Review of the Pittsburgh Public Schools

ORGANIZATION, INSTRUCTION, RESEARCH, AND OPERATIONS

Council of the Great City Schools
2016

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Council of the Great City Schools thanks the many individuals who contributed to this project to improve the Pittsburgh Public Schools. The efforts of these individuals were critical to our ability to present the district with the best possible recommendations.

First, we thank Superintendent Anthony Hamlet for requesting the review and for following through to make sure that the study stayed on track. It is not easy to ask for such a frank and hard-hitting analysis like those from the Council of the Great City Schools. It takes courage, openness, and uncompromising commitment to the city's children. Superintendent Hamlet has those in abundance. Thank you.

Second, we thank the Executive Director of the Office of the Superintendent, Errika Fearbry Jones, for her support and her patience as the report was being prepared. She was instrumental in moving this review forward and ensuring the team was well supported during our visit.

Third, we thank the staff members of the Pittsburgh Public Schools, who provided all the time, documents, and data the Council needed in order to do its work. Their openness and enthusiasm were critical to our understanding of the district's needs.

Fourth, we thank the many individuals, groups, organizations, and associations with which we met. Our only regret is that we were unable to meet with everyone who we know had something valuable to contribute.

Finally, the Council thanks the city school districts that contributed staff to this effort: Miami-Dade County, Orange County, Charleston, Baltimore City, Broward County, Houston, Minneapolis, and Cincinnati. Everyone contributed his or her time *pro bono* to help Pittsburgh Public Schools improve. The enthusiasm and generosity of these districts serve as a further example of how the nation's urban public school systems are working together to help each other improve and reform. Thank you.

Michael Casserly
Executive Director
Council of the Great City Schools

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INTRODUCTION

The nation's urban public school systems are home to some of the most interesting and effective reforms in the nation. Across the country big city schools are aggressively pursuing new and higher academic standards. They have experimented with new ways to hold people accountable for improving student results. They have piloted alternative governance systems. They have taken the lead in reassessing the amount of testing that occurs throughout the school year. They have led reforms aimed at improving outcomes for English language learners and African American males. And much more. At the same time, the nation's urban public schools are under more pressure to improve than any other institution in the nation, public or private.

Like every other major city across the country, this pressure on public schools to show improvements in instructional programming and student performance is a defining feature of the political and social landscape in Pittsburgh. Over the years, community organizations, foundations, parents, and others have expressed their frustrations with the school system and how its students were doing. To its credit, the school system has been open to reform and has actively pursued any number of strategies and approaches. Some of these have panned out; others have not. Either way, the city has not given up on its public schools, and the school district has not stopped looking for ways to improve.

This sense of determination and optimism has been renewed by a new superintendent who is bringing a fresh sense of hope and thoughtfulness to the job of revitalizing Pittsburgh's public schools. The superintendent and the new school board are taking a sharp look at the work that preceded them, examining results, asking hard questions, and rethinking what needs to be done to create better futures for the city's children.

The hard questions that the district's leadership are now asking extend to every corner of the school system. They involve how the school system is organized and staffed; what is being taught in the city's classrooms and how teachers are being supported; how well the district manages taxpayer dollars and provides its back-office services; and how it conducts its own business.

The district's leaders—both the superintendent and school board—understand that Pittsburgh Public Schools are at a turning point. And they understand that the choices that need to be made may require the system to take not the easiest path forward, but the hardest one. A path defined not by headline grabbing upheavals, but by reforms that actually produce better outcomes for children. This entails looking at both the instructional systems that the school district has fashioned over the years and the non-instructional functions that the district has pursued to support that work. It means looking at how the considerable talents of the people inside the district are deployed and what systems have been put into place to support them and to bolster student learning.

The school district and its leadership understand that the community and parents who send their children to the Pittsburgh Public Schools—and those who are thinking about it—are hungry for better results for their children and a stronger foundation on which to build the community's future. This report was written to help the city realize those goals.

ORIGIN AND GOALS OF THE PROJECT

The Board of Education and new Superintendent of the Pittsburgh Public Schools asked the Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS) to provide a high-level review of the school district's organizational structure, staffing levels, instructional program, financial operations and business services, disciplinary policies, and research and data functions. Specifically, they requested that the Council[1]—

- Review and evaluate the organization and management structure of the Pittsburgh Public Schools.
- Examine overall staffing levels to see how they compare with other major school systems.
- Assess the district's instructional program for its ability to improve outcomes for students and examine the district's student disciplinary practices.
- Review major financial operations and business services to see if there were opportunities for improvement.
- Review data systems and research activities.
- Develop recommendations that would help the Pittsburgh Public Schools improve student outcomes and optimize its administrative structure and operations to achieve greater efficiencies and effectiveness.

In response to this request, the Council assembled Strategic Support Teams (the teams) of senior executives with extensive management and instructional experience from other major city school systems across the country. The team was composed of the following individuals: (Appendix D provides brief biographical sketches of team members.)

Organizational Team

Robert Carlson
Director of Management Services
Council of the Great City Schools

Tom Ryan
Chief Information Officer (Retired)
Albuquerque Public Schools

Jose Dotres
Chief Human Resources Officer
Miami-Dade County Public Schools

[1] The Council has conducted nearly 300 instructional, management, and operational reviews in over 50 big-city school districts over the last dozen years. The reports generated by these reviews are often critical, but they also have been the foundation for improving the operations, organization, instruction, and management of many urban school systems nationally. In other cases, the reports are complimentary and form the basis for identifying "best practices" for other urban school systems to replicate. (Appendix G lists the reviews that the Council has conducted.)

Christopher Farkas
Chief Operating Officer (Retired)
Hillsborough County Public Schools

Robin Hall
Director of Reading and Literacy
Council of the Great City Schools

Fred Schmitt
Chief Financial Officer (Retired)
Norfolk Public Schools

Instructional Team

Michael Casserly
Executive Director
Council of the Great City Schools

Robin Hall
Director of Literacy
Council of the Great City Schools

Denise Walston
Director of Mathematics
Council of the Great City Schools

Julie Wright Halbert
Legislative Counsel and Director of Special Education
Council of the Great City Schools

Gabriela Uro
Director of English Language Learner Policy
Council of the Great City Schools

Ray Hart
Director of Research
Council of the Great City Schools

Amanda Corcoran
Manager of Special Projects
Council of the Great City Schools

Finance and Business Services Team

David Koch
Chief Administrative Officer (Retired)
Los Angeles Unified School District

Michael Eugene
Chief Operating Officer
Orange County Public Schools

Christopher Farkas
Chief Operating Officer (Retired)
Hillsborough County Public Schools

Judith Marte
Chief Financial Officer
Miami-Dade County Public Schools

Michael Bobby
Chief Financial Officer
Charleston County School District

Donald Kennedy
Chief Financial Officer
Baltimore City Public Schools

Zoleg Gorokhovshky
Budget Director
Broward County Public Schools

Research and Data Team

Ray Hart
Director of Research
Council of the Great City Schools

Carla Stevens
Director of Research and Evaluation
Houston Independent School District

Eric Moore
Director of Research and Evaluation
Minneapolis Public Schools

Barbara Mattei-Smith
Director of Research and Evaluation
Cincinnati Public Schools

Kerry Giovannone
Director of Research, Assessment, and Evaluation
Arizona Department of Education

Ashley Ison
Research Specialist
Council of the Great City Schools

Renata Uzzell Lyons
Research Manager
Council of the Great City Schools

The teams conducted fieldwork for the project during four-day site visits to Pittsburgh. The organizational team was in Pittsburgh on August 28-31, 2016. The financial operations and business services team was in Pittsburgh on September 11-15. The research team was in Pittsburgh on September 20-23. And the instructional team was in Pittsburgh on September 27-30. The general schedule for the site visits is described below.

On the first day of the site visits, the teams met with the superintendent and a senior staff member to better understand their expectations and objectives for the reviews and to make last-minute adjustments to the agenda. The teams used the next two full days of their site visits to conduct interviews with key staff members and examine documents and data. The complete lists of individuals interviewed and materials reviewed are presented in Appendices D and E.[2] The final day of the visits was devoted to synthesizing and refining each team's findings and recommendations.

The Council sent the draft of this document to each of the teams for their review in order to ensure that the report accurately reflected their findings and to obtain their concurrence with the final recommendations. This report contains recommendations designed by the team to help the district's leadership identify opportunities for strengthening the organizational, operational, and instructional effectiveness of the Pittsburgh school system.

This approach to providing technical assistance, peer reviews, and support to urban school districts working to improve student achievement and operational effectiveness is unique to the Council of the Great City Schools and its members, and the process has proven to be effective for a number of reasons.

First, the approach allows the superintendent to work directly with talented, experienced practitioners from other major urban school systems that have established track records of performance and improvement. No one can claim that these individuals do not know what working in a large school system like Pittsburgh means.

Second, the recommendations developed by these peer teams have validity because the individuals who develop them have faced many of the same problems now encountered by the school system requesting a Council review. Team members are aware of the challenges faced by urban schools, and their strategies have been tested under the most rigorous conditions.

Third, using senior urban school managers from other communities is faster and less expensive than retaining a large management consulting firm. It does not take team members long to determine what is going on in a district. This rapid learning curve permits reviews that are faster and

[2] The Council's reports are based on interviews with district staff and others, a review of documents, observations of operations, and professional judgment. The teams conducting the interviews must rely on the willingness of those interviewed to be truthful and forthcoming but cannot always judge the accuracy of statements made by interviewees.

less expensive than could be secured from experts who are not as well-versed on how urban school systems work.

Fourth, the reports generated from this process are often more hard-hitting and pointed than what school systems often get when hiring a consulting business that may pull their punches because of the desire for repeat business. For the Council teams, this work is not a business (and most members of the team are not compensated), it is a mission to help improve public education in the country's major school systems.

Finally, the teams comprise a pool of expertise that a school system such as Pittsburgh can use to implement report recommendations or develop alternative plans and strategies. The Council would be pleased to put this team and others at the disposal of the new superintendent as he works to implement recommendations and pursue other reforms.

Contents of This Report

This report is made up of several chapters. The first chapter is an introduction. This, the second chapter, describes the origin and goals of the project, lays out the process involved, and presents who was involved. The third chapter summarizes the demographic characteristics of the Pittsburgh Public Schools. The fourth chapter summarizes the teams' analysis of student achievement trends and other student outcomes in Pittsburgh. Chapter five lays out broad findings on the district's organizational structure and staffing levels; instructional programming; discipline: research: and financial operations and business services. The sixth chapter summarizes the teams' recommendations and proposals. And the final chapter presents a synopsis of the team's overall observations, synthesizes results, and presents next steps.

The appendices of the report include the following:

- Appendix A. Organizational structure of the school system when new superintendent arrived.
- Appendix B. Analysis of Student Achievement using National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) scaling of the PSSA
- Appendix C. Comparisons of the Pittsburgh Public Schools with other major urban school systems on pre-school enrolment, absenteeism rates, ninth-grade course failure rates, suspension rates, AP course participation, and graduation rates.
- Appendix D. Biographical sketches of members of the Strategic Support Teams who participated in this project.
- Appendix E. A list of individuals the Strategic Support Teams interviewed during its site visit, either individually or in groups.
- Appendix F. A list of documents and materials reviewed by the Strategic Support Teams.
- Appendix G. A list of the Strategic Support Teams the Council of the Great City Schools has fielded over the last 18 years.

ENROLLMENT IN THE PITTSBURGH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS), the second largest school system in Pennsylvania, serves over 24,000 students across 54 schools. With 3,900 employees, of which 1,990 are teachers, PPS operates 11 magnet schools[3] and offers a variety of learning experiences, including gifted and talented (GT) and career and technical education (CTE).[4] The district's schools include—

- Twenty-three K-5 schools
- Eleven K-8 schools
- Seven middle (6-8) schools
- Five middle/high (6-12) schools
- Four high (9-12) schools
- Four special schools

Students enrolled in PPS are diverse, both racially and socioeconomically. Over half (53.0 percent) of PPS students are African American. White students constitute the next largest racial subgroup and total about a third (33.2 percent) of enrollment. Asian and Hispanic student enrollment is about three percent, respectively. The enrollment of English Language Learners (ELLs) is nearly three percent. Many PPS students (62.0 percent) live in low income families.

White students comprise 67.5 percent of Pennsylvania's statewide enrollment. The enrollment of African Americans is around 15 percent, and Hispanic enrollment is 10.4 percent. Asian students make up 3.6 percent of the state's enrollment, while American Indians and Native Hawaiians combined represent less than one percent of total students. Three percent of students statewide are ELLs, and 45.3 percent are socioeconomically disadvantaged.

Exhibit 1. Pennsylvania and Pittsburgh Public School PK12 Enrollment, SY 2015-16

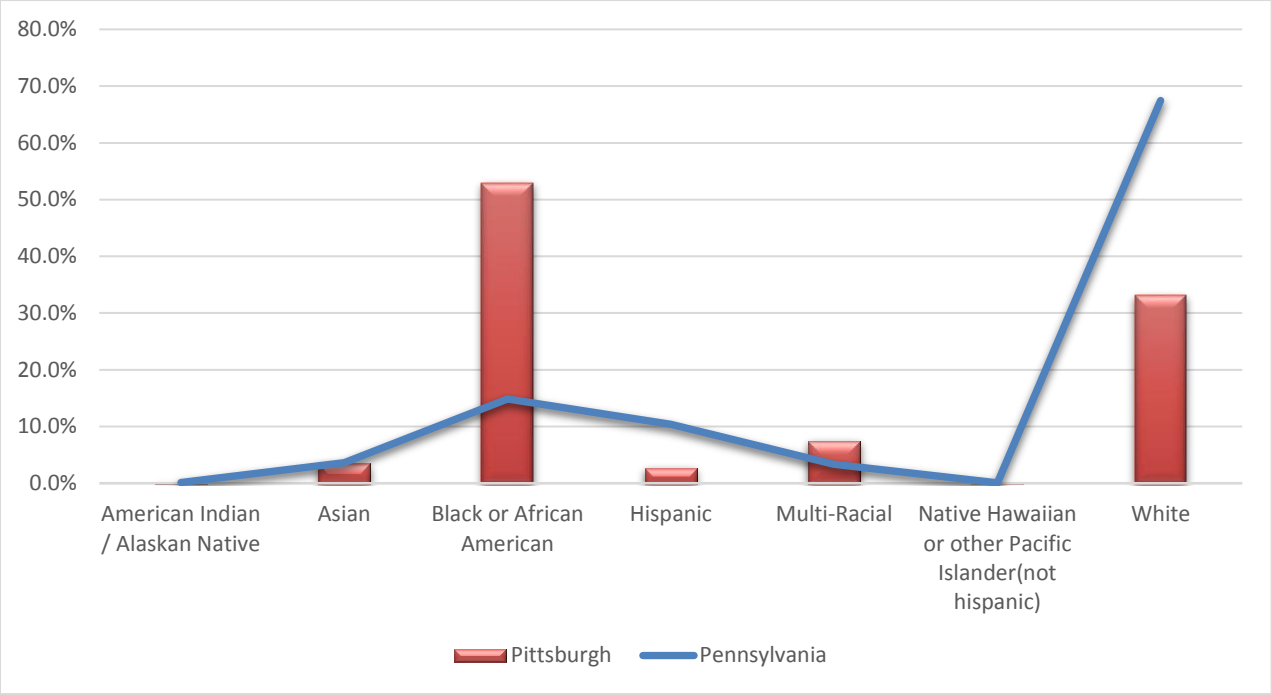
	% of Pennsylvania Enrollment	% of PPS Enrollment	PPS % Share State Enrollment
American Indian / Alaskan Native	0.2%	0.2%	1.6%
Asian	3.6%	3.4%	1.3%
Black/African American	14.9%	53.0%	5.0%
Hispanic	10.4%	2.7%	0.4%
Multi-Racial	3.4%	7.4%	3.1%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.1%	2.0%
White	67.5%	33.2%	0.7%
ELL[5]	3.0%	3.1%	1.4%
Low Income[6]	45.3%[7]	62.0%	1.9%
PK12 Total	1,731,588	24,190	1.4%

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Education. (2016). Enrollment Reports and Projections. Retrieved January 4, 2017, from http://www.education.pa.gov/Data-and-Statistics/Pages/Enrollment%20Reports%20and%20Projections.aspx#tab-1

[3] Facts at a Glance. (n.d.). Retrieved January 4, 2017, from http://www.pps.k12.pa.us/domain/17
[4] Academics. (n.d.). Retrieved January 4, 2017, from http://www.pps.k12.pa.us/domain/14
[5] Pennsylvania State Department of Education. (2016). LEP Student Counts by School. Retrieved January 4, 2017, from http://www.education.pa.gov/Data-and-Statistics/Pages/English-as-a-Second-Language.aspx#tab-1
[6] Pennsylvania Department of Education. (2016). Public Schools Percent of Low-Income Reports. Retrieved January 4, 2017, from http://www.education.pa.gov/Data-and-Statistics/Pages/Loan-Cancellation,-Low-Income.aspx#tab-1
[7] Enrollment totals from LEA reports did not sum to totals in statewide reports. Statewide enrollment from LEA level reports was 1,774,140.

Enrollment in PPS is notably more diverse, with higher portions of poor students than elsewhere in Pennsylvania. For instance, while African American students make up over half of all PPS students, they consist of under 15 percent of the state's total enrollment. Statewide enrollment of white students is double the percentage of white students enrolled in PPS, while the Hispanic enrollment percentage in the state is four times the percentage of Hispanic student in Pittsburgh.

Exhibit 2. Pittsburgh Public School PK12 Enrollment by Race, SY 2015-16



Most of the demographic indicators are very similar for the city of Pittsburgh and Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS), with the exception the African American and white populations. While about a quarter (24.3 percent) of Pittsburgh's overall population are African Americans the percentage of students in PPS who are African American is twice as large (53.0 percent). The opposite trend is seen for white residents and students--the share of white students enrolled in PPS (33.3 percent) is less than half of the share of white residents in Pittsburgh (65.2 percent). (See Exhibit 3.)

Exhibit 3. Demographics of the City of Pittsburgh and the Pittsburgh Public Schools, 2015

Race/Ethnicity	City of Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh Public Schools
American Indian / Alaskan Native	0.0%	0.2%
Asian	5.9%	3.4%
Black/African American	24.3%	53.0%
Hispanic/Latino	2.7%	2.7%
White	65.2%	33.2%
Families with children under 18 living in poverty	28.4%	28.0%

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2015 American Community Survey 1-Year and 5-Year Estimates, and U.S. Census Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates

The poverty rates in Pittsburgh and PPS are both around 28 percent. Poverty, however, has disparate impacts on the various racial groups. African American families with children experience poverty to the greatest extent. Nearly half (46.7 percent) of these families live below poverty level. American Indian families also face substantial socioeconomic challenges with 42.3 percent of these families being impoverished. Approximately a third (34.7 percent) of Hispanic families face similar circumstances. At the other end of the spectrum, Asian and white families have the lowest poverty rates. The poverty rate for Asian families is 18.8 percent for Asians and 15.5 percent for white families.

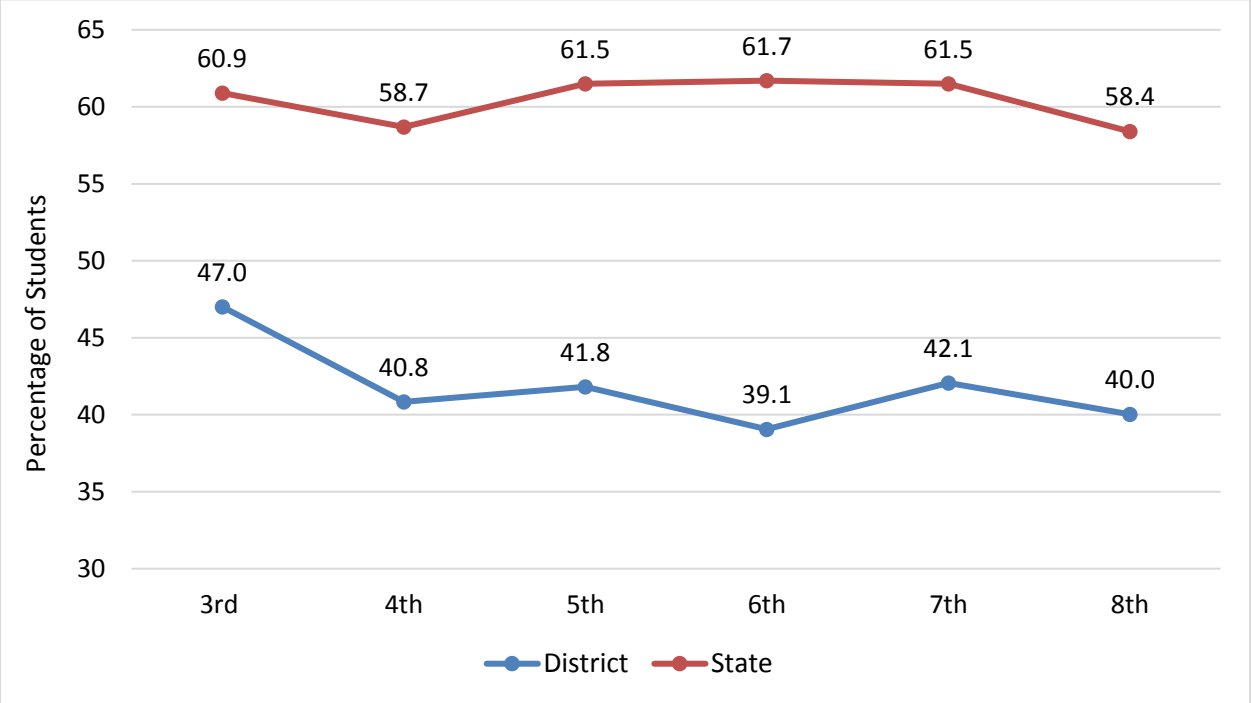
STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND OUTCOMES

The following presents an analysis of student academic performance in Pittsburgh using the state's PSSA exams and NAEP results that have been equated with the PSSA to provide broader comparisons of Pittsburgh to other cities. In addition, this chapter compares the Pittsburgh Public Schools with other major urban school systems on a series of academic key performance indicators.

Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA)

- The overall reading performance of Pittsburgh students in grades three through eight was substantially below statewide averages in 2015-16. In general, reading scores among Pittsburgh third through eighth-grade students on the PSSA ranged from 47 percent proficient or above in third grade to 39.1 percent proficient or above in sixth grade, compared to statewide averages ranging from 61.7 percent proficient or above in sixth grade to 58.4 percent in eighth grade. (Exhibit 4.)

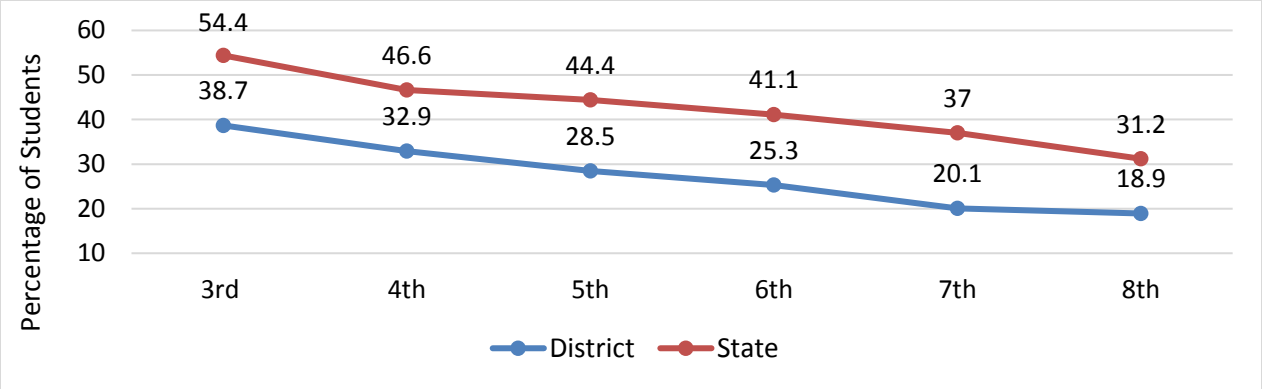
Exhibit 4. Percentage of Pittsburgh and State Students who are Proficient or Above by Grade in Reading, 2015-16



- The overall math performance of Pittsburgh students in grades three through eight was also substantially below statewide averages in 2015-16. In general, math scores among Pittsburgh third through eighth-grade students on the PSSA ranged from 18.9 percent proficient or above in eighth grade to 38.7 percent proficient or above in third grade, compared to statewide averages ranging from 31.2 percent proficient or above in eighth grade to 54.4 percent in third grade. (Exhibit 5.)

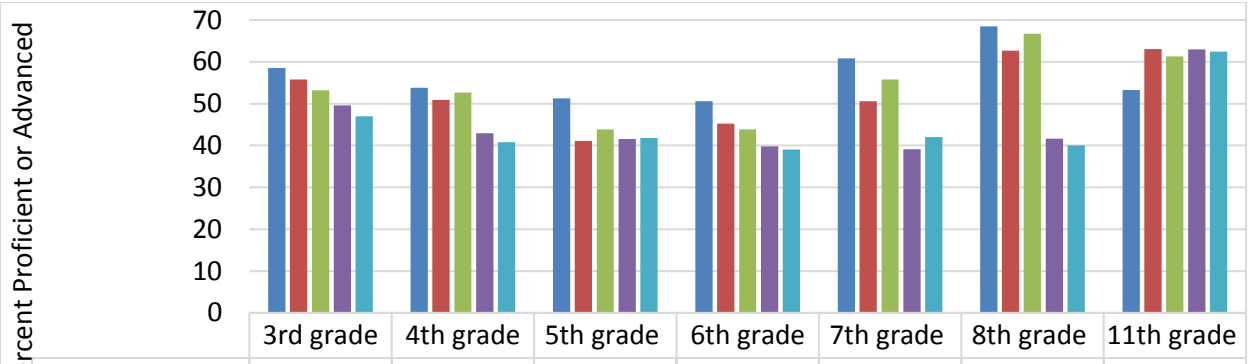
- The pattern of steadily declining scores across the grades appears to be the effect of how the state vertically calibrated its math test—not necessarily the result of declining performance.

Exhibit 5. Percentage of Pittsburgh and State Students who are Proficient or Above by Grade in Math, 2015-16



- The state changed its reading test between 2013-14 and 2014-15, making direct comparisons problematic. The change resulted in lower percentages of students scoring at or above proficiency on the new test than the old test. (Exhibit 6.) At the same time, the old test showed declining reading scores between 2011-12 and 2013-14 in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8—and increasing scores in grade 11; and the new test showed declining scores in grades 3, 4, 6, 8, and 11—and increasing scores in grades 5 and 7. Whether one uses the old or the new test, one has to conclude that overall reading performance on the PSSA in Pittsburgh was generally stagnant or declining.

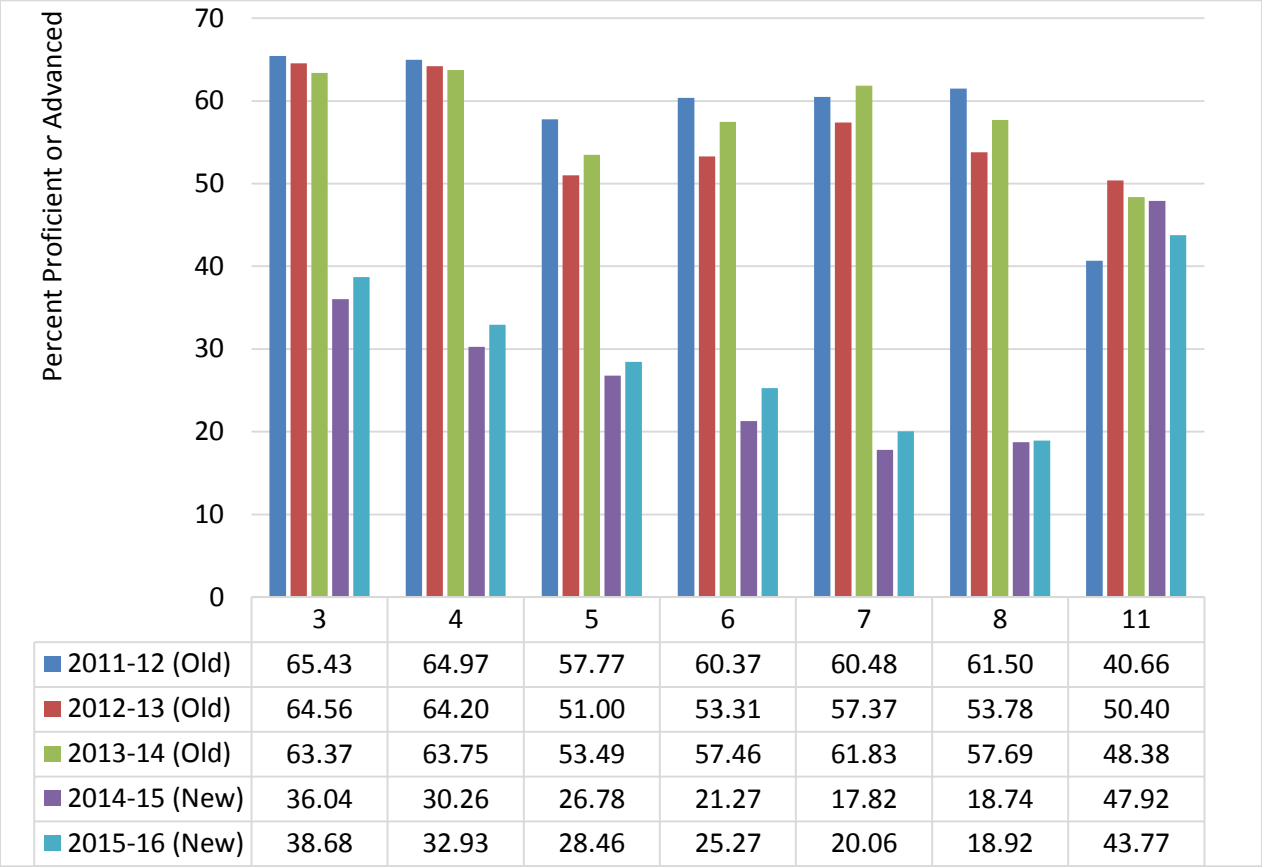
Exhibit 6. Pittsburgh Reading Proficiency Trends on PSSA by Grade, 2011-12 to 2015-16



	3rd grade	4th grade	5th grade	6th grade	7th grade	8th grade	11th grade
2011-12 (Old)	58.52	53.79	51.26	50.56	60.85	68.50	53.23
2012-13 (Old)	55.76	50.93	41.09	45.21	50.60	62.68	63.03
2013-14 (Old)	53.19	52.66	43.89	43.88	55.80	66.74	61.31
2014-15 (New)	49.60	42.96	41.59	39.84	39.14	41.68	63.00
2015-16 (New)	47.01	40.84	41.80	39.06	42.06	40.02	62.42

- The state also changed its math test between 2013-14 and 2014-15. The change resulted in lower percentages of students scoring at or above proficiency on the new test than the old test. (Exhibit 7.) In general, the old test showed declining scores between 2011-12 and 2013-14 in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, and 8—and increases in grades 7 and 11. Conversely, between 2014-14 and 2015-16, using the new test, math scores increased somewhat in all tested grades except 11. The graph shows the same declining performance levels from one grade to another with the new test as was evidenced in Exhibit 5.

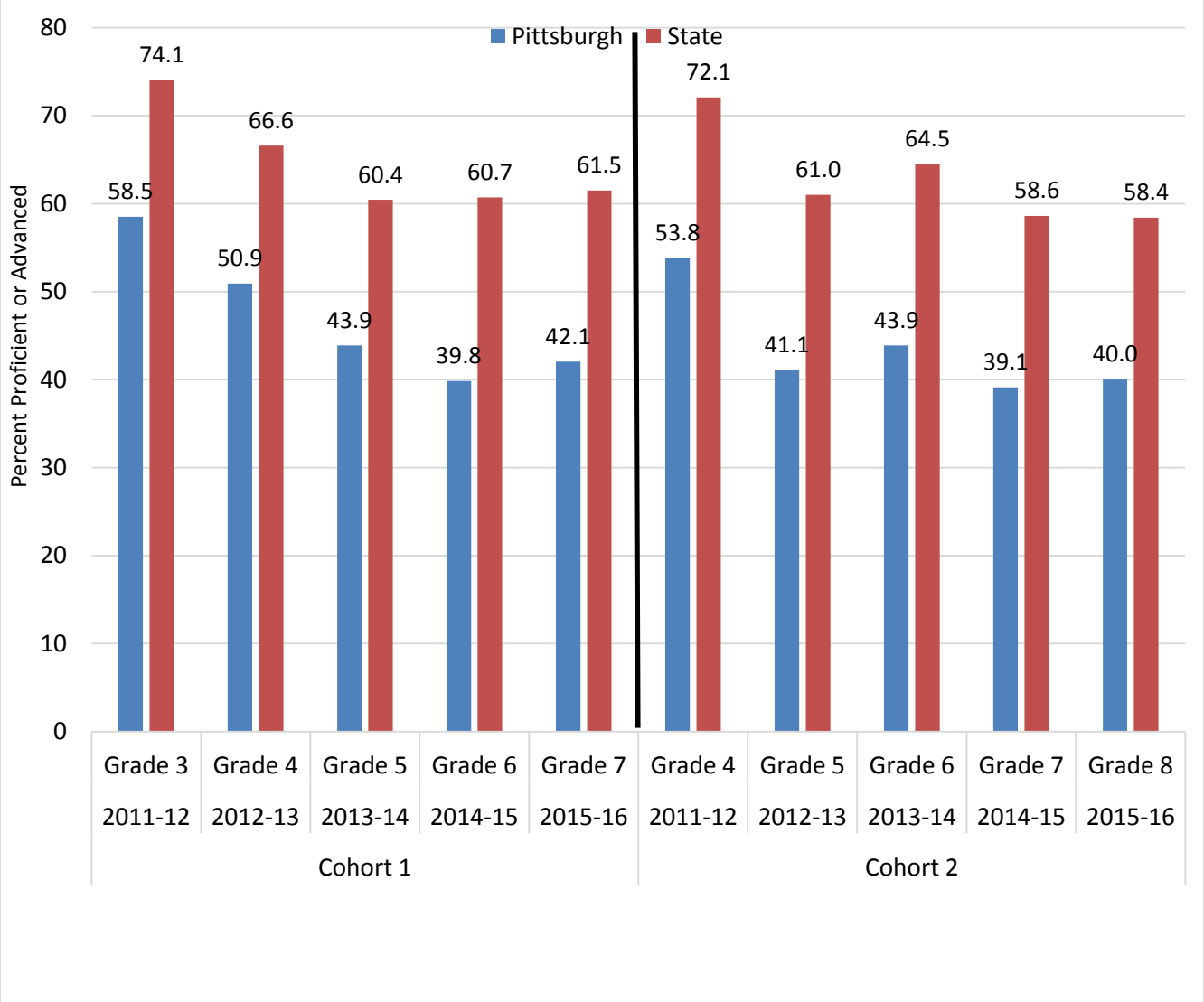
Exhibit 7. Pittsburgh Math Proficiency Trends on PSSA by Grade, 2011-12 to 2015-16



	3	4	5	6	7	8	11
2011-12 (Old)	65.43	64.97	57.77	60.37	60.48	61.50	40.66
2012-13 (Old)	64.56	64.20	51.00	53.31	57.37	53.78	50.40
2013-14 (Old)	63.37	63.75	53.49	57.46	61.83	57.69	48.38
2014-15 (New)	36.04	30.26	26.78	21.27	17.82	18.74	47.92
2015-16 (New)	38.68	32.93	28.46	25.27	20.06	18.92	43.77

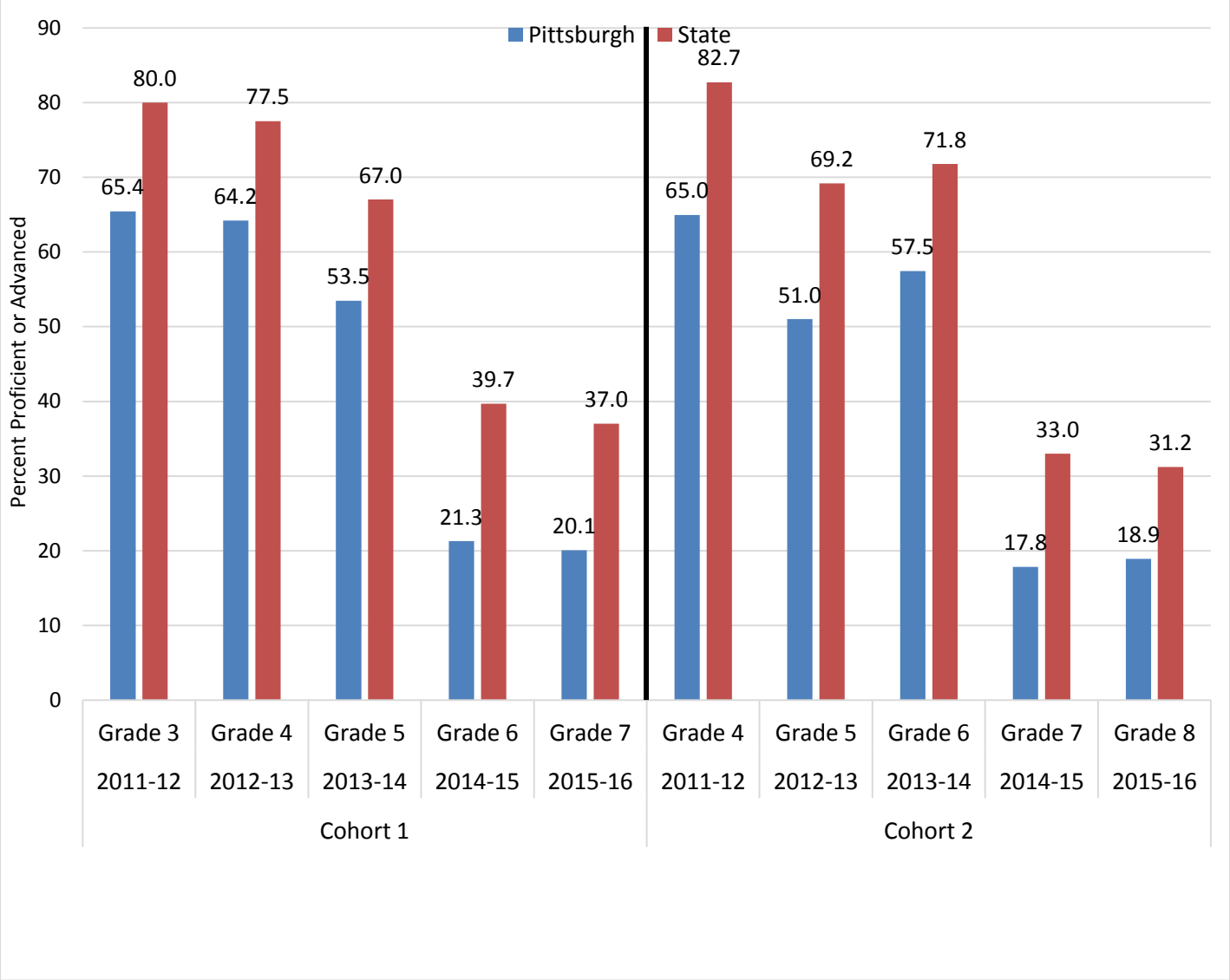
- The teams also examined reading and math cohort data on the PSSA. Exhibits 8 and 9 show reading and math proficiency and above levels among third graders in 2011-12, who were fourth graders in 2012-13, fifth graders in 2013-14, sixth graders in 2014-15, and seventh graders in 2015-16. The analysis also looked at a second cohort of students who were in fourth grade in 2011-12, then fifth grade in 2012-13, sixth grade in 2013-14, seventh grade in 2014-15, and eighth grade in 2015-16. Both Pittsburgh cohorts were compared to identical cohorts statewide. In general, both state and Pittsburgh cohorts showed reading proficiency levels declined as students moved from one grade to another, which may be partially due to how the test was calibrated, but the first Pittsburgh cohort showed a steeper decline in proficiency levels than did the first state cohort. In the second cohort, the difference between the Pittsburgh group and the state group declined in proficiency levels at about the same rates.

Exhibit 8. Trends in Pittsburgh and State Reading Proficiency and Above for Two Student Cohorts, 2011-12 to 2015-16



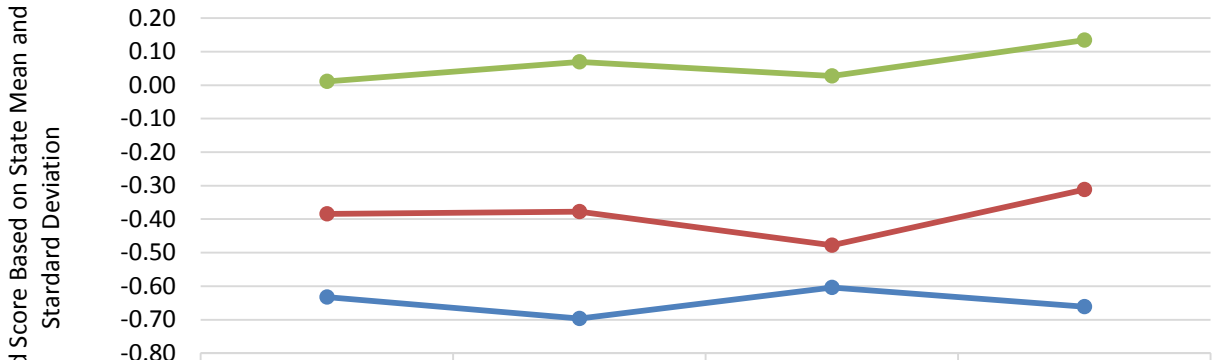
- A similar pattern could be found when looking at math scores of the same two cohorts that we examined in reading. Both statewide and Pittsburgh proficiency levels declined, as we saw earlier, and the gap between the first state cohort and the first Pittsburgh cohort widened over the five years. (The gap between state and Pittsburgh third graders in 2011-12 was 15.6 percentage points; but by the time the students were in seventh grade in 2015-16, the gap had swelled to 19.4 percentage points.) In the second cohort, the gap between the state and the Pittsburgh cohorts was 18.3 percentage points when students were in fourth grade in 2011-12 and 18.4 when they were in the eighth grade—or nearly no change. In both state cohorts, the percent of students who were proficient or above tended to stabilize somewhat in grade 5.

