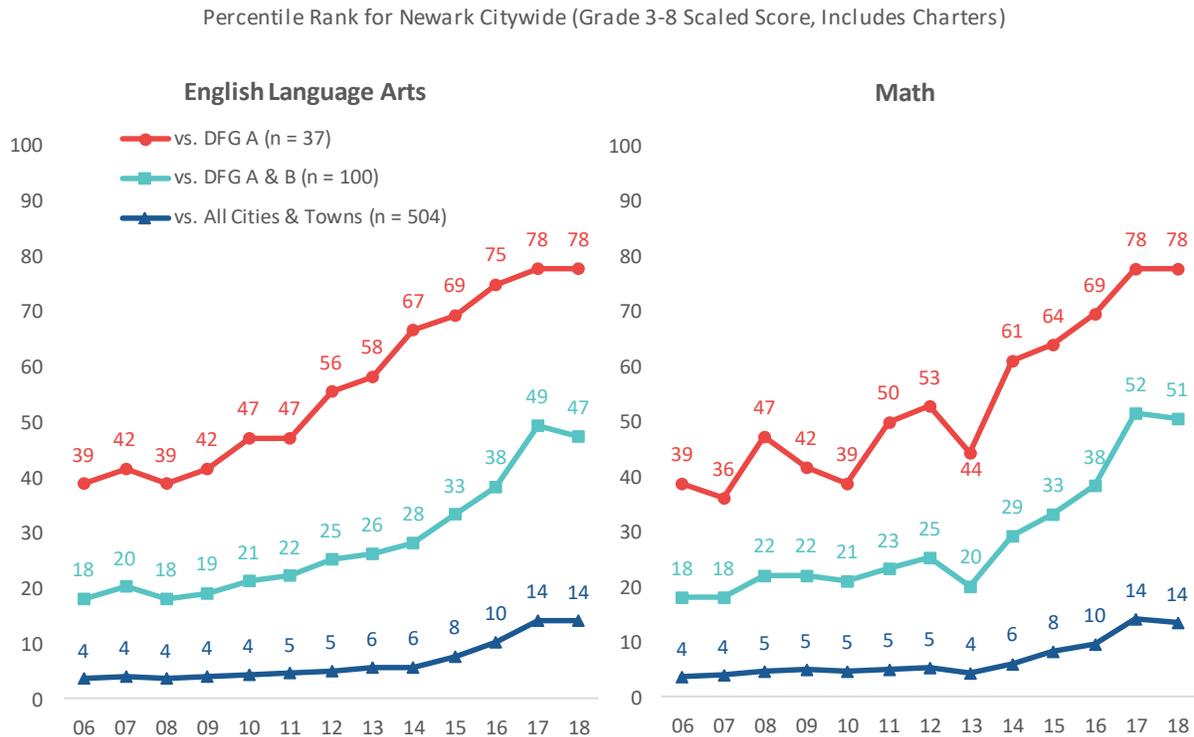
Percentile Rank for Newark Citywide (Grade 3-8 Scaled Score, Includes Charters)

Source: analysis of data from the NJDOE website. Note: each number shows Newark's percentile rank – based on grade 3-8 proficiency – against the comparison group noted.

and towns has improved notably, its students, on average, are still performing

the proficiency rate – rather than the average

test score – show similar and slightly more positive results.[21]

To better understand these trends, we separate out Newark's district schools from its charters. In Figure 7, we repeat the earlier analysis, but remove charter schools from both Newark's results and the comparison districts. In each graph, the top line shows the percentile rank of the Newark school district based on average scaled score compared to all 37 districts in DFG A (now with charters excluded). The middle line shows the same statistic compared to all 100 districts in DFG A and B, and the bottom line provides the same comparison against all 504 school districts in New Jersey.

In ELA, the relative performance of Newark's school district was fairly constant from 2006 through 2012, after which there was a modest decline in the early years of Anderson's reforms, followed by a larger gain that more than made up for the initial decline. When compared to DFG A districts, Newark's school district moved from the 36th percentile in 2006 to the 64th percentile in 2018. When compared to DFG A and B districts, Newark's school district increased from the 15th percentile in 2006 to the 28th percentile in 2018. Compared to all districts in New Jersey, Newark's school district improved from the 3rd percentile in 2006 to the 6th percentile in 2018. While no longer in

Figure 7 – After flat to declining results in the early years, Newark's school district has accelerated its pace of improvement since 2014.
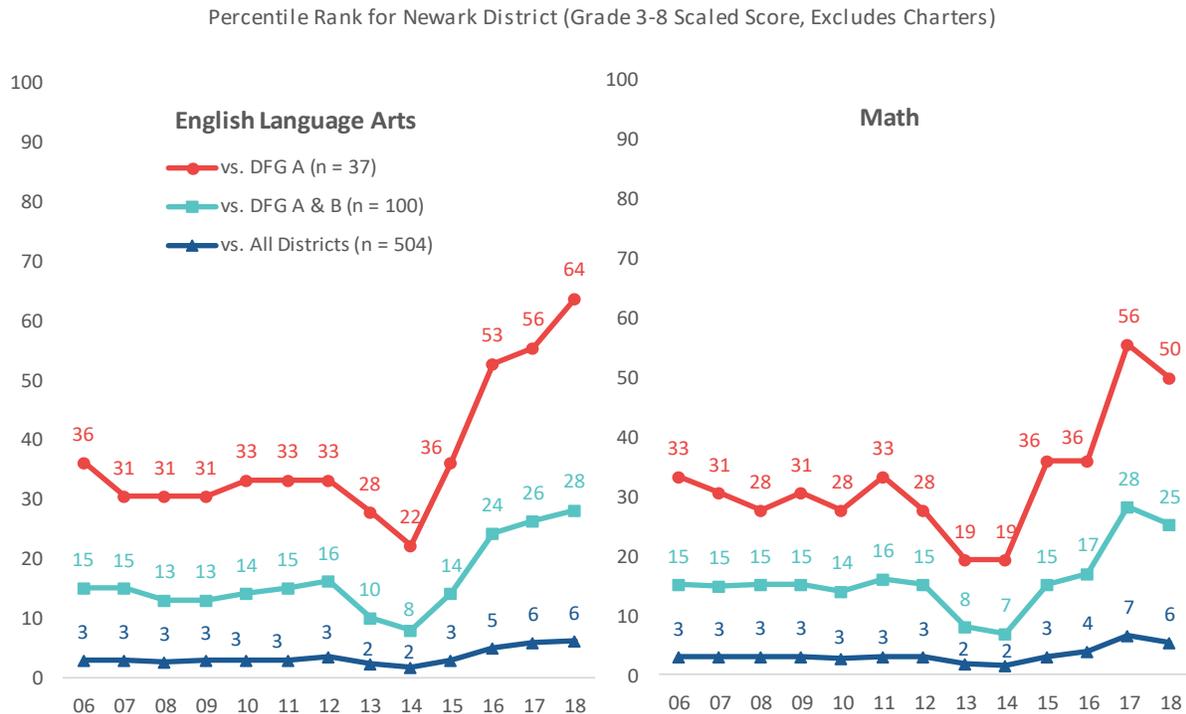
Percentile Rank for Newark District (Grade 3-8 Scaled Score, Excludes Charters)

Source: analysis of data from the NJDOE website. Note: each number shows the percentile rank of Newark's school district – based on grade 3-8 average scaled score – against the comparison group noted.

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[21] See Figure A4 in the appendix

the bottom 5%, the district remains among the lowest performing in the state.

The right side of Figure 7 shows broadly similar trends for math. Against DFG A, Newark's district improved its ranking from the 33rd percentile in 2006 to the 50th percentile in 2018. Over the same timeframe, when compared to the school districts in DFG A and B, Newark's district schools rose from the 15th percentile to the 25th percentile. Finally, against all districts, Newark's district increased from the 3rd percentile to the 6th percentile.

Overall, these results suggest that gains in Newark's traditional public schools have contributed to its citywide improvement. Charters have also contributed through two mechanisms. First, since Newark's charters have higher average performance than Newark's district schools, gains in charter market share – documented in Figure 2 – have led to citywide gains in Newark's test score performance and percentile ranking as more students have enrolled in high-performing charters.[22] Second, as shown in Figure 8, the relative performance of Newark's charters has also improved.

Figure 8 repeats the earlier ranking analysis but excludes Newark's district schools and considers Newark's charters as though they were a single city. As in Figure 6, Newark's charters are ranked against all cities and towns in DFG A, DFG A and B, and the entire state, where charters have been mapped back to their geographic district and

their results combined with the local district schools.

Figure 8 shows that Newark's charters were already performing at a high level compared to DFG A cities and towns in 2006 and have improved to be at or near the top of the comparison group in 2018. In ELA, Newark's charters have improved from the 83rd percentile in 2006 to the 100th percentile (highest scoring city or town) in 2018 when compared to DFG A. In math, Newark charters have improved from the 75th to the 97th percentile (second highest scoring city or town) when compared to DFG A.