Exhibit 9. Trends in Pittsburgh and State Math Proficiency and Above for Two Student Cohorts, 2011-12 to 2015-16



- Finally, the Council examined Pittsburgh's PSSA by major racial group to see how even the progress was. Unfortunately, because the state changed its tests over the last few years, it required that the team normalize or standardized the test scores over the two versions of the test. Doing so allows the reader to view progress of African American, white, and Hispanic students against statewide average progress. For instance, Exhibit 10 below shows that between 2012 and 2015, white fourth graders in Pittsburgh made modest progress in reading against the statewide average (0.00 on the graph); Hispanic students made modest gains; and African American fourth graders made no progress. Figure 11 shows that every racial group of eighth graders in Pittsburgh lost ground in reading against the statewide average (0.00). Exhibit 12 shows that every racial group of Pittsburgh fourth graders made some progress in math; and Exhibit 13 shows no progress for any group of eighth graders in math against the state average.

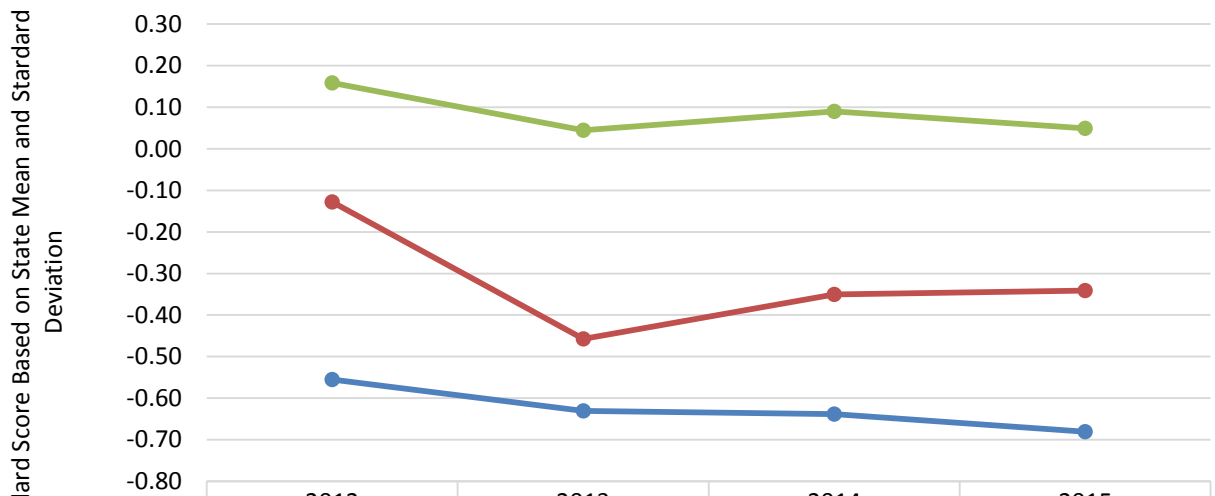
Exhibit 10. Standardized Reading Trends among Pittsburgh African American, Hispanic, and White 4th Graders Relative to the Statewide Average (0.00), 2012 to 2015



	2012	2013	2014	2015
Black	-0.63	-0.70	-0.60	-0.66
Hispanic	-0.38	-0.38	-0.48	-0.31
White	0.01	0.07	0.03	0.13

Note: Standard scores illustrate the relationship between the district performance and the mean performance of students across the state each year. Scores are directly comparable and independent of changes in the state test. A score of 0 indicates that th

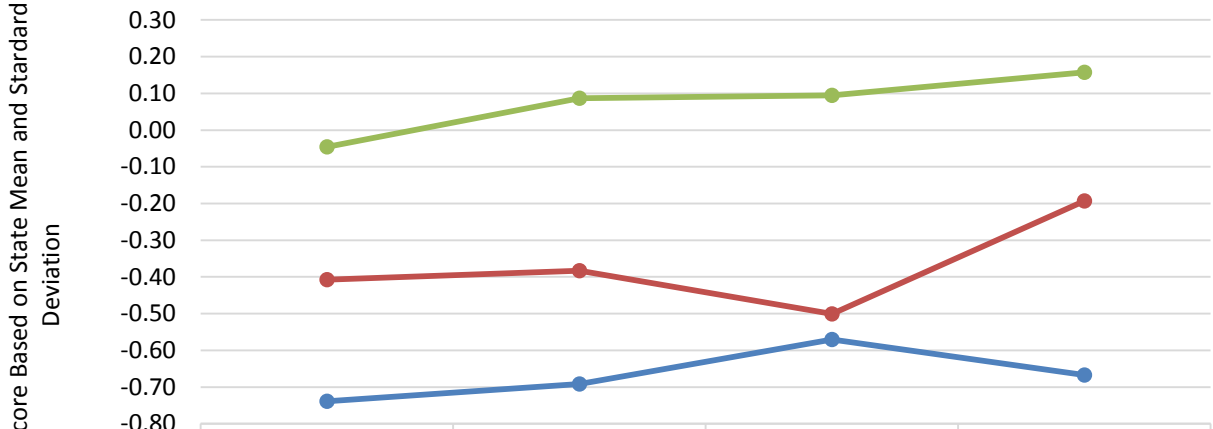
Exhibit 11. Standardized Reading Trends among Pittsburgh African American, Hispanic, and White 8th Graders Relative to the Statewide Average (0.00), 2012 to 2015



	2012	2013	2014	2015
Black	-0.56	-0.63	-0.64	-0.68
Hispanic	-0.13	-0.46	-0.35	-0.34
White	0.16	0.04	0.09	0.05

Note: Standard scores illustrate the relationship between the district performance and the mean performance of students across the state each year. Scores are directly comparable and independent of changes in the state test. A score of 0 indicates that th

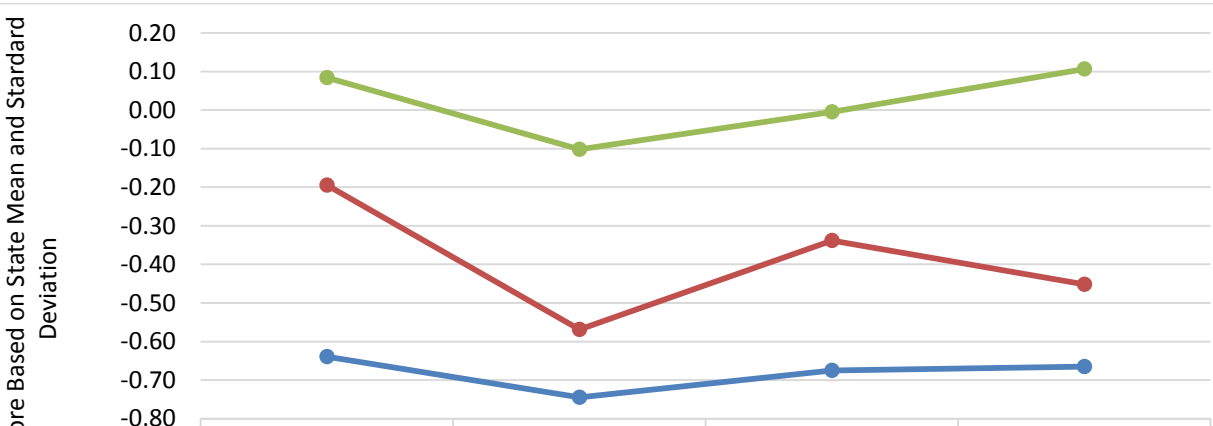
Exhibit 12. Standardized Math Trends among Pittsburgh African American, Hispanic, and White 4th Graders Relative to the Statewide Average (0.00), 2012 to 2015



	2012	2013	2014	2015
Black	-0.74	-0.69	-0.57	-0.67
Hispanic	-0.41	-0.38	-0.50	-0.19
White	-0.05	0.09	0.09	0.16

Note: Standard scores illustrate the relationship between the district performance and the mean performance of students across the state each year. Scores are directly comparable and independent of changes in the state test. A score of 0 indicates the gro

Exhibit 13. Standardized Math Trends among Pittsburgh African American, Hispanic, and White 8th Graders Relative to the Statewide Average (0.00), 2012 to 2015



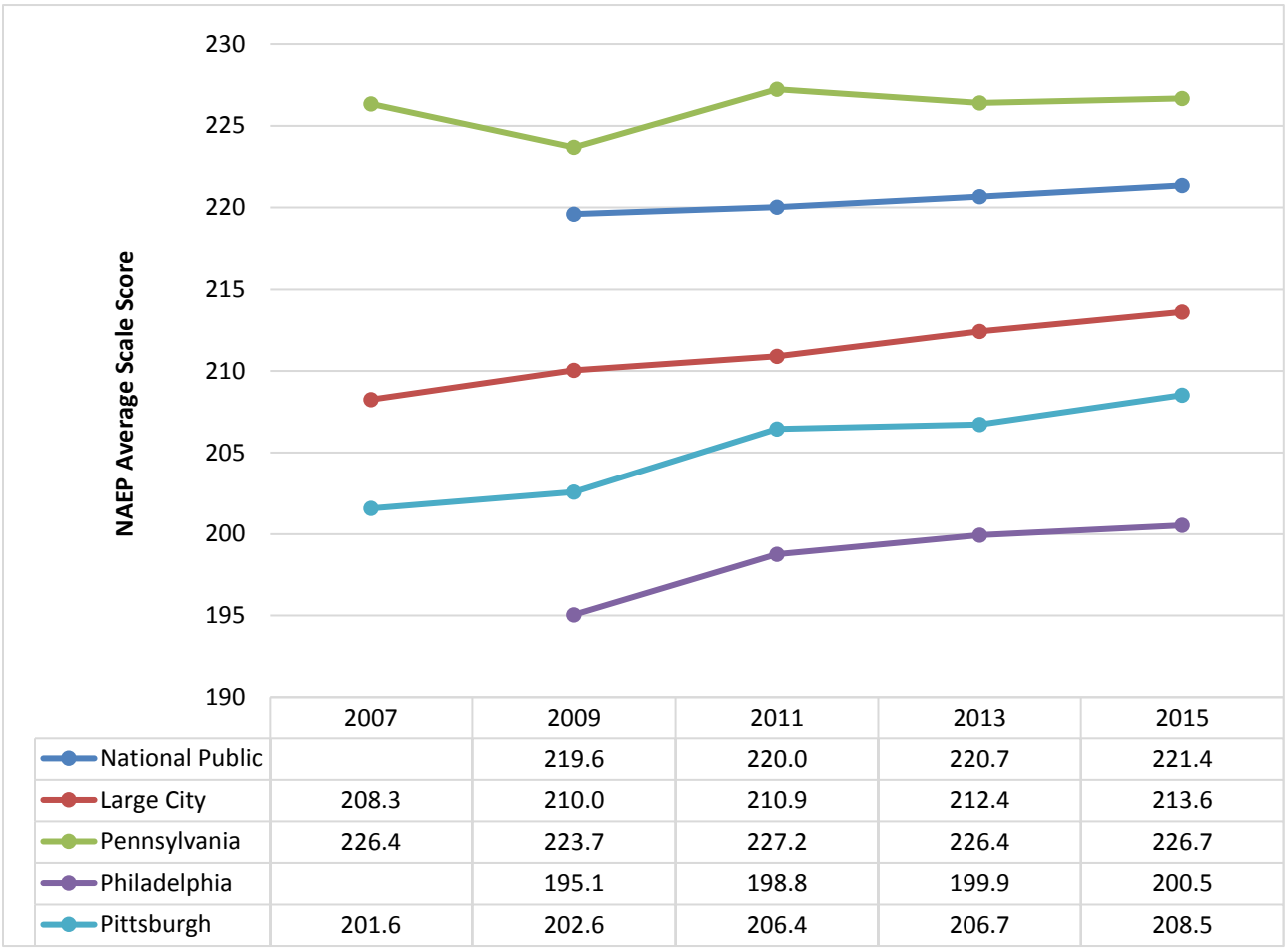
	2012	2013	2014	2015
Black	-0.64	-0.74	-0.67	-0.66
Hispanic	-0.19	-0.57	-0.34	-0.45
White	0.08	-0.10	0.00	0.11

Note: Standard scores illustrate the relationship between the district performance and the mean performance of students across the state each year. Scores are directly comparable and independent of changes in the state test. A score of 0 indicates the gro

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

To present a broader understanding of Pittsburgh's academic performance, the Council team converted the district's PSSA scores into NAEP scale scores and compared them to national, state, and other cities on a common metric.[8] Results are presented for fourth and eighth grade reading and fourth and eighth grade math.

Exhibit 14. Trends in Fourth Grade Reading Scale Scores on NAEP



	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
National Public		219.6	220.0	220.7	221.4
Large City	208.3	210.0	210.9	212.4	213.6
Pennsylvania	226.4	223.7	227.2	226.4	226.7
Philadelphia		195.1	198.8	199.9	200.5
Pittsburgh	201.6	202.6	206.4	206.7	208.5

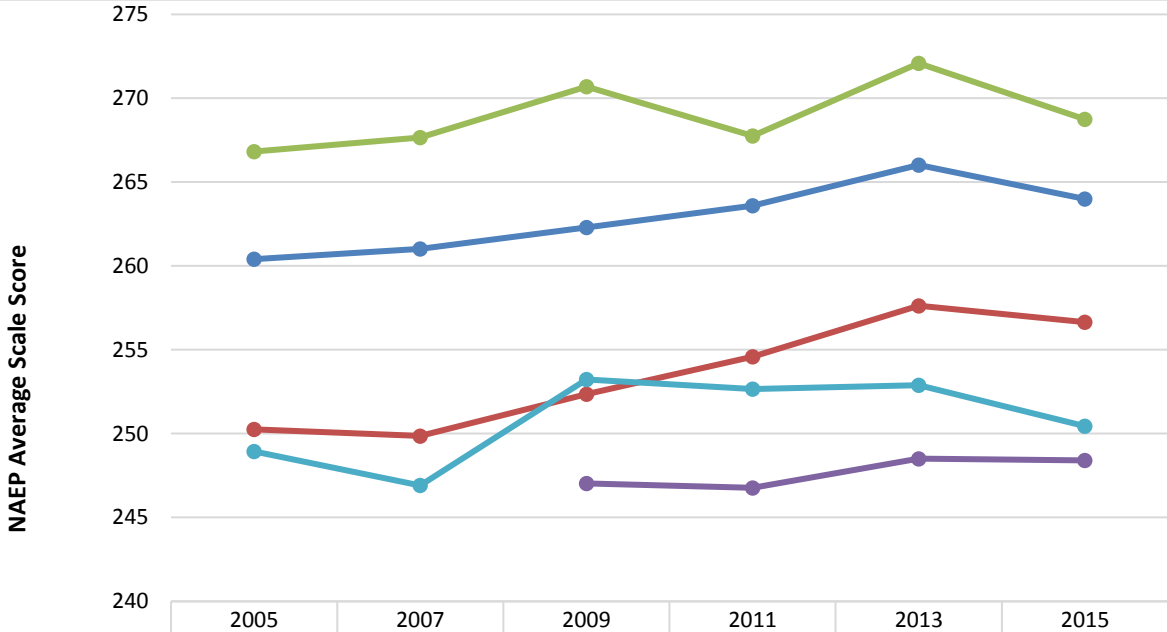
[8] To compare the performance of the Pittsburgh Public Schools children to their state, national public and Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA) peers across the country, the research team translated the PSSA scale score performance for each child to a standard normal score using the state of Pennsylvania mean and standard deviation. The standard normal score was then translated to the NAEP scale using the national public mean and standard deviation. To test the validity of this procedure, the research team also calculated the theoretical transformed scores for the 2015 Philadelphia school district using the same methodology. We compared the Philadelphia estimated scores to their actual NAEP performance scores, and the scores differed on average by 3.3 scale score points across the Grade 4 and 8 reading and mathematics tests. None of the four estimates were statistically different from the actual scores.

- Results of converting Pittsburgh's PSSA reading scores in fourth grade to NAEP scale scores showed again that Pittsburgh performed well-below state averages (the same conclusion drawn from looking solely at PSSA scores). The data also indicate that the city school district scores below national averages in fourth grade reading. In addition, the converted scores suggest that Pittsburgh scores below the large city school average that is calculated as part of the Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA). (Exhibit 14.)

- The data also suggest that fourth grade reading in Pittsburgh has shown modest gains between 2007 and 2015, when scale scores moved from 201.6 to 208.5—or 6.9 scale score points. Most of this gain occurred between 2007 and 2011, rather than between 2011 and 2015. Overall, Pittsburgh's gains between 2007 and 2015 were similar to those seen by large city schools generally over the same period, and exceeded gains statewide and nationally.

- White fourth graders in Pittsburgh scored substantially higher on PSSA-converted assessments in reading than either African American or Hispanic students. Still, white fourth graders in Pittsburgh scored substantially lower in reading than fourth graders in other major cities (Appendix B-1). On the other hand, African American fourth graders in Pittsburgh scored slightly below the median of African American fourth graders in other major cities (Appendix B-2), and Hispanic fourth graders score well above the median of Hispanic fourth graders in other major cities (Appendix B-3).

Exhibit 15. Trends in Eighth Grade Reading Scale Scores on NAEP, 2007 to 2015



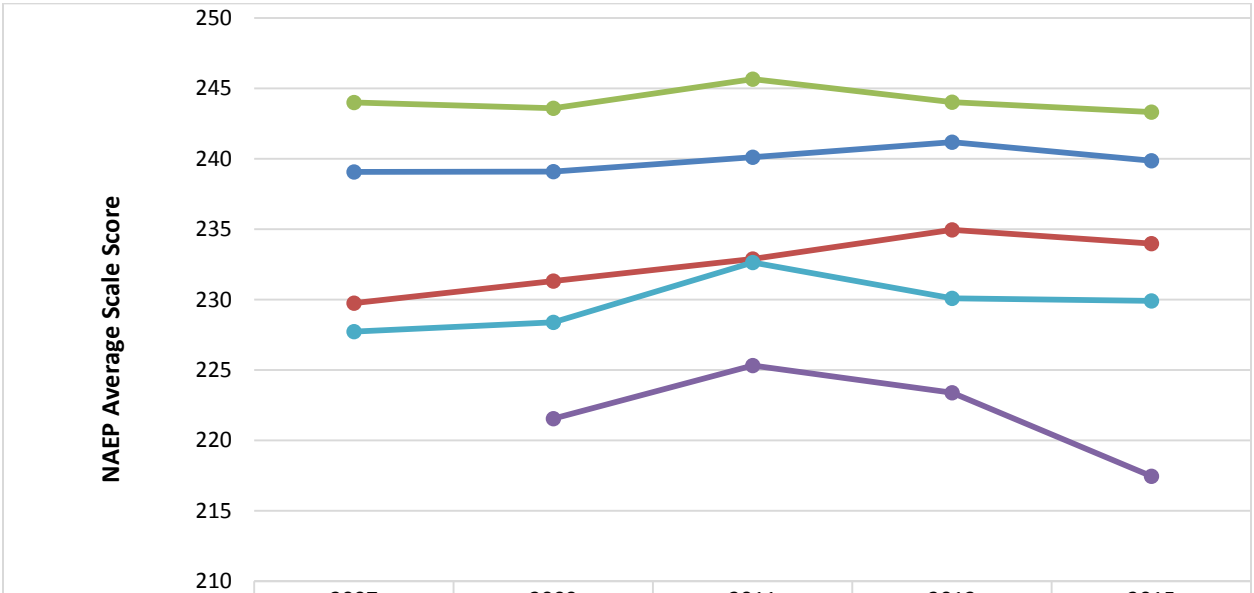
	2005	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
National Public	260.40	261.01	262.29	263.59	266.02	263.99
Large City	250.25	249.86	252.36	254.58	257.63	256.65
Pennsylvania	266.82	267.67	270.70	267.75	272.09	268.75
Philadelphia			247.03	246.77	248.51	248.40
Pittsburgh	248.94	246.91	253.23	252.67	252.89	250.45

- In eighth grade reading, Pittsburgh students scored well-below state averages. The data also indicate that the city school district scores below national averages in eighth grade reading. In addition, the converted scores suggest that Pittsburgh scored at about the same level as the large city average in 2007, but fell significantly behind that group by 2015. (Exhibit 15.)

- The data also suggest that eighth grade reading in Pittsburgh showed little improvement between 2005 and 2015, although there were gains between 2005 and 2009 before dropping steadily between 2009 and 2015 to about the same level as seen in 2007. Overall, Pittsburgh's gains between 2005 and 2015 were slower than those seen by large city schools generally over the same period, and slower than gains statewide and nationally.

- White eighth graders in Pittsburgh scored substantially higher on PSSA-converted assessments in reading than either African American or Hispanic students. Moreover, the gap between white students and African American students widened substantially between fourth and eighth grades. In addition, white and African American eighth graders scored substantially lower in reading than white and African American eighth graders in other major cities (Appendix B-4 and B-5), while Hispanic eighth graders scored above the median of Hispanics in other major cities (Appendix B-6).

Exhibit 16. Trends in Fourth Grade Math Scale Scores on NAEP



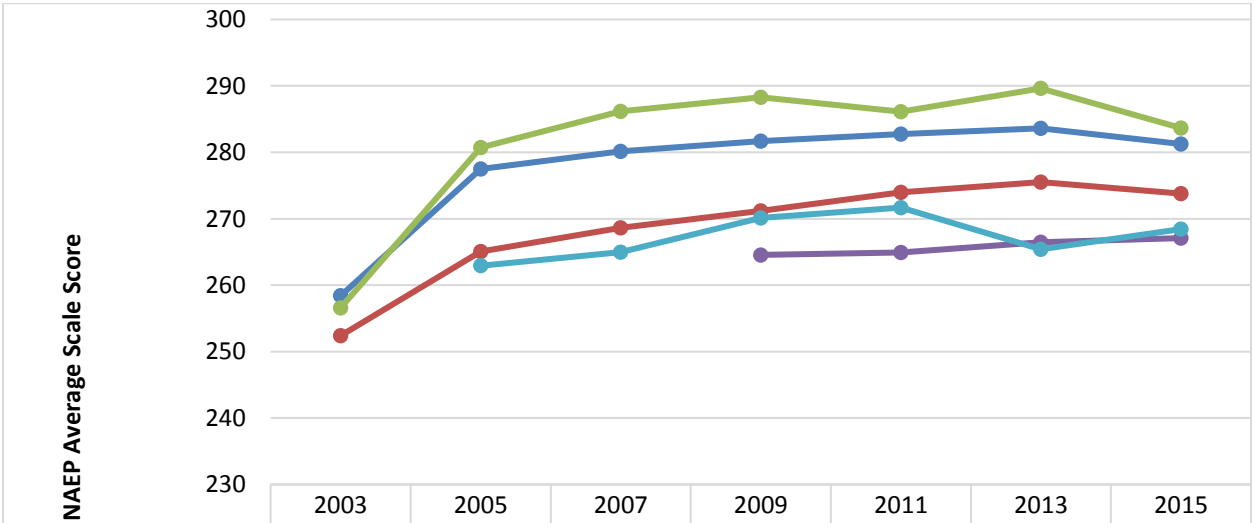
	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
National public	239.06	239.09	240.11	241.18	239.85
Large city	229.74	231.32	232.89	234.96	233.99
Pennsylvania	244.00	243.59	245.65	244.01	243.31
Philadelphia		221.56	225.31	223.38	217.45
Pittsburgh	227.73	228.39	232.64	230.10	229.91

- In fourth grade math, Pittsburgh students scored below state averages once again. The data also indicate that the city school district scores below national averages in fourth grade math. In addition, the converted scores suggest that Pittsburgh scored at about the same level as the large city average in 2007, but fell behind that group somewhat by 2015. (Exhibit 16.)

- The data also suggest that eighth grade reading in Pittsburgh showed only small gains between 2007 and 2015, although there were gains between 2005 and 2009 before dropping steadily between 2009 and 2015. Most of these improvements were between 2007 and 2011, before fourth grade math scores fell through 2015. Overall, Pittsburgh's gains between 2007 and 2015 were slower than those seen by large city schools over the same period, but about the same as those seen statewide and nationally.

- White fourth graders in Pittsburgh scored substantially higher on PSSA-converted assessments in math than either African American or Hispanic students. In addition, white fourth graders scored substantially lower in math than white fourth graders in other major cities (Appendix B-7) while African American fourth graders in Pittsburgh scored at the median among other major cities (Appendix B-8) and Hispanic fourth graders scored above the median among Hispanics in other major cities (Appendix B-9).

Exhibit 17. Trends in Eighth Grade Math Scale Scores on NAEP



	2003	2005	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
National public	258.4	277.5	280.2	281.7	282.7	283.6	281.3
Large city	252.4	265.1	268.7	271.2	274.0	275.5	273.8
Pennsylvania	256.6	280.7	286.2	288.3	286.1	289.6	283.7
Philadelphia				264.6	264.9	266.5	267.1
Pittsburgh		262.9	265.0	270.1	271.7	265.4	268.4

- In eighth grade math, Pittsburgh students scored below state averages again. The data also indicate that the city school district scored below national averages in eighth grade math, but about the same as large cities up until 2011 when scores began to diverge as the large city average improved faster and Pittsburgh scores dipped. (Exhibit 17.)

- The data also suggest that eighth grade math in Pittsburgh showed gains between 2005 and 2015, but declined in 2013 before rebounding somewhat in 2015. Overall, Pittsburgh's trend line between 2005 and 2015 showed some improvement but the gains over the decade were slower than those seen nationwide, statewide, and across the large city schools generally.

- White eighth graders in Pittsburgh scored substantially higher on PSSA-converted assessments in math than either African American or Hispanic students. At the same time, white eighth graders in Pittsburgh scored lower than white students in the median-scoring big city school district (Appendix B-10), while Pittsburgh African American and Hispanic eighth graders scored only slightly below the median of their respective peers in other big city school districts. (Appendix B- and B-12.).

Student Attendance and Absenteeism

- Approximately 28 percent of third graders in the district were absent from school for between five and nine days during the 2014-15 school year. (Exhibit C-2). In addition, some 30 percent of third graders were absent between 10-19 days that school year, and 12 percent of third graders were absent for 20 or more days. This means that some 70 percent of third graders were absent from school for five or more days that school year. This rate places Pittsburgh among the urban school districts with the highest third-grade absentee rates, which ranged from 80 percent to 32 percent.

- The high rates of third-grade absenteeism in Pittsburgh continued into the sixth grade. About 25 percent of sixth graders in the district were absent from school for between five and nine days during the 2014-15 school year. (Exhibit C-3) In addition, some 31 percent of sixth graders were absent between 10-19 days that school year, and 17 percent were absent for 20 or more days. This means that some 73 percent of sixth graders were absent from school for five or more days that school year. This rate placed Pittsburgh among the urban school districts with the highest sixth-grade absentee rates, which ranged from 75 percent to 19 percent.

- The pattern continued among ninth graders. With this group, some 21 percent of ninth graders were absent between five and nine days during the 2014-15 school year. (Exhibit C-4) In addition. Some 26 percent of ninth graders were absent between 10-19 days, and 33 percent were absent for 20 or more days. This means that some 80 percent of ninth graders were absent from school for five or more days that school year. The range among other urban school districts was between 96 percent and six percent.

Course-Taking

- Some six percent of Pittsburgh's ninth graders in 2014-15 had successfully completed an Algebra I course (or integrated math 1 course) by the end of their seventh grade year. In addition, about 30 percent of ninth graders that year had completed an Algebra I course (or integrated math course 1) by the end of their eighth grade year. And 45 percent completed Algebra (or integrated math 1) by the end of their ninth grade. In other words, some 81 percent of Pittsburgh's students had completed Algebra I or integrated math 1) by the end

of their ninth grade year. This rate compared to a high of 94 percent in other major urban school systems to a low of about 48 percent. (Exhibit C-5)

- About 26 percent of district ninth graders in 2014-15 failed one or more core courses. This rate was lower than many other major urban school systems, which ranged in their ninth grade failure rates from a high of 59 percent to a low of three percent. Pittsburgh's rate could be interpreted either positively or negatively. The rate might be due to the district's academic support of ninth graders—a good thing, or it could be the result of weak rigor in ninth grade courses in general—a bad thing. (Exhibit C-6)

- About 23 percent of Pittsburgh students in grades nine to 12 took one or more Advanced Placement (AP) courses in 2014-15. This rate in Pittsburgh compared to a range in other major city school systems that went from a high of 44 percent to a low of 8 percent. (Exhibit C-9) The median was 24 percent.

Graduation Rates

- Some 70 percent of Pittsburgh students graduated in 2014-15 after having been in grades 9-12 for four years. This rate was lower than many other major urban school systems, whose graduation rates ranged from a high of 89 percent to a low of 58 percent. (Exhibit C-10) The rate is also lower than one might have been predicted from the district's ninth grade Algebra I completion rate. (Exhibit C-11) It is also possible that one or more of the rates are incorrect, although the 70 percent graduation rate is the one used by the state.

FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS

This chapter presents the findings and observations of the Council's teams on the school district's organizational structure, instructional programming, discipline, research and data systems, financial operations, and business services.

A. General Organizational Structure, Effectiveness, and Staffing

In general, the school district is not organized in a way that supports schools or enhances the work of staff. There is also considerable unevenness in staffing patterns and staff quality. More importantly, the district is held back by the limited amount of collaboration across staffing units.

- The school system has many talented and committed staff members at both the central office and school levels who can be deployed to build a high-functioning organization.

- School-level staff reported to the teams that they thought that the central office was not set up, organized, or oriented to support schools. Assistant superintendents, in particular, reported that the system seemed to be set up so that schools could serve the central office rather than vice versa.

- The general organizational structure of the district—as of when the new superintendent arrived—is shown in Exhibit A-1.

    - Under that organizational chart, there was a deputy superintendent who reported to the superintendent. Reporting to the deputy was a chief of school performance (vacant when the Council team visited) and personnel in charge of curriculum, instruction, and assessment; early childhood; professional development; and research.
    - A level below the deputy were three chiefs who also reported to the superintendent: chief information officer, chief human resource officer, and chief operations officer.
    - The superintendent, under the original organizational structure, also had three direct staff reports: an executive director (who largely served in the role of a chief of staff), an executive director for equity, and a public information officer.

- There was an inappropriate span of control or misplacement of functions in numerous parts of the district's organizational structure when the new superintendent arrived. For example—

    - The roles and responsibilities of the deputy and chief of school performance were not clearly delineated, and there appeared to be an over-concentration of authority in the Chief Operating Officer's (COO) position. For example, the COO had financial responsibilities, e.g., budget, finance, and procurement responsibilities, which can create perceived or real internal control issues, as well as staff oversight problems.
    - There was no separate CFO position.[9] Functions of a CFO are found under the COO.

[9] As a general rule, Council member districts and specifically those with student populations comparable in size to the Pittsburgh Public Schools (e.g., Indianapolis, Rochester, Jackson, Birmingham, and Richmond) have Chief Financial Officers who report directly to the Superintendent.

- There was no real Chief Academic Officer (CAO) in the district—when the team initially visited.
- Student services, career and technical education, and special education, sat under the chief of school performance rather than to the deputy superintendent or CAO. The school accountability unit also reported to the chief of school performance, presenting an apparent conflict of interest
- Management of federal title grants was inappropriately placed in the budget office instead of under a CAO where it is typically located.
- Responsibilities for English language learners did not appear on the district's main organizational chart.
- With the vacancy in the chief of school performance position, under the structure that the new superintendent found, the deputy superintendent had a very large number of direct reports (13). The span of control of the deputy reverted to three direct reports when the chief of school performance position was filled by the new superintendent and a CAO position was created (see below).
- Data, research, and evaluation functions were dispersed across three different units (i.e., chief of school performance, deputy superintendent, and chief information officer).
- The ownership of key enterprise systems were inappropriately placed in the technology office, e.g., SIS and ERP. It was also unclear who owned the shift to digital or instructional technology on the instructional side of the organization, since the director of curriculum technology position was vacant and sat under the chief information officer.
- Some staff and line positions were not clearly delineated or assigned, i.e., the role of the executive director of internal and external affairs.
- Roles and ratios of schools to assistant superintendents are inconsistent, e.g., two sitting principals were serving as assistant superintendents, their workloads were not balanced or equitable, and they operate quasi-independently.
- The merger of facilities and finance has resulted in conflicts in workloads.
- There was no organic internal audit or enterprise-wide risk management function; the cross functional crisis response team was located in compensation; custodians did not report to the facilities unit; and research data programmers are misplaced. (City Hall appears to have internal audit functions, which is not unheard of in other cities.)
- The district's organizational chart did not show any function for community engagement or parental relations.

- Since the Council team's visit, the new superintendent has created a chief academic officer position reporting to the deputy superintendent and filled the CAO slot with a new recruit with substantial academic experience, and the superintendent named a new deputy superintendent. The new CAO now oversees curriculum, instruction, and assessment, early childhood, career and technical education, professional development, and research, while student services remains under the chief of school performance. And the executive director for special education (PSE) now reports to the deputy (see section on special education in the discussion on instruction).

- In general, at the time of the Council team's visit there were excessive layers of staff members with managerial responsibilities, including seven on the academic side and six in operations.

- Key leadership vacancies appeared to be left unfilled[10] because of the district's inability and capacity to recruit a sufficient pool of talent to build the district's bench and create a diverse and expert workforce from internal and external resources. Job responsibilities for vacant positions were not adequately defined, assigned, or understood by district staff.

- There was a lack of clearly defined communications protocols between the superintendent and the board of education; central administration and the school board; among and within the departments; and between the central administration and schools.

    - There was no formal process for cabinet members to vet items prior to being taken to the school board for consideration, leading to board decisions that required departments to take action when they lacked the capacity to do so.
    - The team heard from a variety of sources that there was no protocol or control of "rogue" items taken to the school board for consideration.
    - There appeared to be little accountability in the chain of command, resulting in "work arounds" in order to get things done.

- There were weak processes for strategic decision making (e.g., no governance structure, no major research or evaluation function, no performance metrics, and data analytics were not linked to strategies).

    - Departmental objectives listed in the FY2016 budget were not coordinated, so there were competing priorities and a lack of cohesion across the system.
    - The cabinet lacked a collaborative culture and a formal process for decision-making.
    - A formal process for communicating how and why decisions were made—e.g., the rationale for organizational changes that had already been made, and who sits at the table and why—had not been clearly described.

- Multiple Council teams saw little evidence of cross-functional collaboration to solve the district's major challenges. Instead, the teams saw extensive staff siloing and weak cooperation across departments. In addition, there was no indication that staff—particularly in the instructional offices—were held accountable for working together.

- Legacy decisions were not based on a strategic plan, making it difficult to fill vacant positions and align job responsibilities.

- Siloed decision making and embedded stovepipes have created operational inefficiencies and ineffectiveness.

[10] The new superintendent is making headway on filling many of the critical senior positions.

  - No joint decision-making process or timelines had been developed for actions by staff at the "C" level (chief level).
  - Departmental goals had been developed but the team saw little evidence that business plans had been developed to implement them or that staff were held accountable for meeting goals.
  - No key performance metrics had been set up to achieve operational efficiencies or improve effectiveness.

- There did not appear to be a vetting process to determine the "value add' from various grants. In fact, the acceptance of those grants was not always strategically aligned and could sometimes interfere with the district's core mission, e.g., a Performance Management Team that was staffed at a higher ratio than the Talent Management Team whose services were critical for the staffing of schools.

- The lack of a clear vision, strategic direction, theory of action, standards and specifications, and cross-functional decision-making processes have limited program effectiveness and coherence. Examples included—

  - Multiple versions of what should be the same algebra course
  - Multiple math programs
  - Three different literacy programs
  - ITL 1s and 2s (Instructional Teacher Leaders) all doing much the same work
  - The preprinted list of approved items for purchase no longer being used
  - Technologies and related "rogue" items acquired without the capacity to support them, e.g., iPads sat for two years

- The team heard that there were no built-in incentives for the equitable allocation of resources to schools or students with the greatest needs, or any mechanism to encourage people to act differently in protecting their resources.

- There appears to be a disconnect among the chiefs of the academic and non-academic sides of the district's operations. In addition, staff members in the central office often lacked a clear understanding of their respective roles, and the effect has been mistrust and dissension with "no place to have open, candid, or difficult conversations."

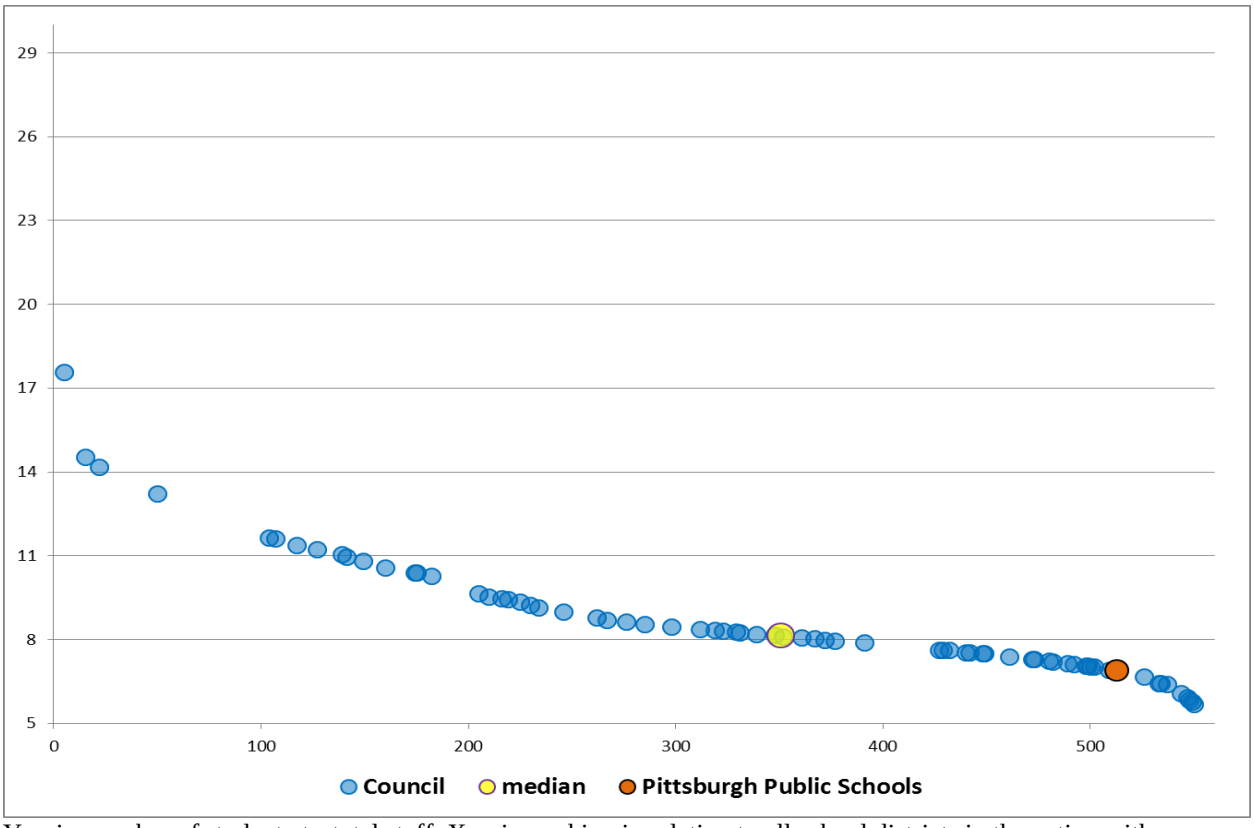
- There was no apparent succession planning among senior staff, or any recognition of the need to develop bench strength to sustain operations.

- The Council found the district's overall staffing ratios (FTEs) to be generally comparable to those in other urban school districts in the 2013-14 school year (the most recent on which there are national numbers on individual school districts. (Exhibits 18 through 23)

  - Pittsburgh had approximately 6.9 students per total staff member compared to the Great City School median of 8.1 students per total staff member. (See exhibit 18.)

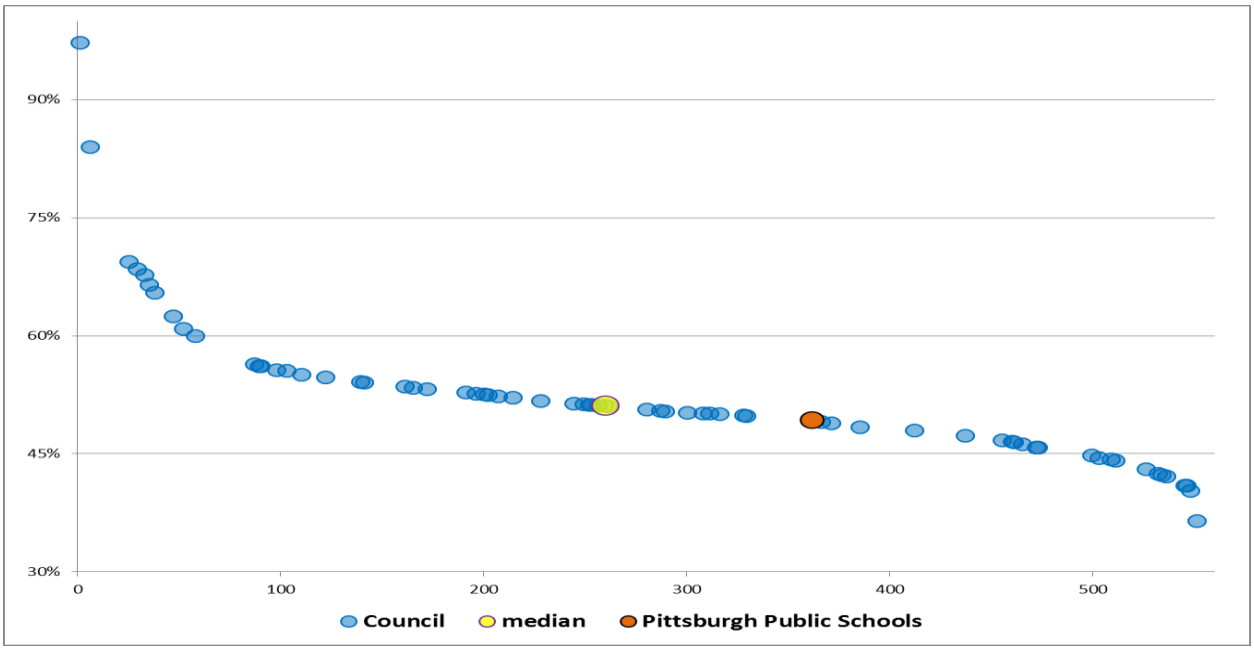
- Pittsburgh had approximately the same proportion of total staff members who were teachers as the median Great City School district, 49.2 percent vs. 51.1 percent, respectively. (See exhibit 19.)
- Pittsburgh had slightly fewer students per teacher than the median Great City School district, 14.0 vs. 16.1, respectively. (See exhibit 20.)
- Pittsburgh had more students per total administrator compared to the median Great City School district, 89.8 vs. 75.2. (See exhibit 21.)
- Pittsburgh had somewhat fewer students per school-based administrator than the median Great City School, 111.3 vs. 114.6, respectively (See exhibit 22.)
- Pittsburgh had considerably more students per district-level administrator than the median Great City School district, 465.0 vs. 216, respectively. (See exhibit 23.)