When compared to cities or towns with a better-off population, Newark's charters started at a lower relative ranking in 2006 but have shown more dramatic gains in relative performance. Compared to DFG A and B cities and towns, Newark's charters have improved from the 58th to the 96th percentile in ELA and from the 45th to the 95th percentile in math between 2006 and 2018. Compared to all cities and towns in New Jersey, Newark's charters have improved from the 14th to the 49th percentile in ELA and from the 11th to the 48th percentile in math over the same time period. As of 2018, Newark's charter school students were performing, on average, approximately equal to students in the typical New Jersey city or town in both ELA and math.[23]

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[22] This is related to the "enrollment shifts" mechanism that the Harvard CEPR study found explained much of Newark's citywide improvement in ELA value-added between 2010 and 2016. See: https://cepr.harvard.edu/evaluating-newark-school-reform

[23] Note that Figure 8 shows that students in Newark's charters perform slightly *below* the median city or town in New Jersey, while Figure 3 shows that

students in Newark charters perform slightly *above* the average student in New Jersey. The reason for this apparent discrepancy is that New Jersey's higher performing cities and towns tend to have fewer students than the state's lower-performing cities and towns. While Newark's charters have recently surpassed the *mean* performance of the rest of the state, they have yet to surpass the *median* city or town performance.

Figure 8 – In 2018, Newark's charters outperformed nearly half of all cities and towns in New Jersey on the ELA and math tests.
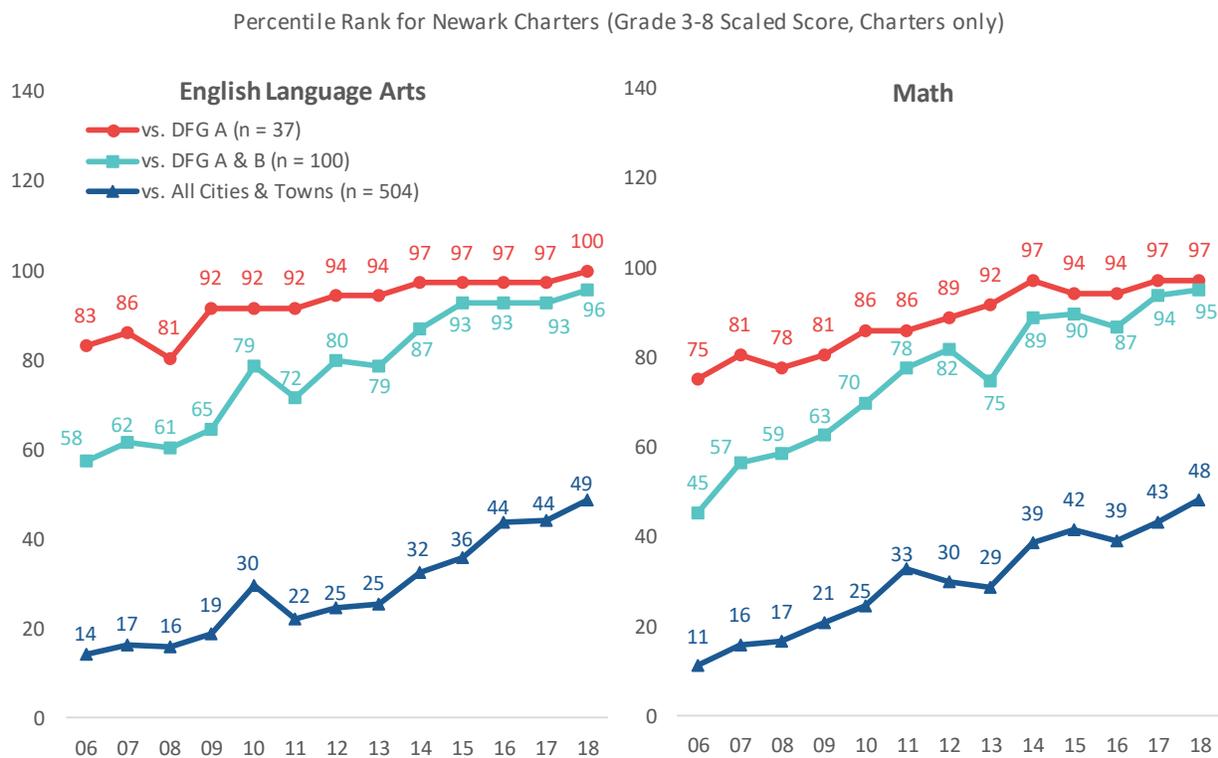
Percentile Rank for Newark Charters (Grade 3-8 Scaled Score, Charters only)

Source: analysis of data from the NJDOE website. Note: each number shows the percentile rank of Newark's charters – treating the group of charters as though they were a single city – against the comparison group noted. The comparison districts include both charter and district schools. Grade 3-8 average scaled score is used as the underlying performance measure.

Black Students in Schools that Beat the State Proficiency Average: 2006 to 2018

Given that Newark's student population is over 90% Black and Latino, improving performance in Newark can help to close the racial achievement gap that exists both in New Jersey and nationally. Black students, in particular, represent Newark's largest racial group and historically its lowest performing. In 2006, 45% of Black students in Newark in grades 3-8 were proficient on the state test, compared to 60% of Latino students and 80% of white students.[24] Similar trends emerge at the national level

as well. In 2000, Black students had the lowest 8th grade average scaled score on the national mathematics assessment of any race, scoring 39 points lower than white students and seven points lower than Latino students. In 2017, Black students remained at the bottom in this metric and scored 33 points lower than white students and nine points lower than Latino students. Similar national achievement gaps exist for ELA.[25]

As shown in Figure 9, as Newark's performance has improved, Black students have had greater access to high-performing schools. In 2006, for example, only 7% of

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[24] These results from 2006 are based on the NJASK test and include both district and charter school students.

[25] U.S. Dept. of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

Black students in Newark attended a school that beat the state proficiency average in their grade.[26] By 2018, that number had more than quadrupled: 31% of Black students in Newark attended a school that beat the state average. By contrast, the percentage of Black students in the rest of New Jersey attending a school that beat the state average remained relatively constant – between 25% and 29% – during this time period.

As shown in Figure 9, the gains for Black students in Newark on this measure were driven primarily by the city's charter sector, which historically enrolls a disproportionate share of the city's Black population.[27] Initially, charter market-share gains led to Newark's citywide improvement on this measure. In 2006, for example, 2% of Black students in the Newark district attended a school that beat the state average and 33% of Black students at Newark's charters attended a school that beat the state average. This led to a Newark citywide "beat-the-average" rate of 7% for Black students. By 2015, Newark's district and charter numbers were largely unchanged: 2% of Black students in the Newark district attended a school that beat the state average and 35% of Black students at Newark's charters

Figure 9 – Citywide, the percentage of Black students in Newark attending a school that beat the state average quadrupled from 2006 to 2018.

Percent of Black Students Enrolled in a School that Beat the New Jersey State Average (2006-2018)
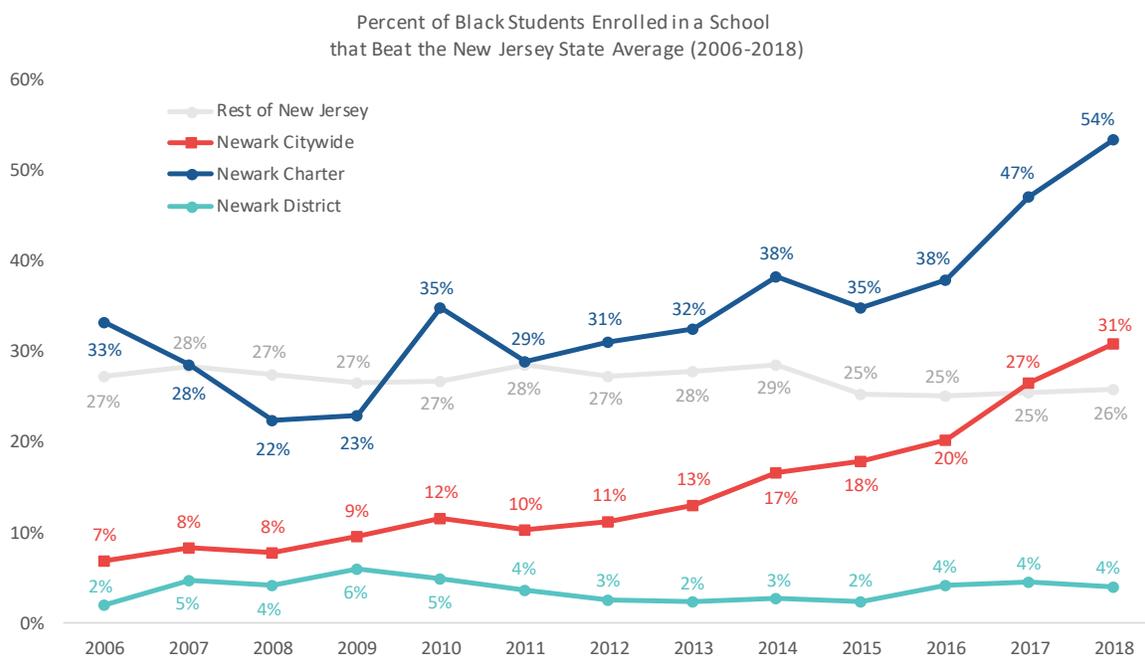
Source: analysis of data from the NJDOE website. Note: the graph shows the percentage of Black students enrolled in a school that had a higher proficiency rate than the state at their grade level (combining both ELA and math tests in grade 3-8).

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[26] This analysis includes only students in grades 3-8 and is based on the aggregate proficiency rate for both ELA and math. It is a modified and updated version of an earlier analysis by Andrew Martin that appeared in *The 74* (https://www.the74million.org/ article/the-prize-the-unwritten-appendix-by-those-inside-newarks-improving-schools/)

[27] In 2017, for example, 81% of K-12 students in Newark's charter schools were Black compared to 42% of K-12 students in Newark's district schools.

attended a school that beat the state average. However, the citywide "beat-the-average" number had increased from 7% to 18% as charters came to enroll a higher share of Black students in Newark.[28] [29]
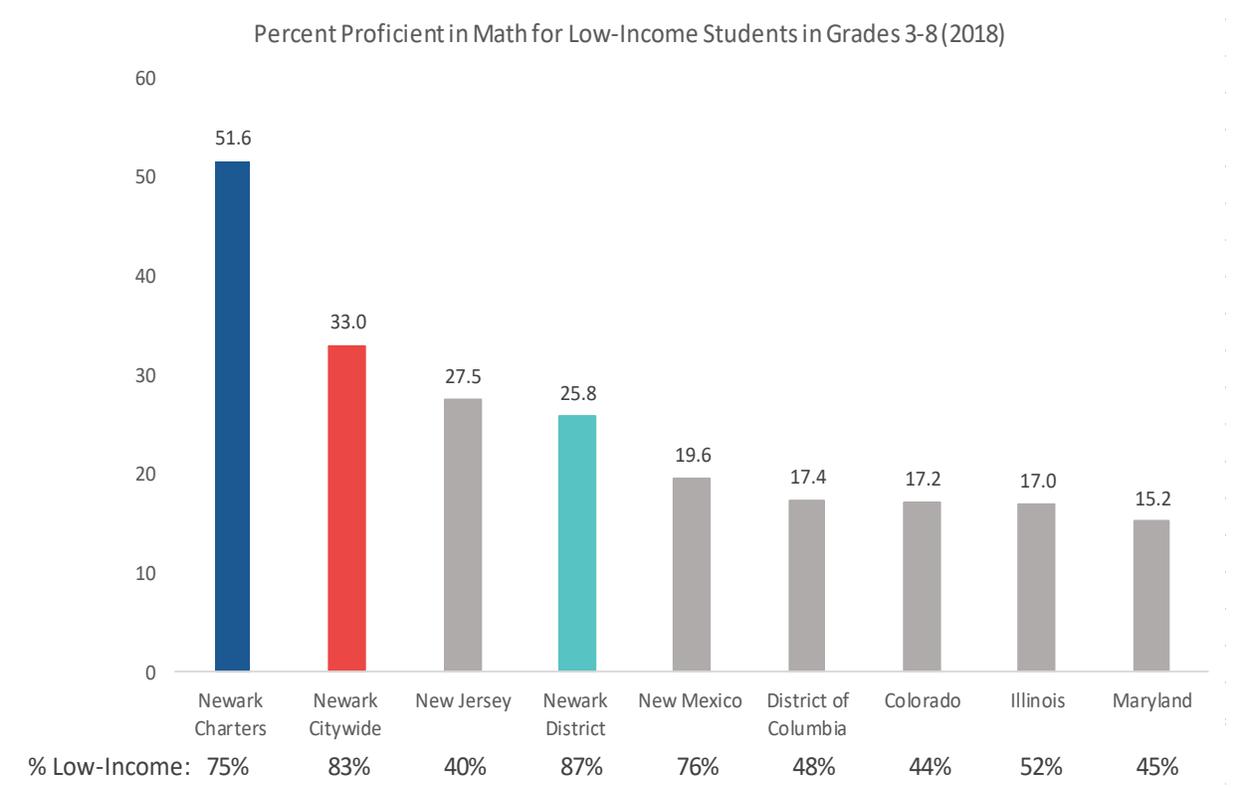
Since 2016, the share of Newark's Black charter school students attending a school that beat the state average in their grade has also been on the rise, increasing to 54% in 2018. In 2018, for the first time, more than half of Newark's Black charter school students attended a school with test scores

above the statewide average. Combined with continued charter enrollment share gains, these trends have led to an accelerating share of Black students citywide attending a school that beats the statewide proficiency rate.

Performance relative to other PARCC states and districts

To expand our comparison group, we can look at other states whose students took the

Figure 10 – In math, Newark's citywide proficiency rate for low-income students was higher than the statewide proficiency rate for low-income students in every PARCC state.

Percent Proficient in Math for Low-Income Students in Grades 3-8 (2018)

	Newark Charters	Newark Citywide	New Jersey	Newark District	New Mexico	District of Columbia	Colorado	Illinois	Maryland
Value	51.6	33.0	27.5	25.8	19.6	17.4	17.2	17.0	15.2
% Low-Income:	75%	83%	40%	87%	76%	48%	44%	52%	45%

Source: State DOE websites. Note: The "low-income" title refers to however defined by the state, including: low-income (IL), free/reduced price lunch (NJ, CO), economically disadvantaged (NM), Title I (MD), at-risk (D.C.).

[28] In 2006, Newark's charters enrolled 16% of Black students in grades 3-8 in Newark. By 2015, Newark's charters enrolled 48% of the city's Black students in grades 3-8, a number that increased to 54% by 2018. [29] The breakdown of enrollment by race at North Star Academy reported on the NJDOE website for

2018 is incorrect (most students are categorized as Latino when most students should be categorized as Black). Therefore, all analyses based on student race adjust the demographics at North Star Academy to match the racial breakdown from 2017.

PARCC test in 2018. In addition to New Jersey, the PARCC test was taken by students in New Mexico, Illinois, Maryland, Colorado, and the District of Columbia.[30]

Figure 10 shows the grade 3-8 math proficiency rate for low-income students in Newark and in each of the PARCC states. Citywide, Newark's low-income students have a higher proficiency rate than the low-income students in any of the five PARCC states or the District of Columbia. Newark's strong performance is driven by its charter schools, whose low-income students have a proficiency rate more than 20 points higher than the low-income students statewide in New Jersey. However, even Newark's district schools have a low-income proficiency rate in math that is higher than the low-income proficiency rate in any PARCC state outside of New Jersey. Figure A7, in the appendix, shows similar results for ELA.

Figure 11 shows how Newark compares to all districts in PARCC states that had at least 5,000 low-income students tested in grades 3-8 in 2018. Newark's citywide math proficiency rate for low-income students of 33.0% was the highest among all PARCC districts with at least 5,000 low-income students, besting cities like Denver (17.9%), Chicago (17.0%), the District of Columbia (14.7%) and Baltimore (10.8%).[31] The Newark district schools trailed only four of 25 comparison districts, two of which are the neighboring districts of Elizabeth and Jersey City. Figure A8 in the appendix shows similar results for ELA.

These comparisons to other PARCC states help put the earlier results in context. Newark's gains against other districts in the state are all the more impressive because New Jersey appears to be a relatively high-performing state. New Jersey's low-income students score higher in math and ELA than the low-income students in any other PARCC state, and the same is true if we look at all tested students. Test scores in Newark have been rising against the high bar set by other New Jersey districts.

Test Score Growth

In addition to test score performance, we also look at test score growth in Newark. To measure test score growth, we use the Student Growth Percentile (SGP), which the NJDOE has calculated since 2012 for all schools serving students in upper elementary or middle school grades.[32] The SGP is a growth measure for students in grades 4-8 that compares each student's test score to the test score of students with similar test score histories in previous years. A student with an SGP of 80 in a given year and subject, for example, had a test score that was higher than 80% of students with similar test score histories. Schools in New Jersey are evaluated based on the median SGP, where the median SGP is the middle number when ranking all of the school's students from top to bottom by their individual SGP. The median SGP for the entire state is, by definition, a 50. Schools' median SGPs tend to range from the low 30s

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[30] Colorado took an abbreviated version of the test in 2018. More can be learned here https://www.chalkbeat.org/posts/co/2017/07/05/from-csap-to-parcc-heres-how-colorados-standardized-tests-have-changed-and-whats-next/

[31] DC reports scores for low-income students using a composite measure labeled "at-risk." This appears to be a more restrictive definition of low-income than

NJ uses. However, even if we compare Newark's low-income students to all of D.C., including the non-low-income students, Newark's citywide proficiency rate of 33.0% is still higher than D.C. (30.4% including charters, or 31.5%, excluding charters)

[32] More information on SGPs can be found here https://www.state.nj.us/education/AchieveNJ/teacher/percentile.shtml

Figure 11 – In 2018, low-income students in Newark's district schools outperformed low-income students in math in most other large PARCC districts.

Percent Proficient in Math for Low-Income Students
(includes PARCC districts with 5,000+ low-income students tested in grades 3-8, 2018)

District (State, % Low-Income)	Value
Newark Charters (NJ, 75%)	51.6
Newark Citywide (NJ, 83%)	33.0
Gadsden (NM, 100%)	32.5
Elizabeth City (NJ, 83%)	31.3
Jersey City (NJ, 74%)	30.3
Montgomery County (MD, 35%)	30.1
Newark District (NJ, 87%)	25.8
Las Cruces (NM, 84%)	20.4
Paterson City (NJ, 80%)	20.2
Cherry Creek 5 (CO, 30%)	19.5
Colorado Springs 11 (CO, 60%)	18.8
Denver County 1 (CO, 66%)	17.9
Jefferson County R-1 (CO, 32%)	17.4
City Of Chicago SD 299 (IL, 84%)	17.0
SD U-46 (IL, 63%)	16.1
Joliet PSD 86 (IL, 100%)	16.0
Pueblo City 60 (CO, 82%)	16.0
Greeley 6 (CO, 65%)	15.2
Adams 12 Five Star Schools (CO, 42%)	14.7
District Of Columbia Public Schools (DC, 47%)	14.7
Albuquerque (NM, 73%)	14.4
Baltimore County (MD, 47%)	13.3
Cicero SD 99 (IL, 84%)	13.0
Adams-Arapahoe 28J (CO, 76%)	12.5
Waukegan CUSD 60 (IL, 72%)	11.7
Prince George'S County (MD, 63%)	11.2
Baltimore City (MD, 87%)	10.8
Rockford SD 205 (IL, 69%)	6.7

Source: State DOE websites. Note: The "low-income" title refers to several different classifications including: low-income (IL), free/reduced price lunch (NJ, CO), economically disadvantaged (NM), Title I (MD), at-risk (D.C.), or however defined by the state. For Maryland, the count of low-income students are only available for grades K-12, rather than grades 3-8 as in all other states. Therefore, the MD district cutoff is set to 10,000 low-income students rather than 5,000. Maryland districts and Newark Citywide include charter schools, but all other districts exclude charter schools.