Exhibit 18. Students per Total Staff in Pittsburgh Public Schools



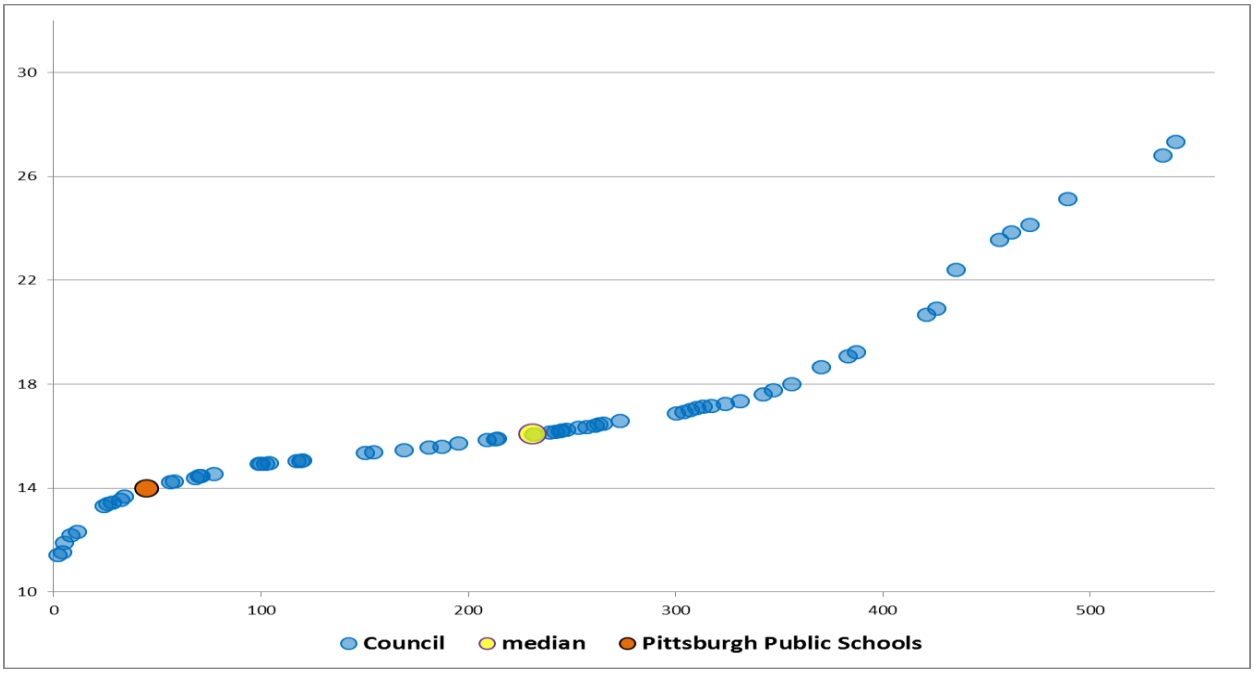
Y-axis=number of students-to-total staff; X-axis=ranking in relation to all school districts in the nation with enrollments of over 15,000. Note that each blue dot represents a Great City School district. Pittsburgh had 6.9 students per staff member; the median for the Great City Schools was 8.1 students per total staff member.

Exhibit 19. Percent of Total Staff in Pittsburgh Public Schools who were Teachers



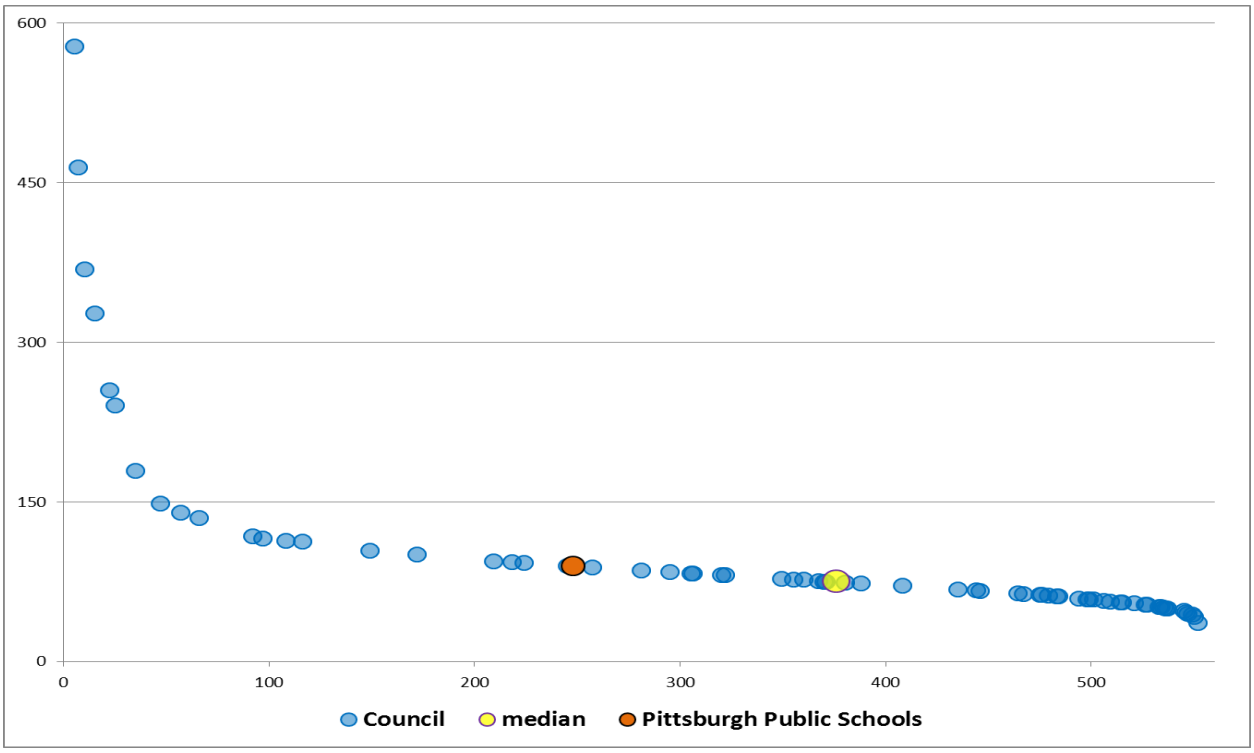
Y-axis=percent of total staff who were teachers; X-axis=ranking in relation to all school districts in the nation with enrollments of over 15,000. Note that each blue dot represents a Great City School district. Pittsburgh's percentage of all staff who were teachers was 49.2 percent; the median for the Great City School districts was 51.1 percent

Exhibit 20. Students per Teacher Ratio in Pittsburgh Public Schools



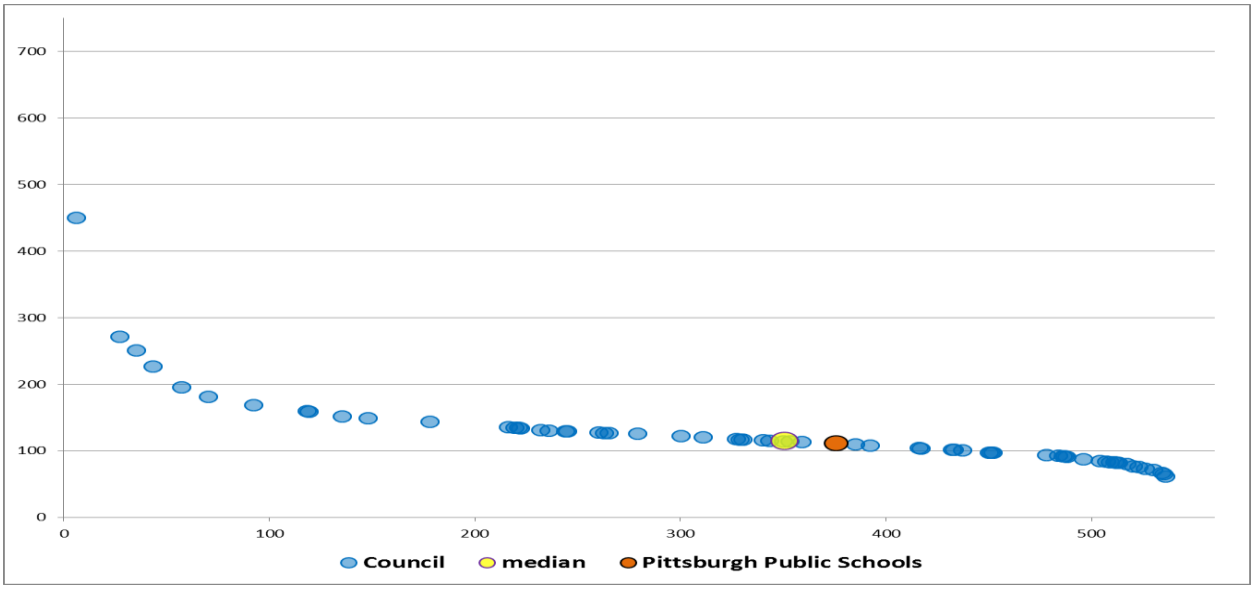
Y-axis=number of students-to-teachers; X-axis=ranking in relation to all school districts in the nation with enrollments of over 15,000. Note that each blue dot represents a Great City School district. Pittsburgh had 14.0 students per teacher; the median for the Great City Schools was 16.1 students per teacher.

Exhibit 21. Students per Administrator in the Pittsburgh Public Schools



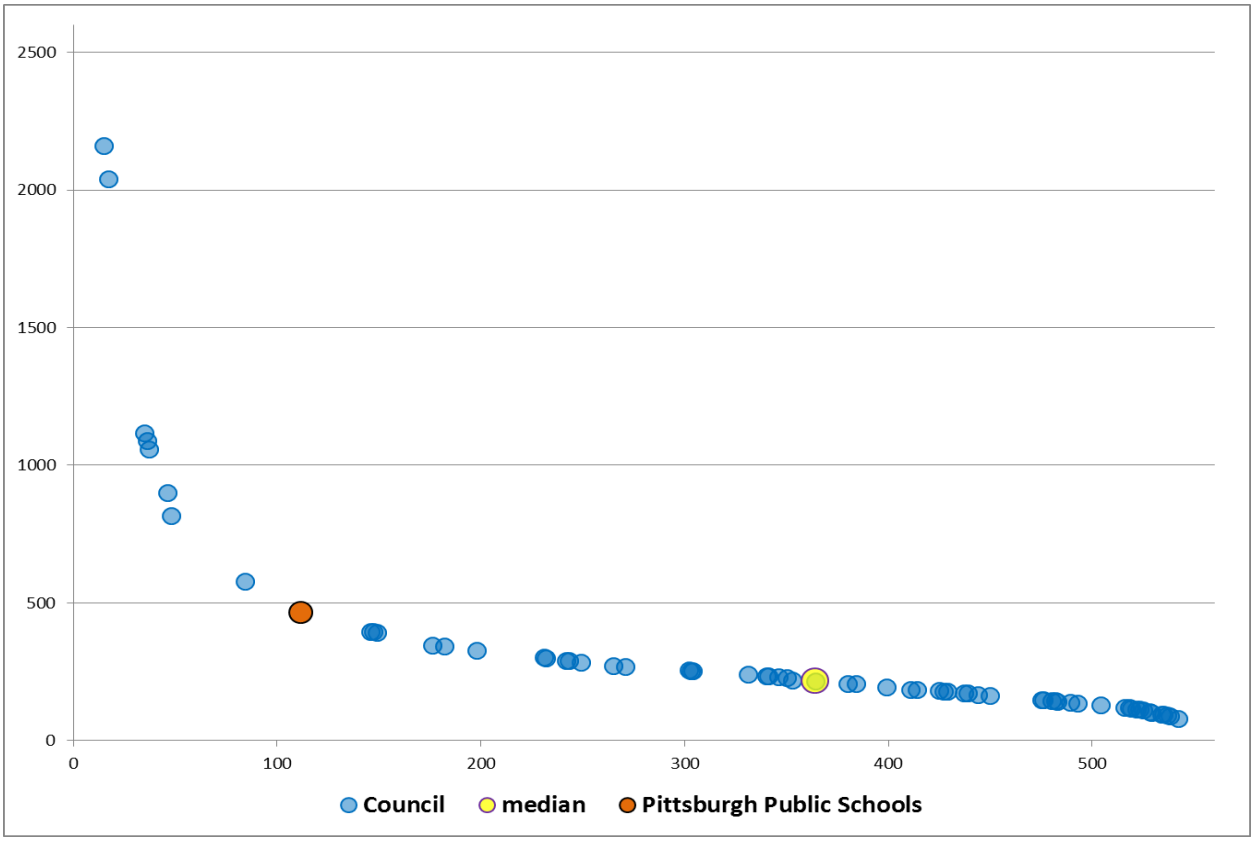
Y-axis=number of students per administrator; X-axis=ranking in relation to all school districts in the nation with enrollments of over 15,000. Note that each blue dot represents a Great City School district. Pittsburgh had 89.8 students per administrator; the median for the Great City Schools was 75.2 students per administrator.

Exhibit 22. Students per School-based Administrator in the Pittsburgh Public Schools



Y-axis=number of students per school-based administrator; X-axis=ranking in relation to all school districts in the nation with enrollments of over 15,000. Note that each blue dot represents a Great City School district. Pittsburgh had 111.3 students per school-based administrator; the median for the Great City Schools was 114.6 students per school-based administrator.

Exhibit 23. Students per District-level Administrator in the Pittsburgh Public Schools



Y-axis=number of students per district-level administrator; X-axis=ranking in relation to all school districts in the nation with enrollments of over 15,000. Note that each blue dot represents a Great City School district. Pittsburgh had 465.0 students per district-level administrator; the median for the Great City Schools was 216.2 students per district-level administrator

B. Instructional Programming

In general, the school district has not taken effective steps to improve the academic attainment of students over the last several years. The district's instructional program is weak and disjointed, and there are few mechanisms for enhancing classroom instruction or building district and school capacity to improve student achievement. There is also no mechanism to determine what works and what doesn't. Finally, there is no effective system by which people in the district are held accountable for student outcomes.

1. *Leadership and Governance*

- The Pittsburgh Promise—the program that provides state college tuition for all graduating students with at least a 2.5 GPA—is one of the best and most forward looking initiatives of any big city in the nation. It is a major investment by the city in its own future.

- A review of the school board by A+ Schools, a local community alliance, gave the Pittsburgh School Board an overall "B" grade, which was composed of individual grades

on focus and mission, transparency, conduct, role clarity, and competency. The highest grade (A) was in conduct; the lowest grade (C) was in role clarity.

- The school board has developed a number of short-term priorities for the new superintendent, including community schools, the turnaround of two high schools, implementation of restorative justice and transgender policies, and improving school discipline and suspension processes.

- The superintendent deserves credit for requesting this review.

- Overall, the school board works reasonably well together, but sometimes gets side-tracked on personnel issues and other operational details that are best left to the superintendent and his administration.

- The school board does not have a set of broad districtwide academic goals. In the past, goal-setting was delegated to the superintendent.[11]

- The school board does not devote extensive time or energy to monitoring or discussing student achievement.

- The school board does not have key performance indicators by which it monitors academic progress.

- Late items for school board action ("tabs") are allowed to be placed on the school board's agenda without having gone through an administrative approval process.

- The school board does not evaluate itself for how well it functions and how closely it follows its own policies and procedures.

- The district has not yet developed a clear theory of action for how it will improve the districtwide academic performance for all students, although the new superintendent's strategic plan is being drafted.

- The district's parent outreach hotline is a good feature to have, along with its monthly Excellence for All meetings and Equity Committee.

- Parents interviewed by the Council team reported no clear guidance on course offerings or prerequisites. They also described inconsistent, misleading, and contradictory communication from the district around instructional expectations, opportunities, and requirements across the system that they viewed as inequitable.

- The district's shift in its instructional approach several years ago was not well communicated; and the district did not build a shared understanding or support for the transition.

[11] The school board has started a goal-setting process with the Council of the Great City Schools as part of the superintendent's transition. In those sessions the board recently drafted five preliminary goals

2. *Curriculum and Instruction*

- At the time of the Council's visit, there was no clearly articulated vision for instruction districtwide nor strategy for improving it. For all intents and purposes, the district has delegated its instructional responsibilities to the schools and provided little guidance to them about how to improve instruction.

- The district's curriculum has been built roughly around the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Standards Aligned System.

- The district has seen no meaningful improvement in student achievement across all student groups and no narrowing of achievement gaps in reading, math, or science over the last several years. (See earlier section on student outcomes.)

- While a number of interviewees indicated that the district has put more emphasis or focus on instruction over the last several years, the lack of improvement in student achievement appears to be due to a weak Tier I (basic) instructional program. (This situation is probably also contributing to the over-identification of students in special education.)

- The quality of staff in the instructional department is very uneven.

- The district has gone from emphasizing a scripted curriculum ten years ago to a point where it largely lacks an overall instructional strategy, direction, or guidance. There did not appear to be a systemic transition from the scripted curriculum to the district's current, flexible structure, and the scripted curriculum continues to be used in some schools.

- Many people interviewed by the team expressed low expectations for student performance, including low expectations for second-language acquisition and magnet school programs focused on foreign languages.

- The district has not articulated what rigorous standards-based instruction looks like, or provided strong guidance to teachers or other school-based staff on the knowledge or level of understanding that students are expected to develop from instruction or exhibit through their work products.

- School-based staff reported to the team that they often did not know who to call in the central office when they encountered instructional problems because of the extensive turnover of staff over the last several years.

- As indicated earlier, two principals also serve as assistant superintendents who serve in supervisory roles for other principals. In other words, they are holding down two jobs—one that supervises the other. Overall, assistant superintendents are expected to serve as instructional leaders despite the fact that they—

    - Have very uneven instructional expertise.

- Carry a full load of operational responsibilities on top of the expectation that they serve as instructional leaders. (The district also has no strategy in place for alleviating this dual responsibility.)
- Receive no meaningful professional development. (Instead they report having joint meetings, watching videos, and reading and discussing articles.)
- Receive no on-boarding. (Principals report receiving no meaningful on-boarding support as well.)
- Do not have budgets or staff support.

- *English Language Arts*

  - The district's K-5 ELA curriculum is voluminous but weak, which results in teachers creating extensive work-arounds. Teachers report receiving little professional development or support on the curriculum—and little guidance on how to implement it.
  - Efforts to implement LETRS as a way of compensating for weaknesses in the McGraw-Hill ELA program were being abandoned after two years.
  - The staff-developed draft literacy framework was also abandoned, but it included an instructional framework, literacy block recommendations, guidance for differentiation, promising practices, an explicit focus on building literacy with tools for formative assessments, lesson plans, and links to additional resources and tools. The team concluded that this was actually one of the best instructional tools that the district had.
  - Neither literacy specialists nor early literacy specialists were clear about who they reported to, and felt under-utilized and marginalized. Neither group appears to have a formal relationship with ELA content staff in the central office or assistant superintendents who supervise principals.

- *Mathematics*

  - In math, the district's curriculum is essentially the textbook, except that there are multiple textbooks—including *Envision*, *Everyday Math* (2005), *Everyday Math* (2016), and *MyMath*, as well as an *Investigations* pilot. Consequently, teachers are drawing from a wide range of disparate math resources and guidelines, coupled with different philosophies about how to teach mathematics.
  - There is a clear lack of consistency in math programming—some schools spread Algebra out over four semesters, while other schools make it a one-year course. At least one school offers pre-Algebra at the high school level. The Council team did not see any research conducted by the district on how well the differing approaches to Algebra I affected student achievement. The Council team suspected that the rigor of the courses was weak overall and uneven in its implementation.
  - The scope and sequence document explicitly indicates the units/chapters from the adopted text(s) that are to be used, but it fails to offer specific guidance for teachers. For example, each quarter in the K-5 math scope and sequence references multiple texts, but there is a lack of guidance about what to teach, at what level of depth, or how to connect the units from differing texts. It is also not clear why multiple texts would be used. For secondary mathematics, the scope and sequence identifies the units from CME (Connected Math), but it does not provide any specific guidance to teachers about

which math standards or clusters students are learning, nor does it address the level of depth or rigor at which math concepts should be taught.
    - There is a draft K-5 math instructional plan framework that was developed, but it was abandoned. The framework explicitly called out computational fluency and identified areas of focus for fluency at each grade level. There were examples of how Standards for Mathematical Practice looked at each grade level. Included were problem-solving strategies, and how culturally responsive teaching becomes visible in math. However, there were no linkages to commonly used textbook-support materials to indicate how to integrate these important strategies into daily classroom practices.
    - Middle schools use Connected Math, but fidelity of implementation was weak, and new teachers weren't receiving professional development on its use.
    - There was no explicit, systemwide strategy for integrating literacy into math instruction.