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to the high 60s, with schools occasionally earning median SGPs outside of that band.

Since the state does not release a median SGP for Newark citywide that includes both Newark's district and charter school students, we calculate a weighted average of the median SGP in all of Newark's district and charter schools. As shown in our prior report, this methodology is likely to produce results that are very close to what would be obtained by calculating the median from student-level data.

As Figure 12 shows, between 2012 and 2018, Newark's citywide SGP improved in both ELA and math. In ELA, Newark's citywide SGP increased from 42.2 in 2012 to 48.9 in 2018, slightly below the state average of 50.0. In math, Newark's citywide
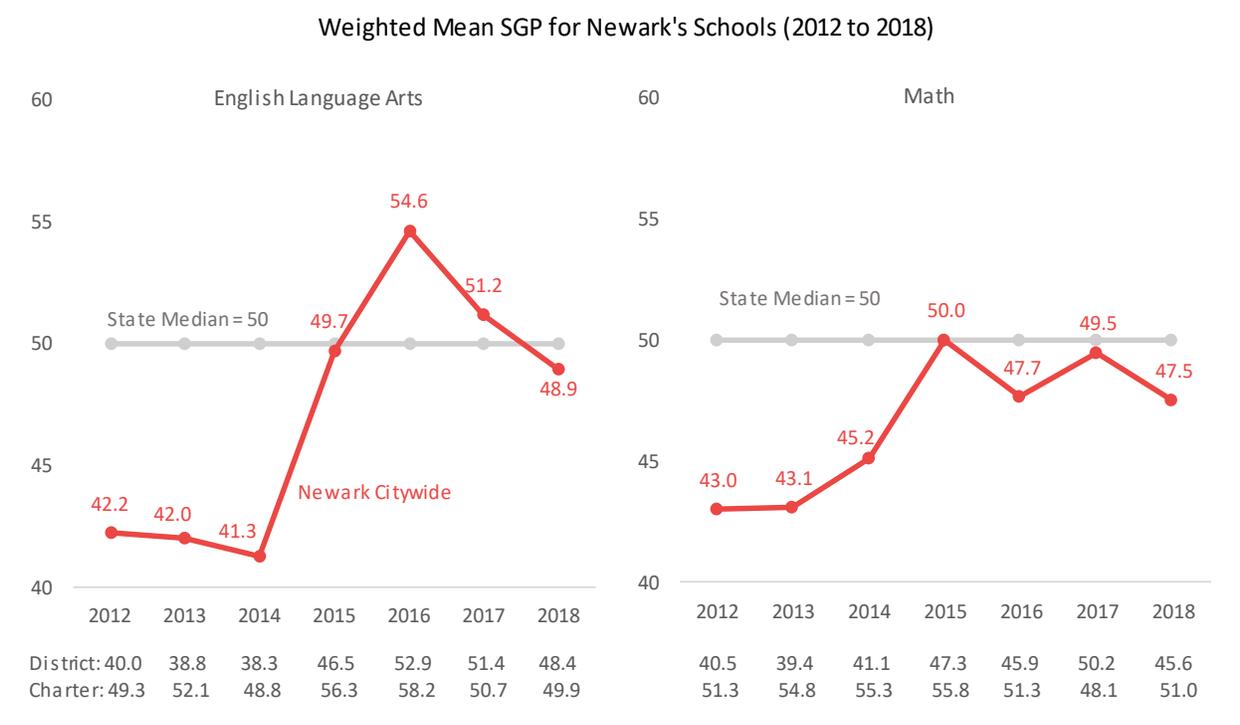
SGP improved from 43.0 in 2012 to 47.5 in 2018.

While an improvement over 2012, Newark's 2018 citywide SGP scores were lower than their recent peaks (50.0 in 2015 for math and 54.6 in 2016 for ELA). As shown earlier in Figure 6, 2018 was the first time in several years that Newark's test score performance rankings did not improve. To continue climbing in the rankings, Newark will likely need to once again achieve SGP scores that equal or exceed the state average.
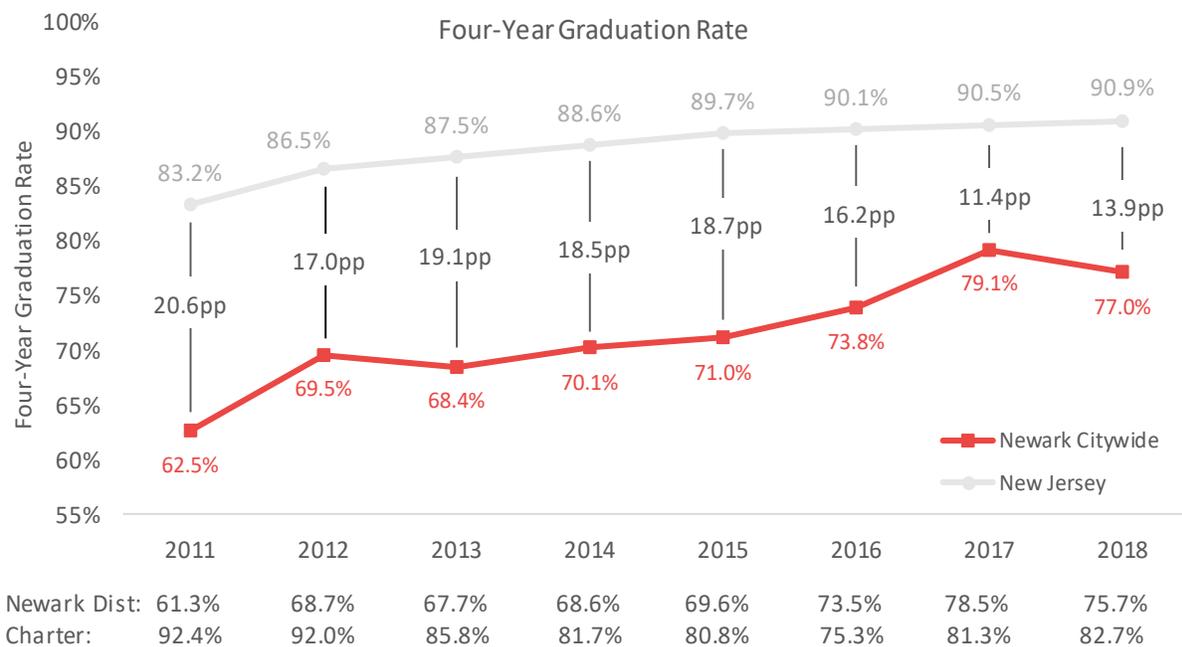
Graduation

While the earlier analyses are restricted to elementary and middle school students, Newark's high school students have demonstrated gains in the four-year

Figure 12 – Newark's citywide average growth score has risen in both ELA and math since 2012.

Weighted Mean SGP for Newark's Schools (2012 to 2018)

English Language Arts	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
District:	40.0	38.8	38.3	46.5	52.9	51.4	48.4
Charter:	49.3	52.1	48.8	56.3	58.2	50.7	49.9

Math	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
	40.5	39.4	41.1	47.3	45.9	50.2	45.6
	51.3	54.8	55.3	55.8	51.3	48.1	51.0

Source: analysis of data from the NJDOE website. Note: the graph shows the weighted mean of school-level median SGPs for grades 4-8 in ELA and grades 4-7 in Math. New Jersey does not calculate SGPs for math in grade 8.

Figure 13 – Since 2011, Newark's citywide high school graduation rate has increased by 14 percentage points, closing the gap with the state by 7 percentage points.

Source: analysis of data from the NJDOE website.

graduation rate. Figure 13 shows that between 2011 and 2018, Newark's citywide four-year graduation rate increased by 14.5 percentage points, from 62.5% to 77.0%. While the statewide graduation rate also increased during this period, Newark's rate increased faster, closing the graduation rate gap with the state by 6.7 percentage points. Despite these gains, Newark's citywide four-year graduation rate continues to be 13.9 percentage points below the statewide rate.

Newark's citywide graduation rate gains have largely been driven by improvement in Newark's district schools. As shown at the bottom of Figure 13, Newark district's four-year graduation rate improved from 61.3% in 2011 to 75.7% in 2017, a 14.4 percentage

point gain that roughly matched Newark's citywide gain. While the graduation rate in Newark's charter sector has always been higher than the rate in Newark's district schools, it declined as more charters had their first graduating classes. In 2011, only two charters – North Star and KIPP – had graduating classes. By 2018, there were a total of six Newark charters with high school graduating classes.