- There is considerable inconsistency across the district in providing schools with instructional support and guidance. Largely, schools and teachers are on their own in figuring out what to teach and at what level of rigor. ITLs and ITL2's are supposed to provide instructional support, but their deployment and impact is uneven from school to school.

- The district has 25-minute intervention blocks at the beginning of the day in elementary and middle schools—a promising idea, but their inconsistent implementation limits impact. Some schools have taken the initiative to purchase academic interventions on their own, but the district's system of interventions is poorly defined. Consequently, use of the intervention block is uneven. The team saw no attempt by the district to evaluate interventions or the time devoted to them.

- There is no clear course progressions across schools, a situation that has significant effect particularly in the area of language development programming for English language learners.

- At the secondary level, differentiated instruction appears to result in courses with different levels of rigor and weights that might present differing opportunities. A review of the course catalog shows that Pittsburgh Public Schools offers courses in the following categories: AP, Center for Advanced studies (CAS, for gifted students or by application[12]), regular 'Conceptual,' Sheltered ESL, and CTE. Access to the more rigorous courses seems limited to meeting specified assessment and grade requirements.

- Class sizes reportedly vary from school to school across the district. (Although the team did not have data on this issue to affirm or refute the reports.)

[12] However, any non-identified students that are interested in taking CAS courses must meet specific course requirements and complete a CAS application, which includes a student essay, student and parent contract, and a teacher recommendation. (page xxxvi, Secondary Course Catalog.)

- The district's magnet programs and school closings over the years have contributed to disparities in educational opportunity and the unevenness of instructional programming across the district.

- There appears to be little clarity for parents and the community on the minimum competencies that students should be acquiring throughout the school year.

- The district lacks uniform walk-through protocols, procedures, materials, or look-fors.

- There does not appear to be systemic use of walk-through data to inform instructional practice or districtwide strategy.

- There is no process for sharing promising practices or common problems of practice across the district.

- The district does not have a rubric or procedure for looking at student work, assessing levels of proficiency against the standards, or informing instructional practice. Examining student work and assessing the level of instruction that produced it is not a common practice systemwide. (There are a number of excellent rubrics for looking at student work, but there was no evidence that the district encourages their use.)

- Principals reported that they did not have time to be instructional leaders due to managerial responsibilities and daily issues that needed to be solved, despite the fact that the deployment of assistant superintendents was designed to lessen the operational responsibilities of principals.

- Budget cutting over the years appears to have depleted the numbers of paraprofessionals, instructional coaches, and related-services personnel that are available to support school-based staff

- *Early Childhood Education*

    - The district's pre-K program serves an estimated 2/3 of eligible children across the city.
    - At the same time, the size of the district's pre-K class is only about 48 percent the size of the district's kindergarten class. (See Exhibit C-1.) Other major urban school districts on which we have data range from a high of 94 percent to a low of 4 percent, placing Pittsburgh at about average among other urban school districts in terms of the size of their pre-K program relative to the size of their kindergarten enrollment.
    - All pre-K classrooms use the same curriculum—a good thing. In fact, this is the only place in the district where this is the case.
    - There appears to be close cooperation between the school district and the Head Start organization. And district's pre-K staff meets regularly with literacy staff.
    - The district serves about 36 homebound students.
    - The district uses the Work Sampling assessment to determine kindergarten readiness.
    - An evaluation of the district's pre-K program showed that participating students did better academically through grade two than those who did not participate.

- The district was unable to determine how many kindergarteners have had pre-K experience outside of the district's program.
- In early literacy, the district is collecting artifacts of student work and sharing them within their buildings and with their teams (although this does not exist systemwide).
- A number of staff interviewed by the instructional team reported large kindergarten classes with few paraprofessionals or co-teachers.

- *Gifted and Talented Programming*

  - The state requires the use of IQ scores as part of the gifted and talented identification, but the district—to its credit—has added other multiple measures beyond IQ to determine eligibility for gifted programming.
  - The district does not have a universal screening mechanism for determining eligibility. Screening needs to be requested at the school level, but there are some schools that make no requests for student evaluations.
  - The number of AP courses per high school ranged from 27 to 4 districtwide.
  - Ethnically and racially diverse students are not proportionally represented in the district's gifted and talented programs, according to 2013 data reported to the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights. For some groups the low participation rates is particularly disconcerting. For instance—

    - Black students were half as likely to be enrolled in gifted and talented programs—Black students comprised 53.7 percent of overall enrollment but only 26 percent of the gifted and talented enrollment. In contrast, Whites were close to twice as likely to be in gifted and talented programs—White students comprised 33 percent of overall enrollment but 60 percent of the gifted and talented enrollment. (Exhibit 24)
    - Black students represented a disproportionate share of students attending schools in which gifted and talented programs were not offered—70 percent were identified as Black while 19 percent were White students. (Exhibit 24)
    - Enrollment of Black students in calculus was also very low—Black students made-up only 20.5 percent of enrollment compared to 65 percent represented by White students. (Exhibit 24)
    - Black students represented 71 percent of the students who attended schools in which calculus was not offered. (Exhibit 24)
    - Black and other racial/ethnically diverse students participated at higher rates in AP/IB and physics. For example, African American students represented 49 percent of students enrolled in AP/IB courses and 47.5 percent of those enrolled in physics, much closer to the 53 percent share of enrollment. (Exhibit 25)

Exhibit 24. Enrollment in gifted and talented programs and calculus by race and ethnicity, 2013

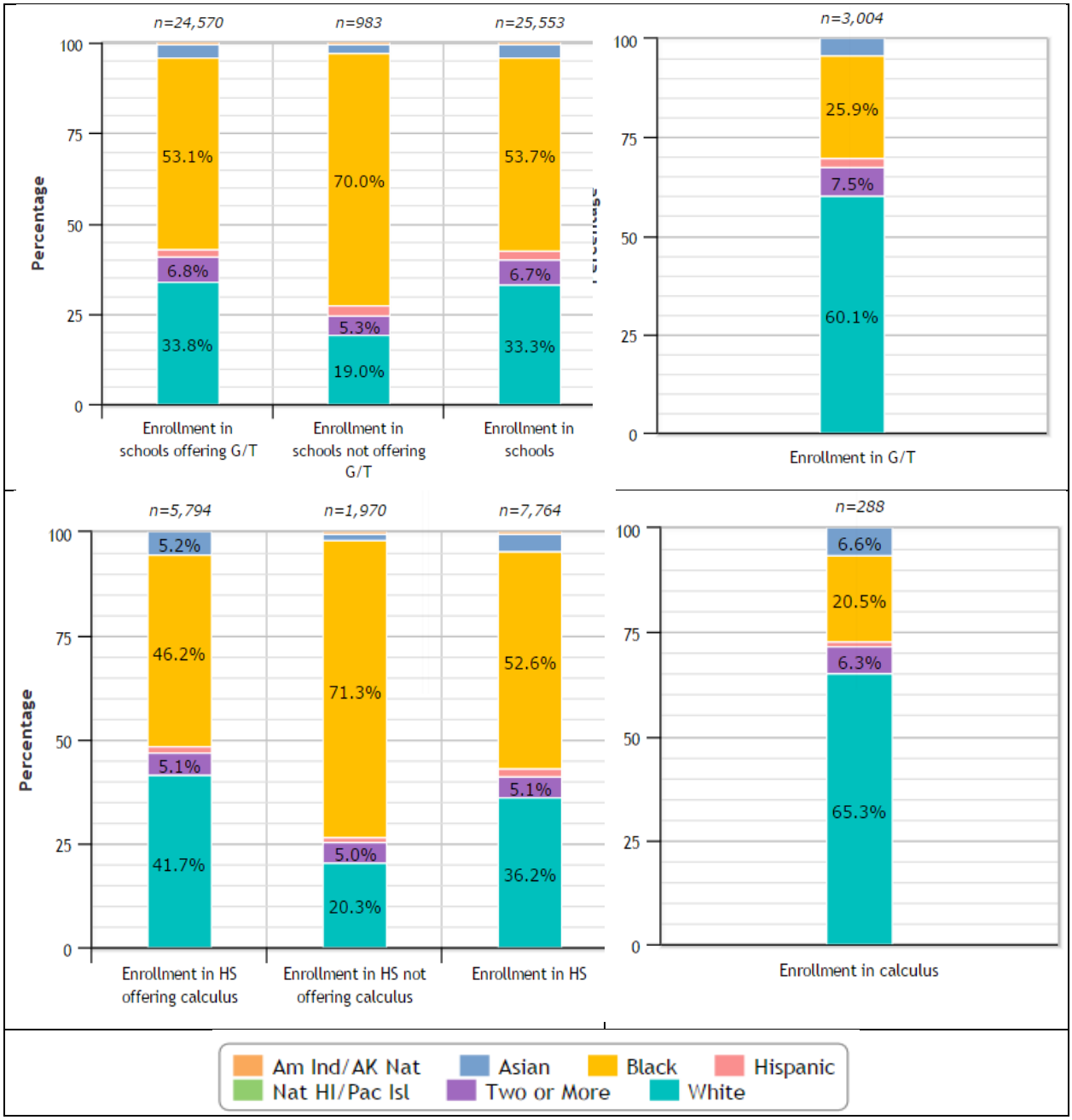
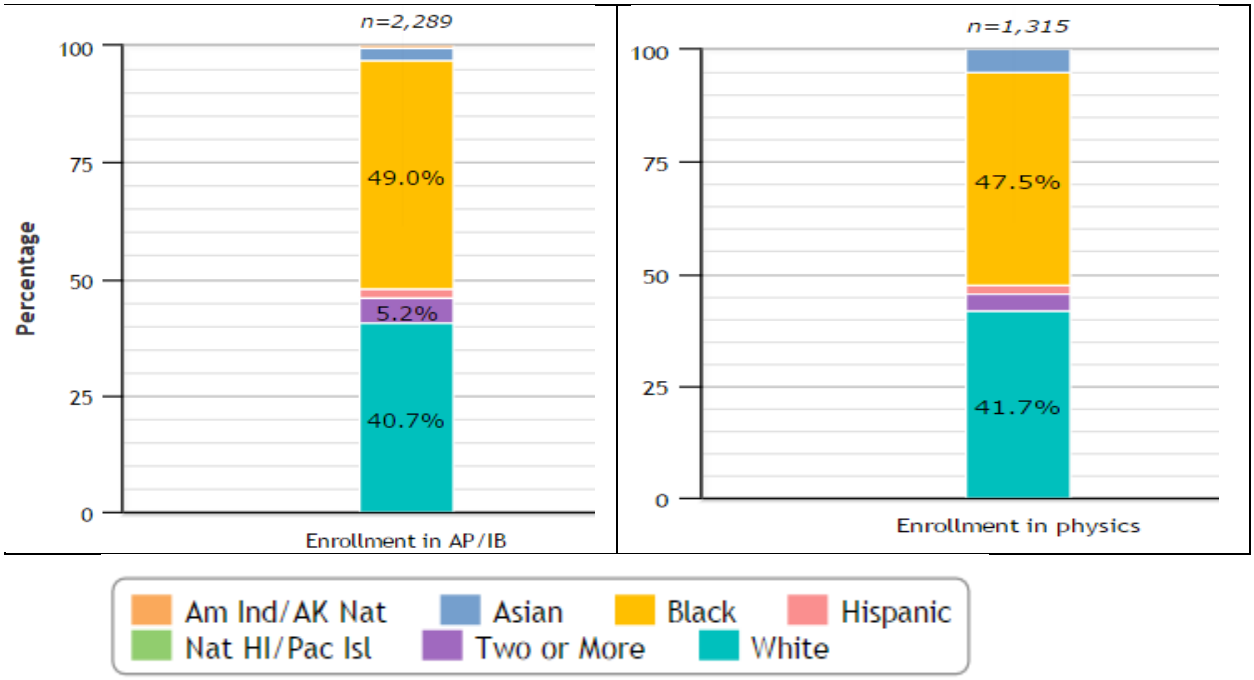


Exhibit 25. Enrollment in AP/IB and physics by race and ethnicity, 2013



- ELLs also represented a small portion of enrollment in gifted and talented programs, calculus, and chemistry, according to the Office for Civil Rights Data Base Specifically, while ELLs comprised three percent of Pittsburgh enrollment,

  - Only 0.1 percent of gifted and talented enrollment are ELLs. In fact, the team could find only one ELL in the district who was in a gifted and talented program.
  - ELLs enrolled in calculus represented only .7 percent of students in calculus
  - ELLs enrolled in chemistry represented 1.6 percent of students in chemistry
  - Only in physics did ELL enrollment approximate its overall percentage—2.7 percent of students enrolled in physics were ELL.

3. *Professional Development*

- There is no districtwide professional development plan or program, meaning that the district has limited ways in which it can systematically build or enhance the capacity of central office and school-based staff.

- There is little coherent focus in the district's professional development; it is mostly a hodgepodge of disconnected offerings that do not line up with the district's academic priorities and do not build staff expertise across sessions.

- The instructional team was told that the district has three districtwide professional development days during the school year—a low number compared to many other urban school systems and a number too low to build capacity.

- The district has very weak professional development for principals and assistant superintendents on academic content and standards.

- Professional development from network to network across the district is very uneven. There is little normalizing of professional development offerings or practices.

- Professional development is not differentiated for teachers or staff based on expertise, student needs, experience, or prior training.

- There is weak coordination of professional development across general education, special education, and bilingual education units.

- The district's professional development is not valued by teachers or other school based personnel.

- The district's professional development is not evaluated either for its implementation or effects on student academic attainment.

- The professional development department has no budget or authority within the central office. It is mostly a clearinghouse for coordinating various efforts, although it does not appear to even do this well.

- There is little professional development on Pennsylvania's version of the common core standards, other than isolated training on text dependent analysis (which, incidentally, received the highest marks from teachers). As well as it was received, this particular training session appeared out-of-context with other training that was occurring, and no follow up occurred.

- Some schools schedule common planning time for teachers while others do not. There is no systemwide planning time for teachers districtwide.

- Instructional Teacher Leaders (ITL IIs), which are funded mostly out of federal Title I and are not in every school, have both instructional coaching and teacher evaluation responsibilities. (There was some discussion about possibly ending this program.) These personnel could be deployed to build teacher capacity, but they appear to be ill-equipped for this purpose.

- There does not appear to be a formal mentoring program for new teachers. Instead, they are often paired with volunteer retired teachers.

- The district does not seem to have an aggressive effort to recruit high-quality staff. The district's HR unit appears to be more oriented around the teacher effectiveness system than on staff recruitment, retention, or professional development.

- There appears to be inconsistent training and resources around culturally relevant/responsive instruction.

- The district is participating in a 22-district professional development pilot with Learning Forward. It was not clear to the team what the evaluation component of this pilot was, and district staff did not seem to know.

- There is no districtwide principal pipeline program.

- The district has no formal learning-management system.

4. *Staff Evaluations*

- The team recognized that many individuals in the school district were dedicated to its mission and held themselves accountable for producing results in their respective areas.

- The district's emphasis on teacher effectiveness over the years appears to have crowded out a focus on improving instruction and content expertise. The district's work on teacher effectiveness originated with a set of foundation grants that also went to other major urban school systems, but the intent of the original grants does not appear to have been sustained in the way that funders might have hoped or district staff wanted.

- There is an appearance of accountability for student outcomes, but no real accountability system districtwide. The accountability system looks on the surface that it might hold staff responsible for results but the internal details of the system suggest otherwise.

- The RISE System does not adequately differentiate between effective and ineffective teaching. (Some 97 percent of teachers in the district continue to be rated as proficient or distinguished, according to staff interviews). The reason for this lack of differentiation are found in the details of the RISE system.

    - The student achievement metric is only given 15 percent of half of the total score, behind SLOs (20 percent). The other half of the score is devoted to professional practice.
    - The addition of SLOs into the rating system nearly ensures that teachers earn a proficient rating.
    - The RISE rubric consists largely of routines and rituals, and does not delve deep enough into content or quality of instruction.
    - The RISE system resulted in 150 of the district's lowest performing teachers leaving when it was first implemented—not enough to affect district achievement.

- Assistant superintendents and other central office staff are eligible for up to $10k in bonuses based on student achievement, and additional incremental raises based on professional practice criteria.

- All assistant superintendents received at least part of this bonus last year.

- Principals are not held accountable for retaining their most effective teachers, even if they could fairly and accurately identify who they were.

- Principal evaluations lack equity measures—i.e., the identification of gifted and talented students, enrollments in and completion of higher-level courses, special education placements, disproportionality in suspensions, etc.

- The evaluation of assistant superintendents is required by the state and is aligned to the superintendent's priorities, but assistant superintendents do not have to meet all goal indicators.

- Principal evaluations are based on professional practice, achievement, and teacher correlations. The rubrics are aligned to RISE and also do not distinguish between effective and non-effective principals.

- No principals were rated ineffective last school year.

- Principals write SLOs for their own schools and they are reviewed by the assistant superintendents.

5. *English Language Learners*

- ELL enrollment is growing in the district, but staff had a poor grasp of the overall size, make up, and achievement trends of ELLs in the district. For example—

    - Staff were unable to cite concrete numbers of ELLs in the district. (There were 920 ELLs, and 30 different languages).
    - In looking at the distribution of ELLs, ELL staff did not have a clear idea as to why so many ELLs were in grade 9, and why there was a 50 percent drop-off in ELLs between grades 10 and 11.
    - Staff could not say how many students had interrupted formal schooling (SIFE), though it was believed to be a high number (no specifics again).
    - Staff members indicated that the ELL population was diverse and it included many gifted ELLs, but the data show that only ONE ELL is in the district's gifted program.

- Data warehouse protocols may be impeding central office ELL staff from having a better grasp of ELL numbers. Teachers and principals create their own spreadsheets, and the ELL director indicated that he has to obtain this data school-by-school. This can lead to miscalculations of what may be needed in the district to support ELLs.

- The district has 37 teachers to serve 920 ELLs (2016-17) with a resulting teacher: student ratio of 1:25.

- The district's ELL program is defined largely by Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) Guidelines that require a certain number of periods during which ELLs receive services *via* push-in or pull-out services based on proficiency level. PDE guidelines call for up to two hours of service a day (e.g., two hours for Levels 1 and 2, one to two hours for Level 3, and one hour for Level 4, and up to an hour for Level 5.) Other staff indicated that these guidelines were not always followed at the school level.

- The PDE calls for LEAs to select a model of instruction for ELLs, but in the case of Pittsburgh, the model seems to be left up to the school. Students are assigned to push-in or pull-out services based on a number of factors, including WIDA ACCESS results, grades and standardized tests, and teacher observations.

- The district's decision tree for ELL placement does not include factors staff indicated were used for appropriate placement of ELLs. The document delineates the number of ESL periods for which ELLs qualify, depending on their WIDA level of English proficiency, and guidance for which students would receive push-in or pull out ESL instruction.

    - Most of the suggested student groupings by WIDA Level are too narrowly defined by a single level of proficiency (1 to 1.9 on ACCESS, 2 to 2.9, etc.), resulting in limited student exposure to differing models of English proficiency.
    - For ELLs with higher levels of English proficiency and in grades 9-12, however, the suggested grouping is too broad (e.g. 3.0 to 6 on ACCESS). In this case, ELLs who are level 5 and 6 are close to reaching proficiency yet for up to two periods a day they would be with students who are below the intermediate levels. ELLs who are close to exiting would benefit from greater exposure to English proficient and native English speaking students.
    - At the elementary level, the ESL support is limited to English Language Arts; the decision tree document does not call for ESL support in other content areas.

- The lack of additional guidance for instructional programming for ELLs may be driving schools to deliver ESL services that are slowing down ELLs' progress in language acquisition, given the narrowly defined proficiency-based student groups, and restricting access to content by providing ESL support only in ELA.

- The district does not appear to use the Council's criteria for the selection of ELA materials for ELLs—or any other version of the "publisher's criteria" to assess whether materials used by the district were compatible with the standards.

- ELLs are largely served in one of 10 schools, called Regional ESL Centers, which include two high schools, six elementary, and two middle schools. ELLs also attend classes in non-centers, including magnets and special schools that have programs for students with IEPs. The district provides transportation for ELLs to the centers.

- Regional ESL centers are not schoolwide but rather provide an ESL program within the school. Students attend regular classes with non-ELLs outside of the designated ELL time (push in or pull out).

    - Staff members indicated that ELLs in the centers are not isolated from their English-speaking peers.
    - Staff also indicated that mainstream teachers collaborate with ESL teachers for modifications, but that teacher support for this practice was varied.

- At the high school level, sheltered instruction is provided in social studies and math. Courses grant high school credit.
- The Council was unable to confirm that the ESL sheltered instruction courses in math and science meet graduation requirements or that there is a clear pathway to graduation for ELLs because district documents seemed inconsistent or incomplete. A review of the ELL pathway towards graduation and the 2015-16 Pittsburgh Secondary Course Catalog showed that none of the ESL Courses listed in the 'ESL Sequence for Grades 9-12' document, appeared in the 2015-26 secondary course catalog; the ESL or sheltered courses did not appear even on the "Minimum" Required Courses for Graduation table (page xvii of the catalog).[13] The ESL Sequence document listed Algebra 1 & 2 ESL, Geometry ESL, and Promise Readiness Mathematics ESL but none of these appeared on the Pittsburgh Public School Math Sequence (pp xxviii).
- Of the ESL courses for science, the catalog indicates that *only two* of the five courses 'satisfies the graduation requirement and is a fourth credit science option.' (pp 173). No further information was found to clarify whether the 'conceptual chemistry ESL' and 'conceptual physics ESL' meet graduation requirement but prerequisites for some of the 'conceptual' suggest that the rigor is lower and thus, might likely not meet the graduation requirements. For instance, students who take conceptual Chemistry ESL are those who meet the following prerequisite: 'Grade C or below in Biology, Below proficient in reading.'
- The ESL sheltered courses in US History and World History were listed as satisfying the graduation requirement.
- The grade 9-12 promotion requirements (p. xvi of the secondary catalog), prescribes academic units in specific content areas. This sequence and number of content courses would not be the ideal for ELLs, especially those with beginning levels of English proficiency.
- Staff indicated that the ELL materials included: CENGAGE/ National Geographic REACH, INSIDE at the middle school level, and EDGE at the high school level. If ELLs were provided nothing else other these instructional materials, their curriculum would lack rigor and may not be aligned to the state's core standards.
- Communications and partnerships with resettlement agencies appear to be effective. The school district receives information from the State Refugee Coordinator and agencies on the number of families to be settled, and there is ongoing interaction in support of refugee families. (There were no concrete details provided.)

- Staff indicated that ELLs take between three and four years to exit the ELL program, but no more specific information was provided to substantiate the claim. Data on ELLs appears to be particularly weak.

- The ELL office's supports for mainstream teachers and principals varied by school depending on whether or not the principal makes a request for support from the central office.

[13] file:///C:/Users/dlai/Downloads/15-16_Secondary_Course_Catalog_Finalv2.1.pdf

- Opportunities for ESL and content teachers to collaborate varied by school and even by year. It seems that the degree of collaboration largely depends on the principal's priorities and the level of autonomy the principal may give teachers.

- The district's monitoring of ELL programs and services is not systemic or systematic. The ELL Office does not have a schedule for visiting and supporting schools, but addresses compliance issues when they are detected during school visits.

- Federal Title III budgeted expenditures do not appear to be strategic. Staff indicated that technology upgrades were a major expenditure, but budget documents showed that the funds went mostly to central office staffing with no mention of staff responsibilities. Funds were also used to provide supplemental materials that appeared to be of low rigor (leveled libraries and picture dictionaries) and mostly related to assessment accommodations.

- Achievement tracking of ELLs does not go beyond the federal NCLB requirements to monitor former ELLs two years after exiting. This monitoring, however, is largely informal and serves mostly to ensure that former ELLs do not re-enter the ELL program.

- Assessments for tracking academic progress among ELLs are focused mostly on English language acquisition: WIDA's MODEL kits are used for this, but in the content areas there are interim assessments that include all ELLs. Curriculum Based Assessments exclude ACCESS Level 1 ELLs.

- Some external ELL stakeholders interviewed by the team expressed frustration with the lack of communication outreach in languages other than English. For example, school results are provided only in English.

6. *Special Education*

a. Disability Rates

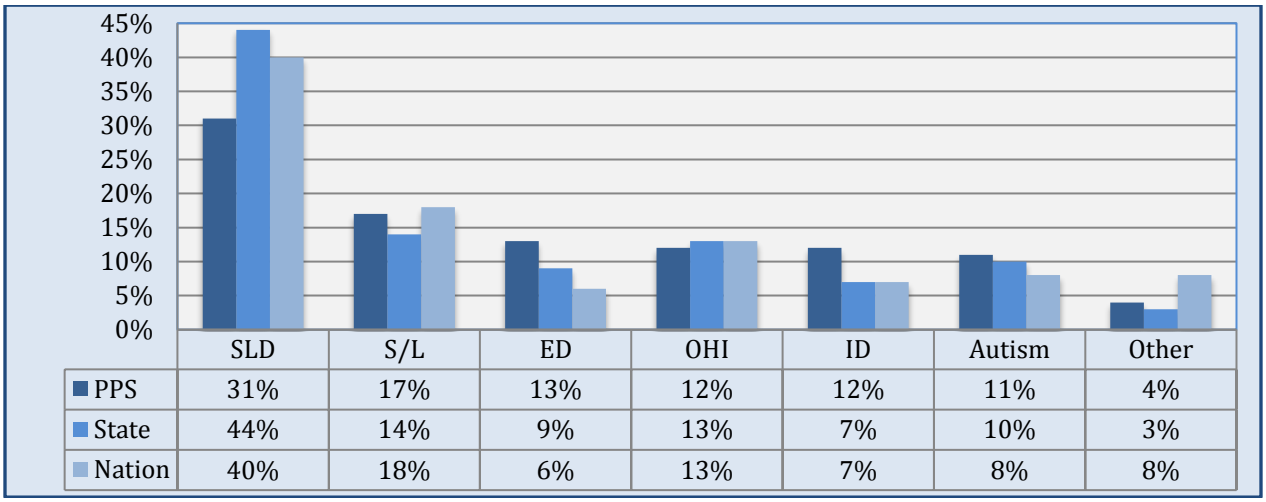
- PPS enrolls 5,821 students with IEPs who are three through 21 years of age. This number includes students in separate schools (inside and outside of the district). The number comprises 23.3 percent of the 25,003[14] students enrolled in the district. Among school-aged students (K-12), the district enrolls some 4,210 students, which comprise 18.1 percent of the district's 23,276 students. This percentage is higher than the 13.1 percent average across 71 urban school districts on which we have data.[15] Percentages in other districts ranged from 8 percent to 22 percent, indicating that PPS was high in the numbers of students identified as having a disability. The PPS figure is also higher than the 12.9 percent national figure, which has decreased since 2004-05, when it was 13.8 percent.[16]

[14] Retrieved from PPS's Facts at a Glance at http://www.pps.k12.pa.us/Domain/17.
[15] Most data were provided by school districts that responded to a survey conducted by the Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative; the Council team or members of the team obtained the remaining data during district reviews.
[16] U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2015). *Digest of Education Statistics, 2013* (NCES 2015-011), Chapter 2. The rates are based on 2011-12 data based on students 3 through 21 years of age. http://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=64.

- Children with IEPs in early childhood programs have disabilities most frequently in three major categories. The largest category (51.1 percent) is developmental delay. The next largest category is speech/language impairment (34.2 percent), which is followed by autism (7.7 percent). The remaining 7.0 percent of children are identified as having another disability.

- Compared to state and national average, PPS's students with IEPs are identified as having particular disabilities at proportions that are different in many areas from those at state and national levels.[17] (See Exhibit 26.) The greatest disparity between PPS and state and national averages is in the area of specific learning disabilities, where PPS's 31 percent is much lower than the state's 44 percent and the nation's 40 percent. On the other hand, PPS has a larger percentage of students than the state and nation in the areas of emotional disturbance and intellectual disability. In the emotional disturbance category, PPS's 13 percent is higher than the state's 9 percent and the nation's 6 percent. In the intellectual disability category, PPS's 12 percent is higher than state and national rate of 7 percent.

Exhibit 26. Percentage of Students by Disability Category, Compared to State and Nation

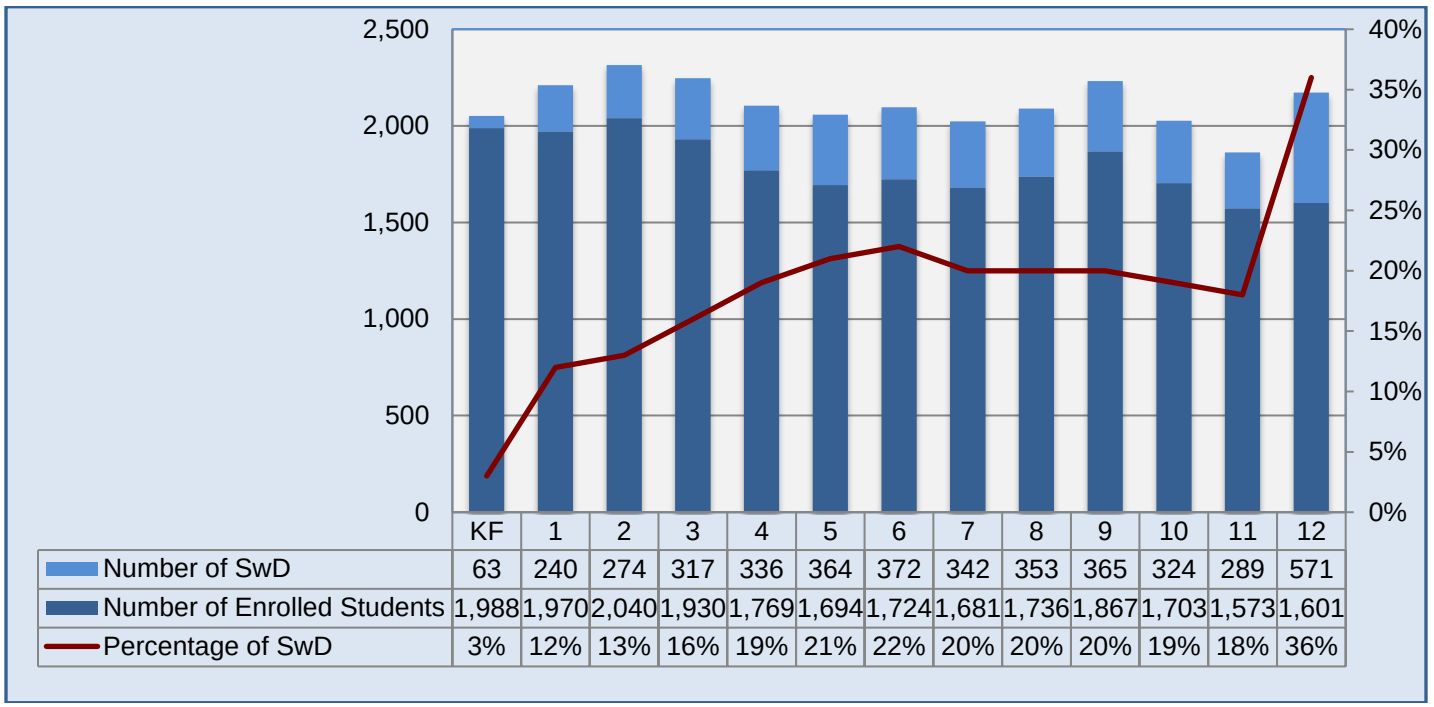


	SLD	S/L	ED	OHI	ID	Autism	Other
PPS	31%	17%	13%	12%	12%	11%	4%
State	44%	14%	9%	13%	7%	10%	3%
Nation	40%	18%	6%	13%	7%	8%	8%

- The district's overall average of students with IEPs is 18.1 percent, but the figure varies by grade. (Exhibit 27.) Following a low of 3 percent in kindergarten, the figure jumps to 12 percent (first grade), 16 percent (third grade), 19 percent (fourth grade), 21 percent (fifth grade), and a high of 22 percent (sixth grade). Between seventh and ninth grade the percentage is steady (20 percent), but then drops slightly in tenth grade (19 percent) and eleventh grade (18 percent). Twelfth grade's high of 36 percent of students with IEPs is most likely due to students with IEPs who continue to receive postsecondary transition services and activities past the age of 18 years, a pattern that is often seen in other major urban school systems.

[17] National and state data are based on the U.S. Department of Education's 2014 IDEA Part B Child Count and Educational Environment database, retrieved from 2014-15 USDE IDEA Section 618 State Level Data Files, retrieved at http://www2.ed.gov/programs/osepidea/618-data/state-level-data-files/index.html#bccee. Unless otherwise stated, all PPS data were provided by the district to the Council's team.

Exhibit 27. Pittsburgh Students with IEPs by Grade



	KF	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Number of SwD	63	240	274	317	336	364	372	342	353	365	324	289	571
Number of Enrolled Students	1,988	1,970	2,040	1,930	1,769	1,694	1,724	1,681	1,736	1,867	1,703	1,573	1,601
Percentage of SwD	3%	12%	13%	16%	19%	21%	22%	20%	20%	20%	19%	18%	36%

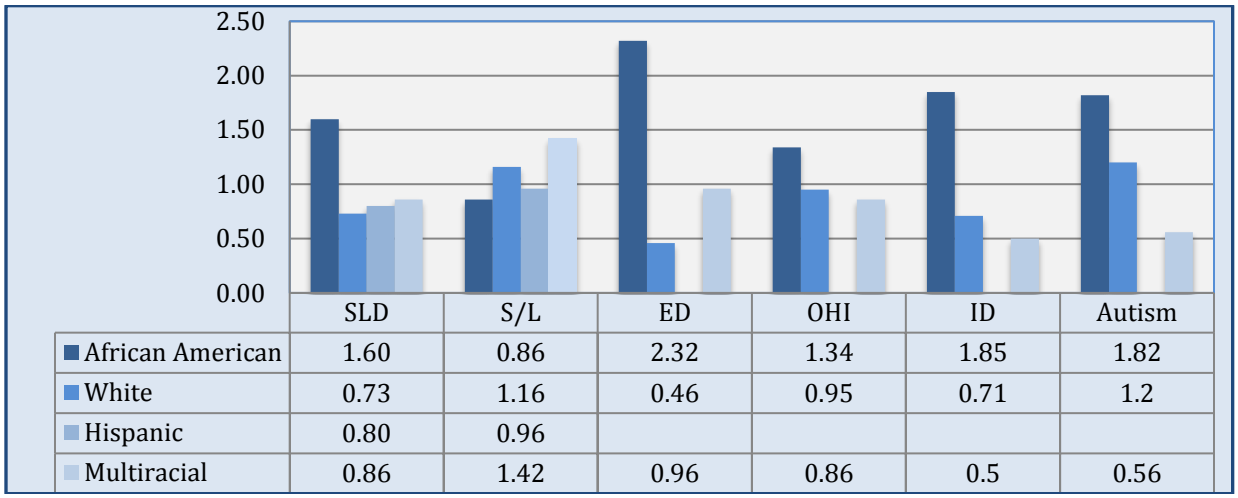
b. Risk of Over-identification

- There are 4,210 African American students in special education out of the total school population of 12,276 African American students (total district enrollment of 23,276).

- Pennsylvania's state performance plan uses a weighted risk ratio to measure disproportionality by race. School districts having a racial/ethnic student group with a weighted risk ratio of at least 3.0 for two or more consecutive years are required to conduct a self-review of their compliance with policies, procedures, and practices. The state's weighted risk ratio analysis is based on a minimum of 40 students with disabilities in the particular racial category.[18] Exhibit 28 shows students by the most prevalent race/ethnic subgroups, most common disability areas, and their relevant risk ratios. These data shows that African American students are 2.32 times more likely than students in other racial/ethnic groups to be identified as having an emotional disturbance. These students are also 1.85 times more likely to be identified as having an intellectual disability, 1.82 times more likely to be identified as having autism, and 1.34 times more likely to be identified as having an other health impairment. No disproportionality exists for other student groups and disability categories.

[18] In 2010-11, the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) reported that states do not use standard calculations or definitions to define disproportionality and there are large differences between state measures. The U.S. Department of Education has issued a draft regulation that requires states to use a reasonable risk ratio measurement with a minimum cell size of 10. A final regulation may be issued prior to the end of President Obama's administration, but it is unclear what the next administration will do with it.

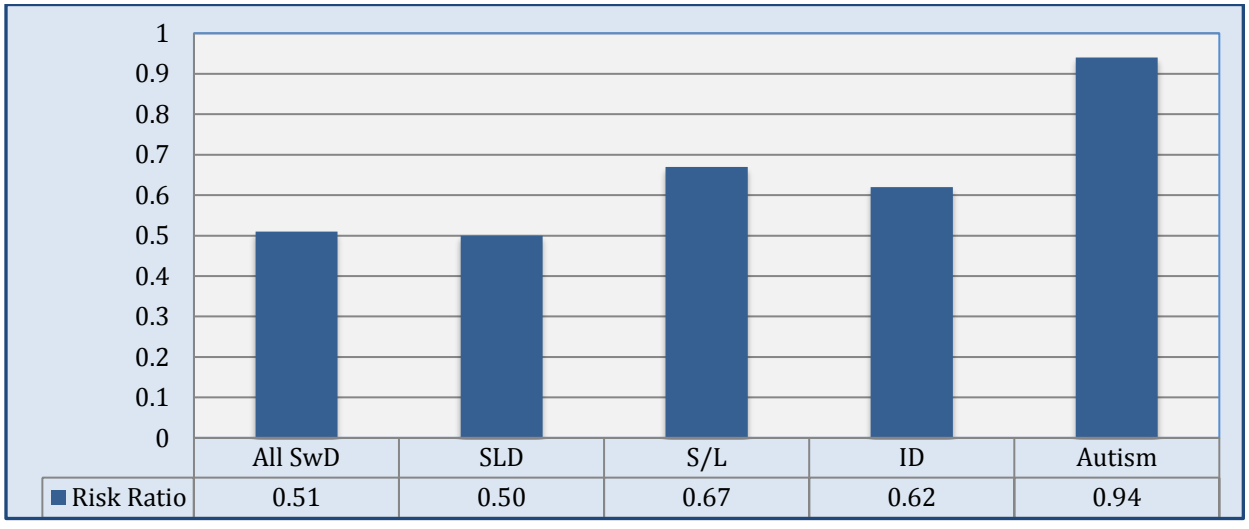
Exhibit 28. Race/Ethnicity Risk Ratios by Most Common Disability Categories



	SLD	S/L	ED	OHI	ID	Autism
African American	1.60	0.86	2.32	1.34	1.85	1.82
White	0.73	1.16	0.46	0.95	0.71	1.2
Hispanic	0.80	0.96				
Multiracial	0.86	1.42	0.96	0.86	0.5	0.56

- ELL students are less likely than students who are not ELLs to be identified as having a disability. Exhibit 29 shows the risk ratio for all ELLs with IEPs and for ELLs with a disability by category where there are at least 10 ELL students. Only in the autism category are ELLs about as likely as students who are not ELLs to be identified (0.94 risk ratio). ELLs were much less likely than students who are not ELLs to be identified as having a specific learning disability (0.50 risk ratio), speech/language impairment (0.67 risk ratio), or intellectual disability (0.62 risk ratio).

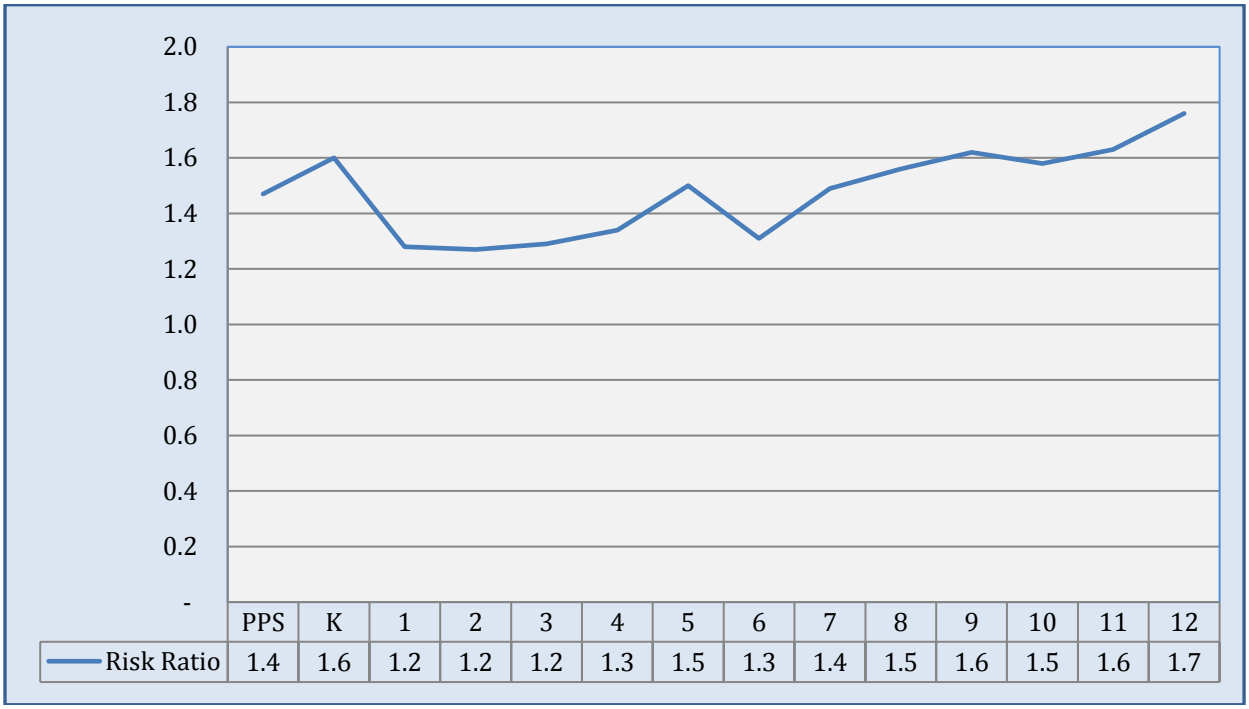
Exhibit 29. Risk Ratios for ELLs by Most Common Disability Categories



	All SwD	SLD	S/L	ID	Autism
Risk Ratio	0.51	0.50	0.67	0.62	0.94

- Although students identified as economically disadvantage (ED) are somewhat more likely than students who are not ED to have an IEP, their risk does not reach the level of significance. As shown in Exhibit 30, risk levels are lowest at first through third grade (1.28 to 1.34) and at sixth grade (1.31). The risks are highest in kindergarteners (1.6) and from seventh through twelfth grade (1.49 to 1.76).