School-level Results

To explore school-level variation in results, we look at grade 3-8 test score performance and growth in Newark's schools.[33] Figure 14 shows a scatterplot of every school in

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[33] This analysis includes all schools that reported a grade 3-8 proficiency rate in 2018 and a median SGP

in 2016, 2017, and 2018. High schools with students tested in grades 8 and below are included.

Figure 14 – While Newark has seen substantial citywide gains in test score performance and growth, many students remain enrolled in low growth, low proficiency schools.
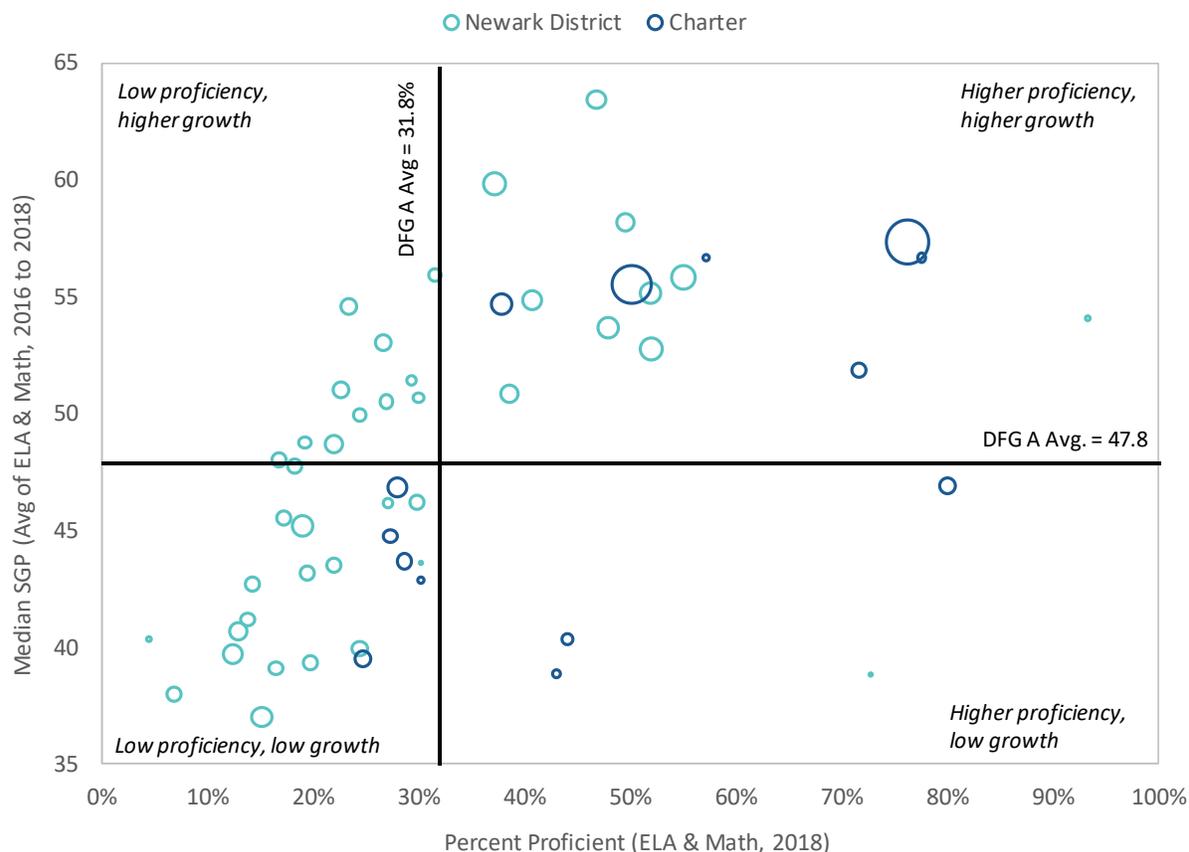
Source: analysis of data from the NJDOE website. The size of the bubble is proportional to the number of students tested. North Star and KIPP operate as multiple schools in Newark but appear as single bubbles in the chart, since their data is reported as one entity by the state. This figure excludes schools that do not have proficiency data in 2018 and SGP data in 2016, 2017, and 2018.

Newark with students tested in grades 3-8. It plots the school's 2018 proficiency rate on the x-axis and its mean SGP from 2016 to 2018 on the y-axis.[34] The figure is divided into quadrants based on the average proficiency rate and SGP for all DFG A districts. The size of each bubble is proportional to the number of students tested.

As shown in the figure, there is a positive correlation between growth and performance. Schools with higher average

SGP from 2016 to 2018 tended to see a higher proficiency rate in 2018, and a number of Newark district and charter schools earned high growth and performance scores. Visible in the upper right-hand quadrant of the figure are the 16 schools that beat the DFG A average in both growth and proficiency. These schools – which include 10 district schools and 6 charters – enroll over 21,000 students, of whom 86% qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, and 89% are Black or Latino (50%

[34] Given the significant year-to-year variability in school-level SGP scores, we average the three most

recent years to provide a more reliable growth measure for each school.

and 39%, respectively). On average, 56% of these students were proficient on the 2018 test, with over 70% reaching proficiency in several schools.

There are also 11 schools in the upper left-hand quadrant of Figure 14. These low-proficiency, higher-growth schools are all part of Newark district and have median SGPs above the DFG A average. These schools enroll over 6,600 students, of whom 89% are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch and 97% are Black or Latino (56% and 41%, respectively). While their current proficiency rate is low – on average 23% of the students in these schools passed state tests in 2018 – their higher growth scores are a positive sign for the future.

However, there remain a substantial number of schools in the lower left-hand corner of the chart. By any reasonable standard, these are "low-growth, low-proficiency" schools. These schools have a growth score and proficiency rate below the DFG A average. Given that DFG A contains the highest-need and some of the lowest-performing cities and towns in the state, scoring below the DFG A average for both growth and proficiency is cause for concern.

In total, there are 25 low-growth, low-proficiency schools in Newark enrolling over 15,000 students, roughly 30% of Newark's citywide student population. In this group, over 11,500 students are enrolled in Newark's district schools and over 3,500 in charters. Of these students, 83% are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch and 98% are Black or Latino (67% and 31%, respectively). On average, 19% of these students scored proficient on the 2018 test, with less than 10% scoring proficient in some schools.

Despite the gains in Newark's citywide average test score performance, test score growth, and graduation rate that are shown

earlier in this report, a rising tide has not lifted all boats. Future improvement efforts should pay special attention to those schools that continue to have low performance and chronically low growth.

Conclusion

In recent years, Newark's schools have shown substantial gains in elementary and middle school test score performance, test score growth, and the high school graduation rate. Compared to demographically similar cities and towns in New Jersey, Newark's citywide ELA and math test scores in grades 3-8 have gone from being in the bottom 40% in 2006 to the top 25% in 2018. During that time, the share of Black students in Newark attending a school that beat the state test score average more than quadrupled, from 7% to 31%. Over the last six years, Newark's citywide test score growth in grades 4-8 has risen to be roughly on par with the statewide average. The high school graduation rate has improved by 14 points since 2011, closing the gap with the state by seven points.

While Newark's strong and expanding charter sector has been responsible for some of these gains, recent improvements in test scores and graduation rates at Newark's district schools have also contributed. Against a backdrop of increasing enrollment, with the number of K-12 students in Newark citywide topping 50,000 in 2018 for the first time in at least two decades, these results are very encouraging.

However, if one only reads the popular press, one might come away with the notion that school reform in Newark has been a failure. In February 2019, for example, *U.S. News* reported that reform efforts in Newark "flooded the city with charter schools but barely budged the student success barometer" and that Mark Zuckerberg's

2010 gift, in particular, is "often characterized as a failure."[35] The pervasive perception of Newark's school reforms as a failure seems to have been generated, at least in some circles, by the publication of and reaction to Dale Russakoff's 2014 *New Yorker* article (later turned into a book) on the Zuckerberg gift. While Russakoff's article said little about the *outcomes* of Newark's school reforms – it focused, rather, on the top-down way in which they were implemented – critics were quick to use it to brand the reforms a failure. Despite modest gains prior to the article's 2014 publication and more impressive gains since, that label has proven hard to shake.

More scholarly critiques of the results of Newark's school reform efforts have claimed that the magnitude of the gains is small. In reviewing the Harvard study, which found statistically significant ELA test score value-added gains in Newark through 2016, Baker and Weber (2017) write that the study finds "what can, at best, be described as isolated and small effect sizes."[36] [37] Given the various gains we present here – math and ELA test scores, performance and growth measures, and the high school graduation rate – we don't think our study's gains would reasonably be described as "isolated." A more difficult question is whether they should be considered small.

As shown earlier in this report, from 2006 to 2018, Newark's citywide test scores in grades 3-8 improved from the 39th percentile in DFG A to the 78th percentile. In other words, among the state's poorest cities and towns, Newark went from a below-average city to a top quartile city. Against the entire

state, Newark's gains have been less dramatic, with the citywide test scores rising from the 4th to the 14th percentile over the past decade. While the gains certainly appear smaller when compared to a statewide reference group, they nonetheless seem important. After years in the bottom 5% of New Jersey, Newark has pulled itself out and is no longer even a bottom 10% city. When combined with higher test score growth and a rising graduation rate, which is closing the gap with the state by roughly a point per year, Newark's citywide gains seem both real and meaningful.

Moreover, Newark's charter sector has done well by almost any measure. When treated as their own district and compared to all other cities and towns in New Jersey, Newark's charters have improved from the 14th to the 49th percentile in grade 3-8 ELA test scores and the 11th to the 48th percentile in grade 3-8 math test scores between 2006 and 2018. Compared to the 37 cities and towns with socioeconomically similar students, Newark's charters have the highest test scores in ELA and second highest in math. In 2018, for the first time, charter school students in Newark had a higher proficiency rate than students statewide in both math and ELA, and more than half of the Black students in Newark attending a charter were enrolled in a school that beat the state test score average in their grade.

These positive results for Newark's charters are not news to those who have followed the academic literature. In 2015, CREDO at Stanford University found that charter schools in Newark were associated with the second largest learning gains among charters in the 41 urban areas they studied.[38] Also in

[35] https://www.usnews.com/news/education-news/articles/2019-02-08/how-betsy-devos-could-sink-cory-bookers-presidential-bid

[36] https://cepr.harvard.edu/evaluating-newark-school-reform

[37] https://nepc.colorado.edu/thinktank/review-newark-reform

[38] http://urbancharters.stanford.edu/summary.php

2015, CPRE at the University of Washington found that a higher share of Newark students were enrolled in a "beat-the-odds" school than in any of the 50 cities they studied, with charters in Newark performing extremely well.[39] However, the latest data in these studies are at least five years old.[40] The news since then is that students in Newark's charters have continued to perform well – and by some measures improved – even while the sector has grown to represent one-third of Newark's students.

Moreover, in recent years, gains in Newark's district schools have driven citywide improvement as well. After years of stagnation, the elementary and middle school test score performance in Newark's district schools has improved relative to similar districts; its growth numbers are now almost on par with the state, and the high school graduation rate has risen by over 14 points in seven years.

Our claim in this study is not that any particular reform, or collection of reforms, *caused* these gains. We are not arguing that Cory Booker's election in 2006, Mark Zuckerberg's gift in 2010, or Ras Baraka's election in 2014 (and the policy changes that accompanied each) led to the improvement shown in this report, though each may have contributed. We are simply arguing that these gains happened, they are real, and they are meaningful. Where few Newark students in 2006 had hope of attending a high performing school, a substantial and growing number now do. But there remains much work to be done. We hope the results presented here can provide a useful baseline against which to measure future progress as the city regains full local control of its schools.

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[39] https://www.crpe.org/sites/default/files/ measuringup_10.2015_0.pdf

[40] The CREDO study used performance data through 2012 and the CPRE study used performance data through 2013.

Appendix

Figure A1 – The PARCC test set a significantly higher standard than the NJASK test, so their proficiency rates are not directly comparable.

Percent Proficient on the ELA and Math Test

English Language Arts / Math charts (NJASK and PARCC)
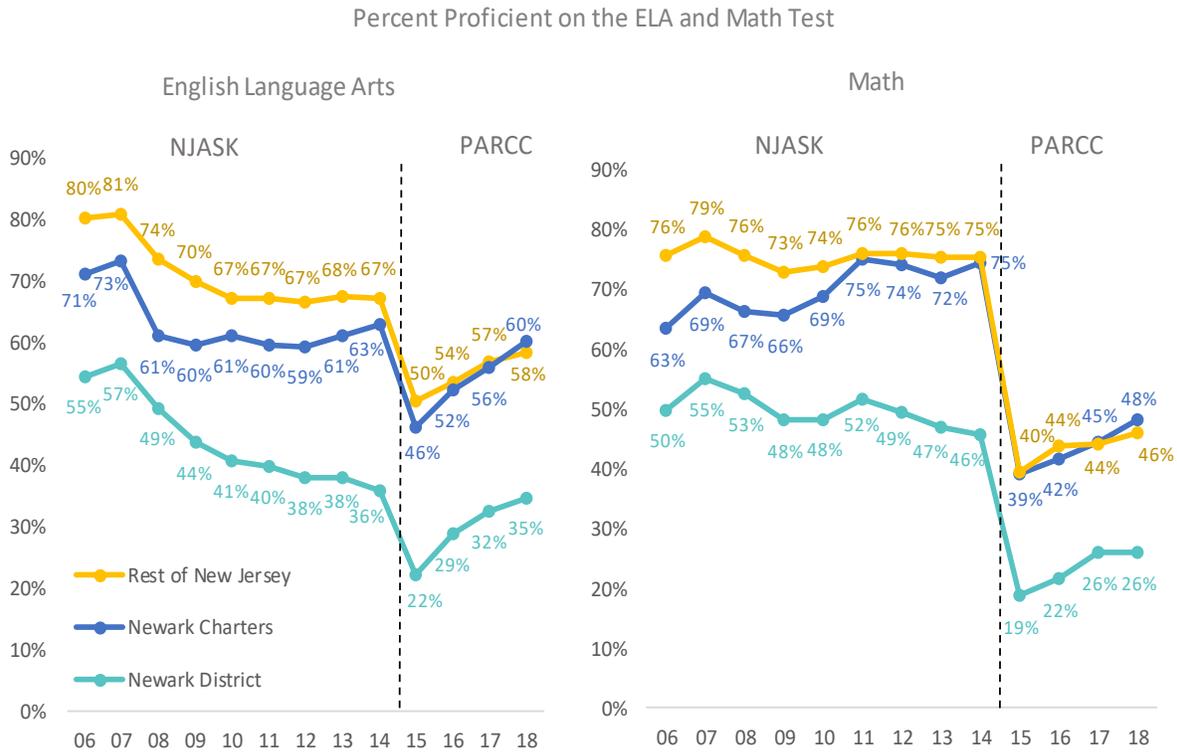
Source: analysis of data from the NJDOE website. Note: proficiency rates are shown for grades 3-8 from 2006 to 2018. The dashed line marks the transition from the NJASK test to the PARCC test.

Figure A2 - Enrollment and Demographics of DFG A Districts (2018, Including Charters)

| Geographic District (includes charters)	Enrollment	% Free or Reduced Lunch	% Asian	% Black	% Hispanic	% White	% Other	% ELL
WOODBINE BORO	218	100%	0%	37%	31%	28%	4%	0%
PASSAIC CITY	15,239	97%	2%	5%	92%	1%	0%	23%
ATLANTIC CITY	7,400	92%	16%	36%	41%	5%	2%	16%
PAULSBORO BORO	1,125	90%	0%	53%	10%	33%	4%	1%
PERTH AMBOY CITY	11,215	89%	0%	5%	92%	1%	0%	25%
PLEASANTVILLE CITY	3,882	89%	1%	35%	61%	2%	1%	19%
UNION CITY	12,291	89%	1%	1%	96%	2%	0%	26%
TRENTON CITY	14,120	87%	0%	49%	48%	1%	1%	18%
NEWARK CITY	52,918	84%	1%	55%	37%	6%	1%	9%
IRVINGTON TOWNSHIP	7,302	83%	0%	81%	18%	0%	1%	16%
ELIZABETH CITY	27,212	81%	2%	18%	72%	8%	0%	19%
EGG HARBOR CITY	535	80%	1%	27%	41%	26%	5%	4%
WEST NEW YORK TOWN	7,904	80%	1%	1%	91%	6%	0%	12%
SALEM CITY	1,169	79%	0%	70%	13%	15%	2%	1%
CAMDEN CITY	16,682	78%	1%	43%	54%	1%	1%	9%
DOVER TOWN	3,242	76%	2%	4%	88%	6%	0%	10%
PATERSON CITY	28,801	76%	5%	23%	67%	5%	0%	17%
SEASIDE HEIGHTS BORO	233	74%	1%	15%	50%	27%	7%	18%
PENNS GRV-CARNEY'S PT RE	2,086	73%	0%	37%	36%	26%	1%	10%
CITY OF ORANGE TWP	5,129	71%	0%	62%	37%	0%	0%	12%
MILLVILLE CITY	5,674	70%	1%	33%	24%	39%	3%	2%
WILDWOOD CITY	886	70%	1%	13%	64%	22%	0%	20%
EAST NEWARK BORO	33	67%	3%	12%	79%	6%	0%	0%
BRIDGETON CITY	5,994	65%	0%	23%	72%	4%	2%	20%
ASBURY PARK CITY	2,370	65%	0%	56%	41%	2%	1%	8%
EAST ORANGE	9,850	63%	0%	91%	8%	1%	0%	5%
NORTH WILDWOOD CITY	209	63%	0%	0%	13%	79%	7%	2%
COMMERCIAL TWP	530	58%	1%	13%	13%	70%	2%	0%
VINELAND CITY	10,257	58%	2%	16%	57%	22%	2%	8%
FAIRVIEW BORO	1,445	57%	1%	1%	83%	14%	0%	16%
BUENA REGIONAL	1,739	53%	1%	17%	28%	54%	0%	3%
NEW BRUNSWICK CITY	9,645	50%	1%	9%	89%	1%	0%	23%
DOWNE TWP	179	45%	1%	3%	3%	91%	2%	0%
KEANSBURG BORO	1,532	43%	2%	18%	24%	56%	2%	3%
LAWRENCE TWP	465	39%	1%	8%	15%	70%	6%	3%
QUINTON TWP	326	37%	1%	14%	9%	64%	12%	0%
FAIRFIELD TWP	573	13%	1%	55%	25%	10%	10%	4%
DFG A Total	270,408	79%	2%	33%	58%	7%	1%	14%

Source: analysis of data from the NJDOE website. Note: the breakdown of enrollment by race at North Star Academy (a charter in Newark) reported by the NJDOE website for 2018 is incorrect. For the demographics presented here, enrollment by race numbers were corrected using the race proportions from 2017 and the total enrollment from 2018.

Figure A3 - Percentage Free or Reduced Lunch in Newark and Other DFG A Districts (Including Charters)

Percentage Free or Reduced Lunch (2006-2018)
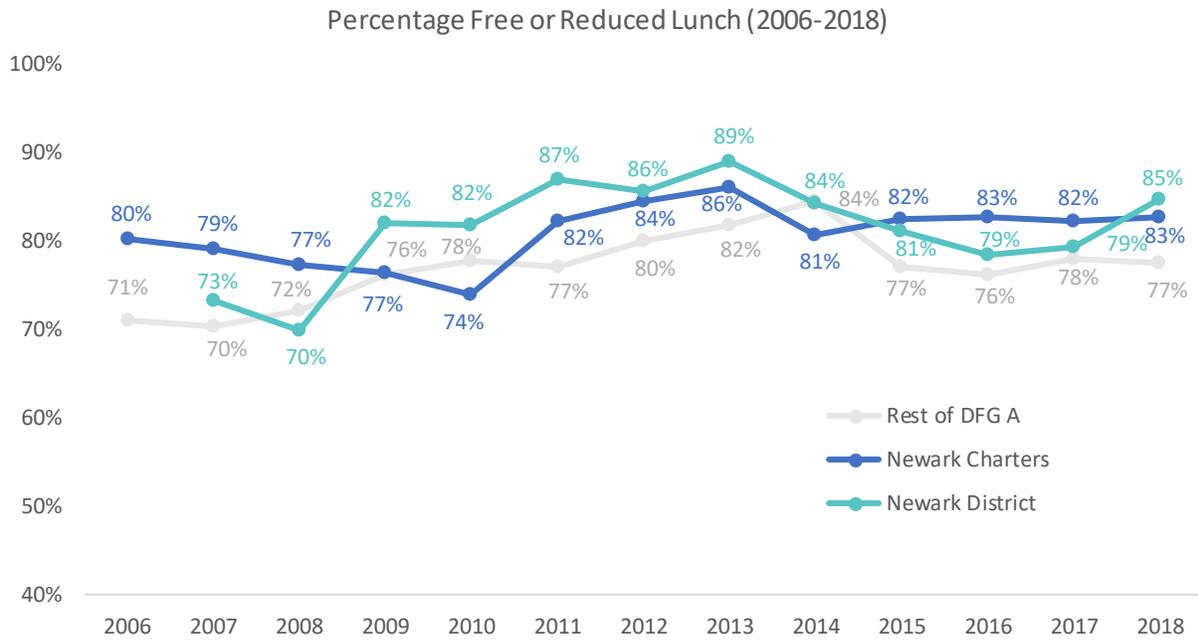
Source: analysis of data from the NJDOE website. Note: The 2006 Newark District value is 44%. This value does not appear to be reliable so is not presented in the figure.

Figure A4 – Percentile Rank for Newark Citywide (Grade 3-8 Proficiency, Includes Charters)
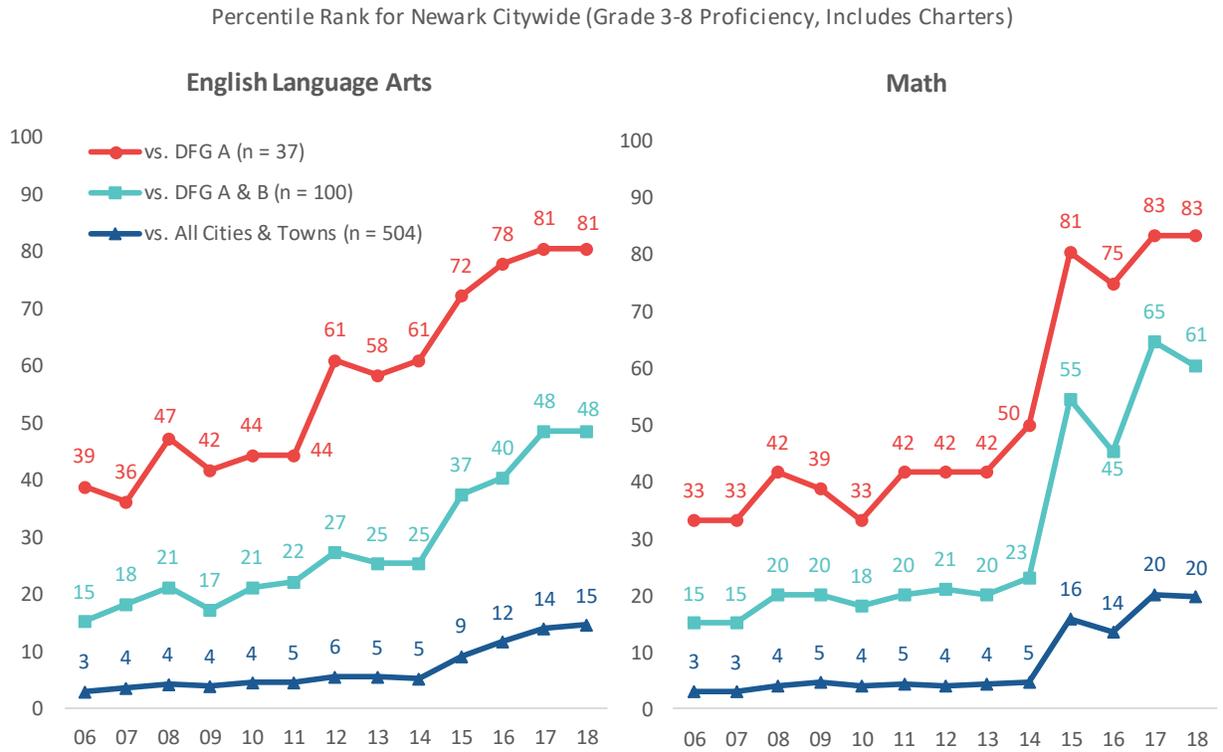
Percentile Rank for Newark Citywide (Grade 3-8 Proficiency, Includes Charters)

Source: analysis of data from the NJDOE website. Note: each number shows Newark's percentile rank – based on grade 3-8 proficiency – against the comparison group noted.

Figure A5 – Percentile Rank for Newark's district (Grade 3-8 Proficiency, Excludes Charters)
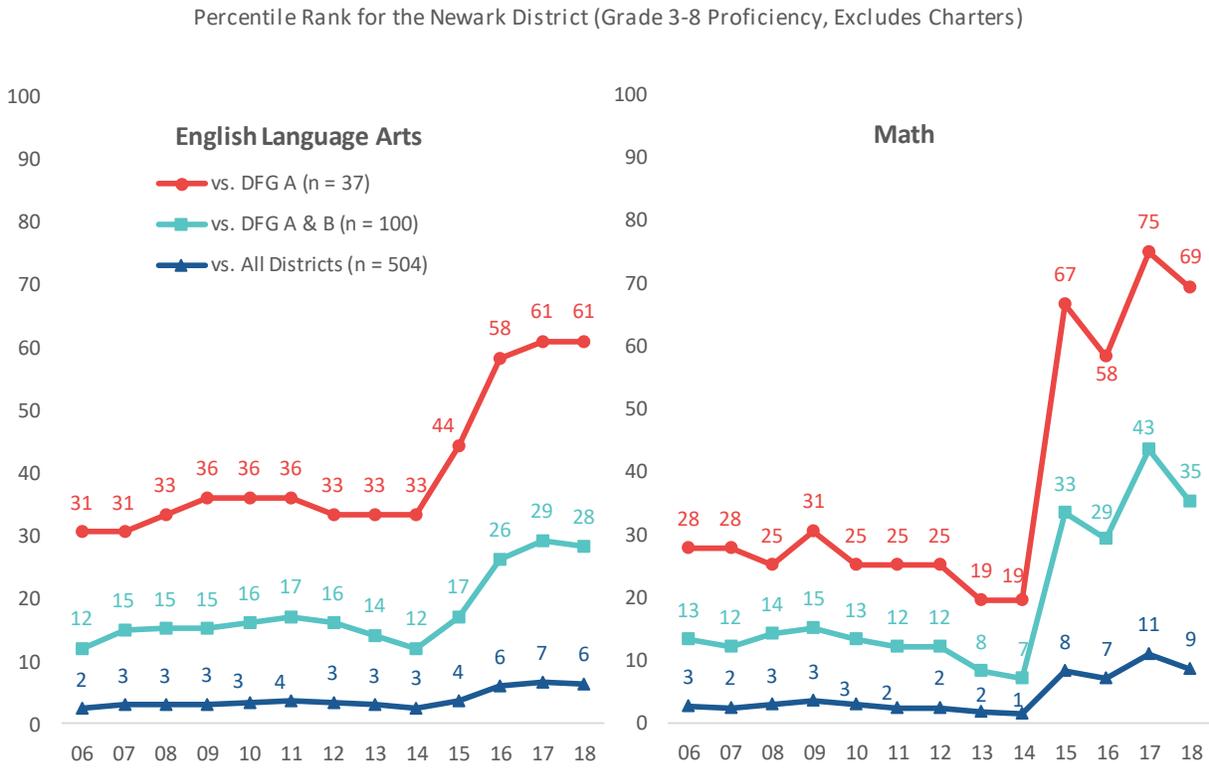
Percentile Rank for the Newark District (Grade 3-8 Proficiency, Excludes Charters)

Source: analysis of data from the NJDOE website. Note: each number shows the percentile rank of Newark's district – based on grade 3-8 proficiency – against the comparison group noted.

Figure A6 – Percentile Rank for Newark Charters (Grade 3-8 Proficiency, Charters Only)
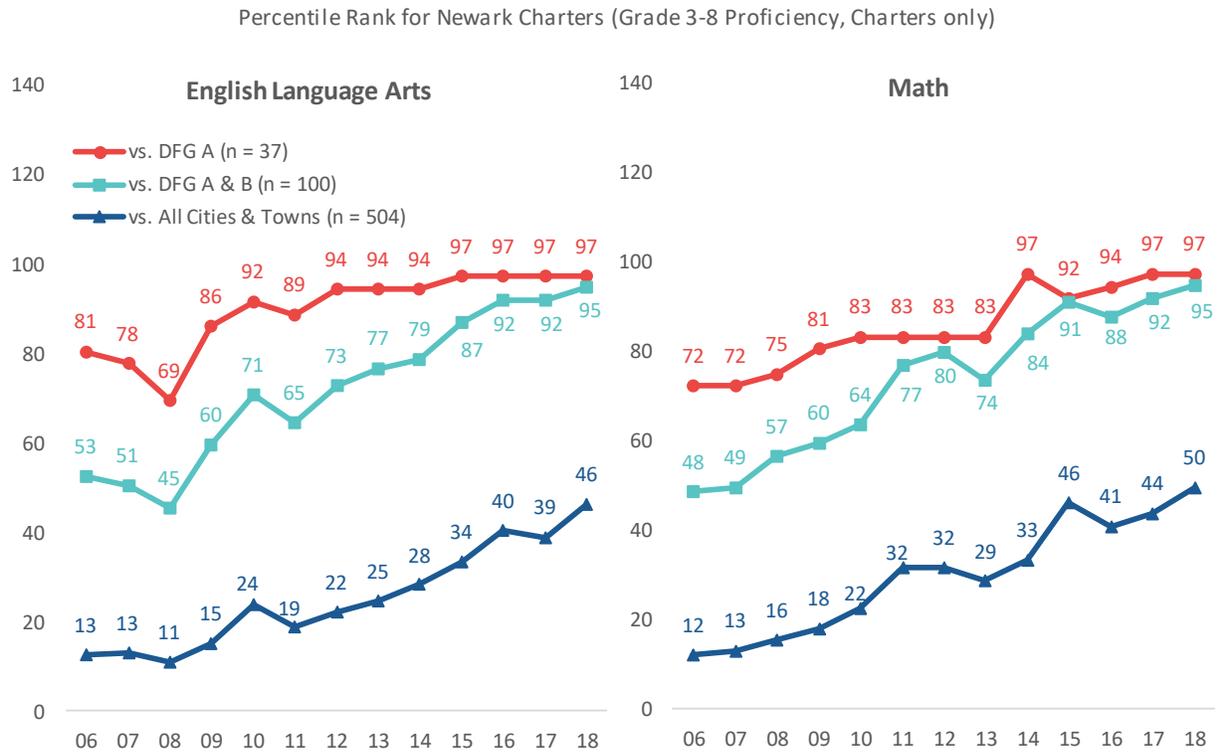
Percentile Rank for Newark Charters (Grade 3-8 Proficiency, Charters only)

Source: analysis of data from the NJDOE website. Note: each number shows the percentile rank of Newark charters – treating the group of charters as though they were a single city – against the comparison group noted. The comparison cities and towns include both charter and district schools. Grade 3-8 proficiency is used as the underlying performance measure.

Figure A7 – In ELA, Newark's citywide proficiency rate for low-income students was higher than the statewide proficiency rate for low-income students in every PARCC state.

Percent Proficient in ELA for Low-Income Students (2018)

	Newark Charters	Newark Citywide	New Jersey	Newark District	Colorado	New Mexico	Illinois	Maryland	District of Columbia
Value	62.2	42.6	39.3	34.2	27.2	24.0	22.6	21.0	18.9
% Low-Income:	75%	84%	38%	88%	44%	76%	52%	45%	47%
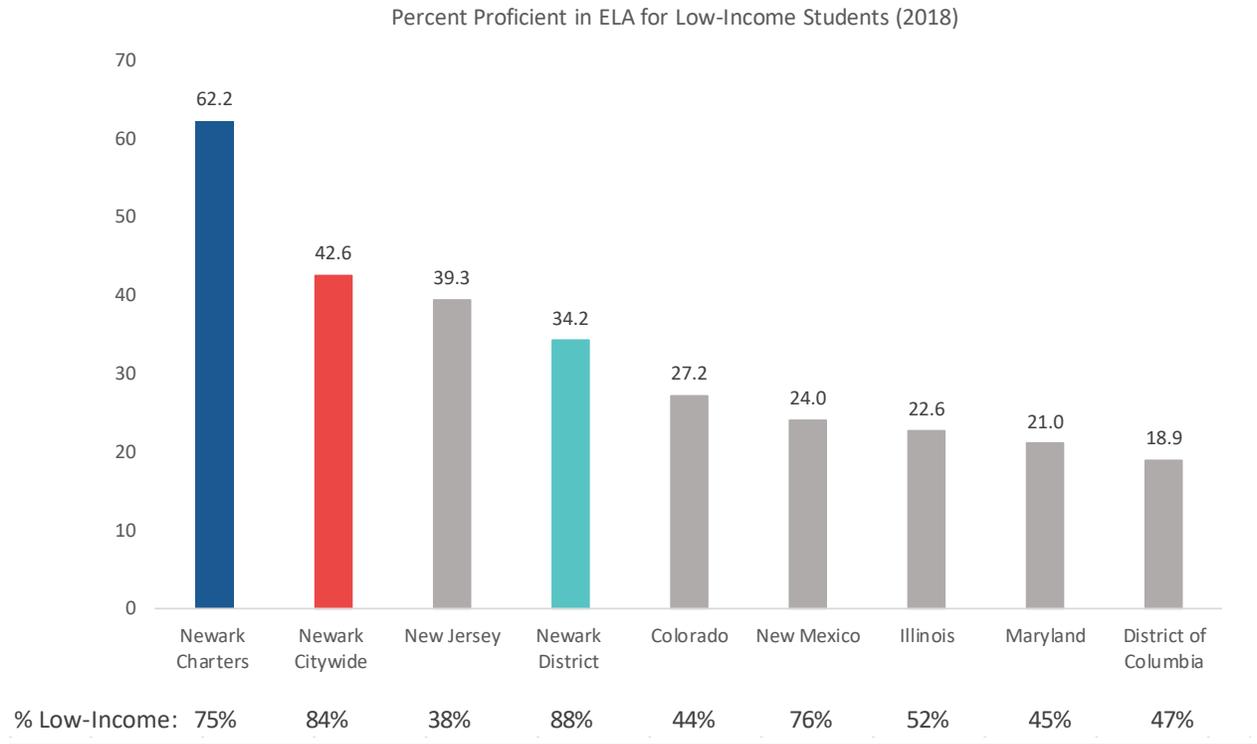
Source: State DOE websites. Note: The "low-income" title refers to free/reduced price lunch, economically disadvantaged, Title I, at-risk, or however defined by the state.

Figure A8 – Districtwide percent proficient in ELA for low-income students

Percent Proficient in ELA for Low-Income Students
(includes PARCC districts with 5,000+ low-income students tested in grades 3-8, 2018)

District (State, % Low-Income)	Value
Newark Charters (NJ, 75%)	62.2
Jersey City (NJ, 75%)	44.8
Elizabeth City (NJ, 82%)	44.7
Newark Citywide (NJ, 84%)	42.6
Gadsden (NM, 100%)	38.2
Newark District (NJ, 88%)	34.2
Paterson City (NJ, 80%)	31.6
Jefferson County R-1 (CO, 32%)	29.1
Cherry Creek 5 (CO, 30%)	28.7
Montgomery County (MD, 35%)	28.7
Colorado Springs 11 (CO, 60%)	27.9
Denver County 1 (CO, 66%)	27.2
Pueblo City 60 (CO, 82%)	27.1
Las Cruces (NM, 84%)	26
Greeley 6 (CO, 65%)	25.4
Adams 12 Five Star Schools (CO, 42%)	24.2
City Of Chicago SD 299 (IL, 84%)	22.4
Prince George'S County (MD, 63%)	20.8
Adams-Arapahoe 28J (CO, 76%)	20
Joliet PSD 86 (IL, 100%)	19.6
Albuquerque (NM, 73%)	18.8
Baltimore County (MD, 47%)	18.1
Cicero SD 99 (IL, 84%)	17.3
District Of Columbia Public Schools (DC, 46%)	17.2
SD U-46 (IL, 63%)	15.8
Waukegan CUSD 60 (IL, 72%)	13.6
Baltimore City (MD, 87%)	13.2
Rockford SD 205 (IL, 69%)	10.1

Source: State DOE websites. Note: The "low-income" title refers to several different classifications including: low-income (IL), free/reduced price lunch (NJ, CO), economically disadvantaged (NM), Title I (MD), at-risk (D.C.), or however defined by the state. For Maryland, the count of low-income students are only available for grades K-12, rather than grades 3-8 in all other states. Therefore, the MD district cutoff is set to 10,000 low-income students rather than 5,000. Maryland districts and Newark Citywide include charter schools, but all other districts exclude charter schools.