Exhibit 30. Risk Ratios for Economically Disadvantaged Students with IEPs by Grade



	PPS	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Risk Ratio	1.4	1.6	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.3	1.5	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.5	1.6	1.7

c. Eligibility

- Referrals are up this year compared to last year. Immediate referrals to special education may be due in part to weak Tier 1 instructional services.

- There does not appear to be consistent site-based expertise to support the assessment and eligibility process. Psychologists appear to have primary control over the process.

- The district's special education identification and referral process is inconsistent from school to school across the system.

- At schools with large numbers of newcomers, there does not seem to be a consistent and comprehensive understanding of how to differentiate weaknesses in language development and disabilities. There appears to be an overly restrictive approach to evaluations, and there does not appear to be an overall plan to address this issue.

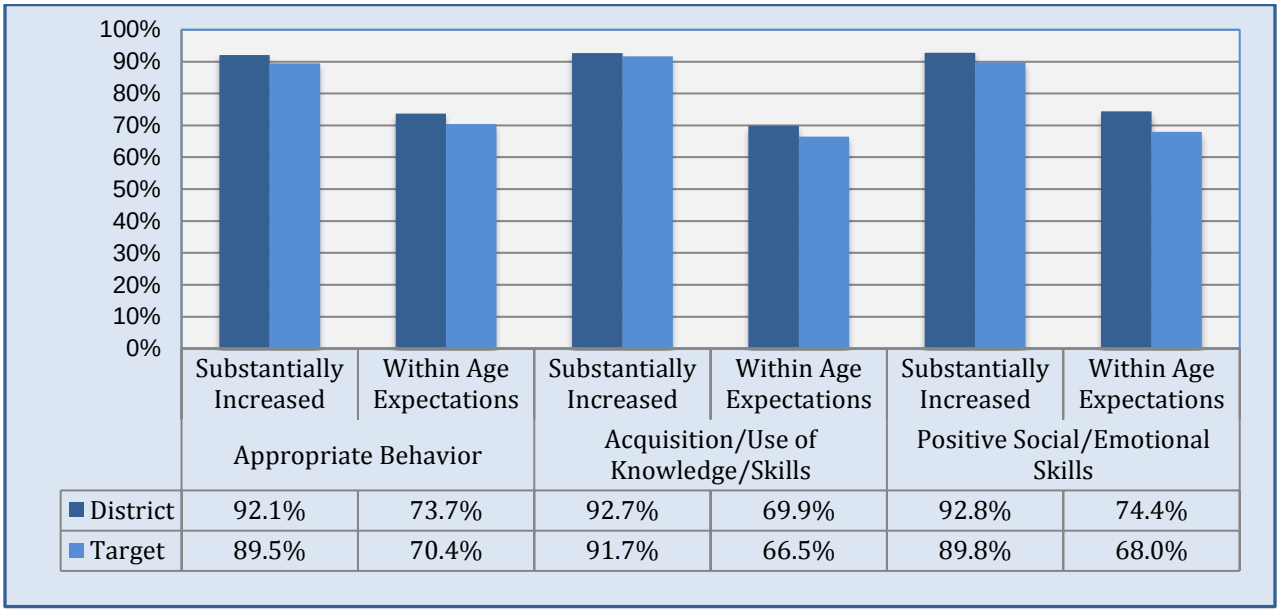
- Litigation in the district is mostly due to non-compliance with procedural safeguards, behavior plans, and progress monitoring.

d. Achievement of Students with Disabilities

- One of the indicators in Pennsylvania's State Performance Plan (SPP) involves the achievement of young children with IEPs in three areas: appropriate behavior, acquisition and use of knowledge and skills, and positive social/emotional skills. In each of these three areas, calculations are made on the percentage of children in the following two ways: (1)

children who entered an early childhood (EC) program below developmental expectations for their age but who had substantially increased developmentally by age six when they exited the program, and (2) children functioning within expectations by age six or had attained those expectations by the time they exited the EC program. Exhibit 31 shows that PPS's young children with IEPs exceeded state targets in all achievement outcome areas assessed by SPP. Differences ranged from 6.4 percentage points (children functioning within expectations for positive social/emotional skills by age six or upon exit of EC) to 1.0 percentage points (children entering EC below expectations for acquisition/use of knowledge/skills but showing substantially increased skills upon exit).[19]

Exhibit 31. Achievement Outcomes for Pittsburgh/State Students with IEPs Ages Three to Five, 2014-15

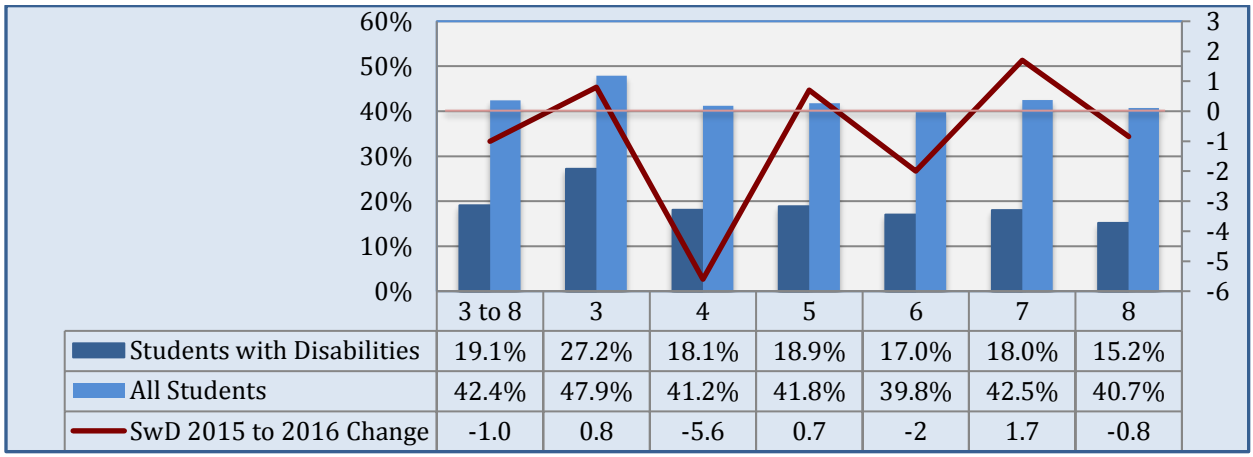


	Appropriate Behavior		Acquisition/Use of Knowledge/Skills		Positive Social/Emotional Skills	
	Substantially Increased	Within Age Expectations	Substantially Increased	Within Age Expectations	Substantially Increased	Within Age Expectations
District	92.1%	73.7%	92.7%	69.9%	92.8%	74.4%
Target	89.5%	70.4%	91.7%	66.5%	89.8%	68.0%

- Overall, a higher percentage of students with disabilities score proficient or above on statewide ELA assessments in third grade, compared to other grades. Exhibit 32 shows that 19.1 percent of all students with disabilities scored at least proficient, and rates ranged from 27.2 percent (third grade) to 15.2 percent (eighth grade). When compared with 2015, the rates decreased by 1.0 percentage point overall, and ranged from a 1.7 percentage point increase (seventh grade) to a 5.6 percentage point decrease (fourth grade). The rates for all students in grades three to eight with proficient/above scores are about twice as high as for students with IEPs, with an overall rate of 42.4 percent. The rates range from 47.9 percent (third grade) to 39.8 percent (sixth grade).

[19] [19]District and state target data is based on the 2014-15 PA Bureau of Early Intervention Services Data Profile, which PPS provided.

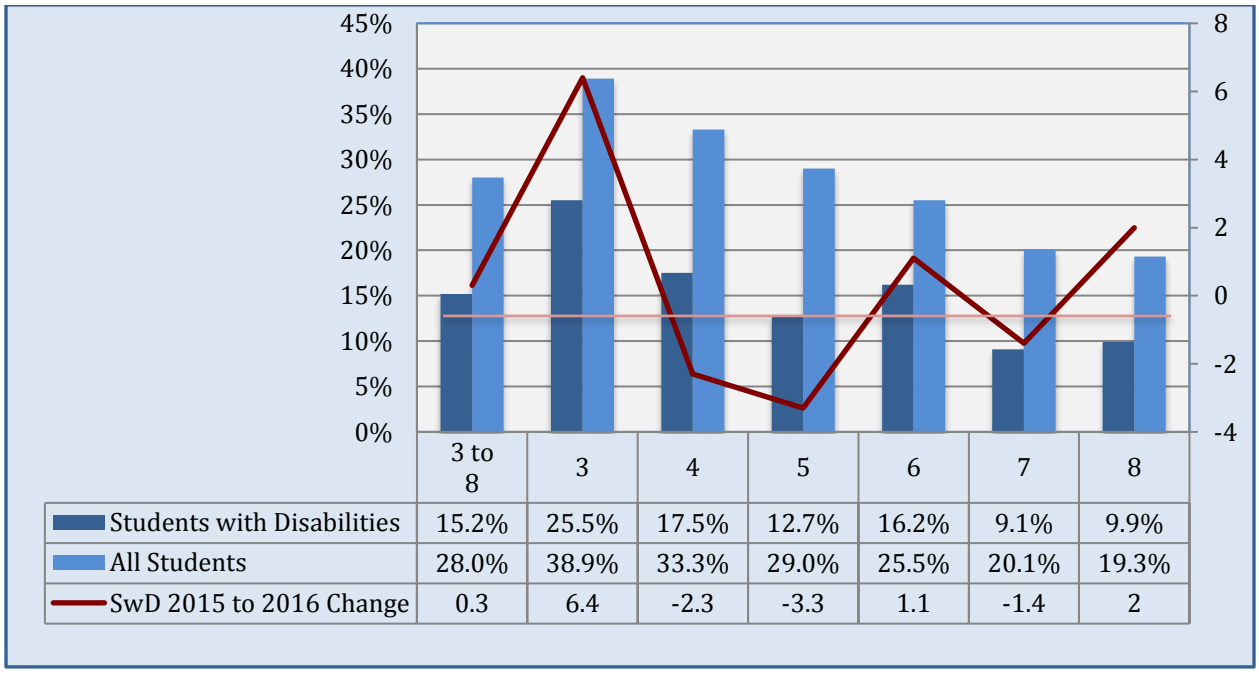
Exhibit 32. ELA Proficient/Above Rates for Students with IEPs and Changes between 2015 and 2016



	3 to 8	3	4	5	6	7	8
Students with Disabilities	19.1%	27.2%	18.1%	18.9%	17.0%	18.0%	15.2%
All Students	42.4%	47.9%	41.2%	41.8%	39.8%	42.5%	40.7%
SwD 2015 to 2016 Change	-1.0	0.8	-5.6	0.7	-2	1.7	-0.8

- As with ELA, a higher percentage of students with disabilities scored proficient or above on the math assessments in third grade than in other grades. Exhibit 33 shows that 15.2 percent of all students with disabilities scored at least proficient, and rates ranged from 25.5 percent (third grade) to 9.1 percent (seventh grade). When compared to 2015, the rates decreased by a 0.3 percentage point overall, and ranged from a 6.4 percentage point increase (third grade) to a 3.3 percentage point decrease (fifth grade). The percentage for all students with proficient/above scores was 28.0 percent, and rates ranged from 38.9 percent (third grade) to 19.3 percent (eighth grade). The increasing gap may be due to the lack of training on interventions and supports in general education.

Exhibit 33. Math Proficient/Above Rates for Students with IEPs and Changes between 2015 and 2016



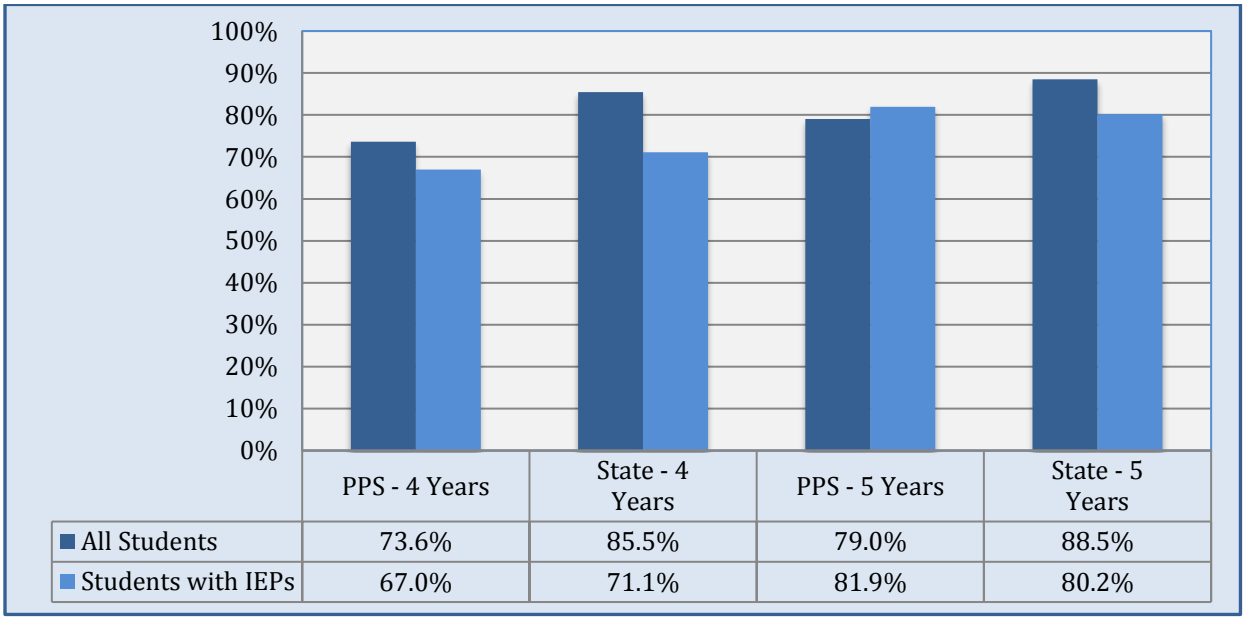
	3 to 8	3	4	5	6	7	8
Students with Disabilities	15.2%	25.5%	17.5%	12.7%	16.2%	9.1%	9.9%
All Students	28.0%	38.9%	33.3%	29.0%	25.5%	20.1%	19.3%
SwD 2015 to 2016 Change	0.3	6.4	-2.3	-3.3	1.1	-1.4	2

e. Graduation and Dropouts of Students with Disabilities

- PPS's *four-year* graduation rate is 67.0 percent among students with IEPs, and 73.6 percent for all students. Both groups of students have rates that are lower than the state's percentages for students with IEPs (71.1 percent) and all students (85.5 percent). PPS's *five-year* graduation percentages are higher than the four-year rates for both student groups. PPS's graduation rate is 81.9 percent among students with IEPs, which is higher than the state's 80.2 percent rate. Also, PPS's 81.9 percent rate for students with IEPs exceeds the district's 80.2 percent rate for all students.[20] (Exhibit 34.)

- The dropout rate for all students with IEPs was 4.89 percent, compared to the state's rate of 12.23 percent and the state target rate was 10.9 percent.[21]

Exhibit 34. Percentage of Pittsburgh/State Students with IEPs who Graduated



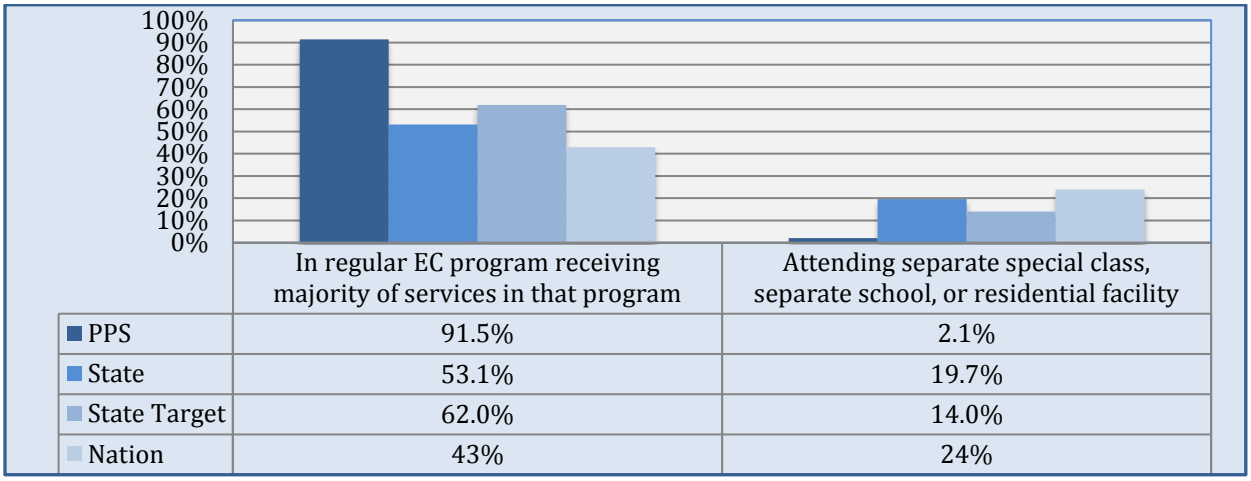
	PPS - 4 Years	State - 4 Years	PPS - 5 Years	State - 5 Years
All Students	73.6%	85.5%	79.0%	88.5%
Students with IEPs	67.0%	71.1%	81.9%	80.2%

f. Educational Settings

- A much higher percentage (91.5 percent) of district children with IEPs ages three to five years receive the majority of their services in early childhood programs compared to the state (53.1 percent), the state's target (62.0 percent), and the nation (43 percent). (Exhibit 35.) At the same time, the district educates a much smaller percentage (2.1 percent) of young children in separate classes, separate schools, or residential facilities compared to the state (19.7 percent), the state target (14.0 percent), and the nation (24 percent).[22]

[20] 2014-15 data retrieved from http://www.eseafedreport.com/Content/reportcards/RC15D102027451.PDF.
[21] Pennsylvania Special Education Data Report (2014-2015 reporting) at https://penndata.hbg.psu.edu/penndata/documents/BSEReports/Public%20Reporting/2014_2015/PDF_Documents/Speced_Data_Report_SD026_Final.pdf
[22] District and state data is based on the 2014-15 PA Bureau of Early Intervention Services Data Profile, which PPS provided. National data are based on USDE's 36th Annual Report to Congress (Fall 2012 data).

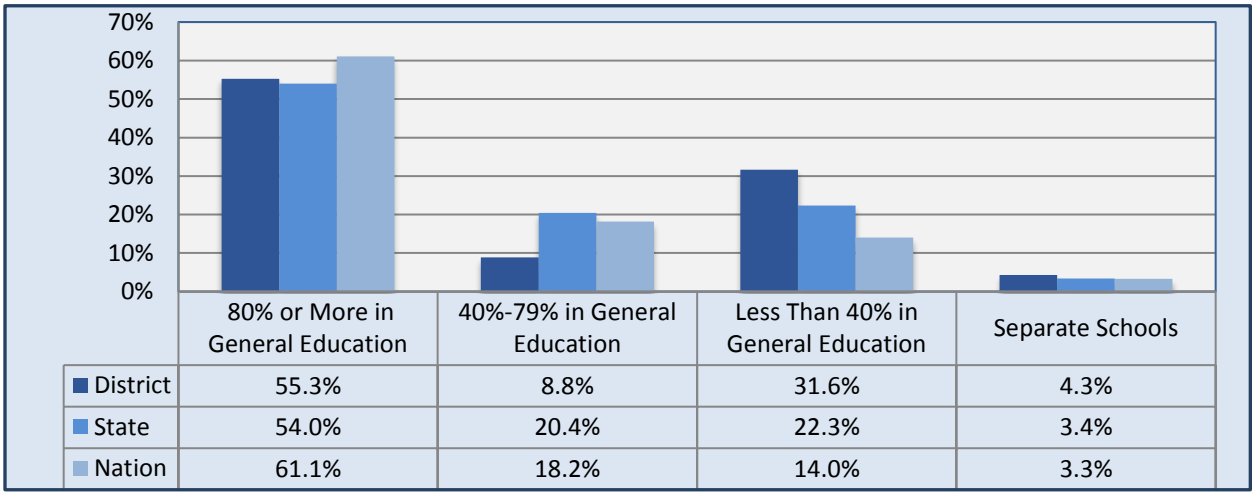
Exhibit 35. Percentage of Young Children with IEPs (Ages 3 to 5) by Educational Environment



	In regular EC program receiving majority of services in that program	Attending separate special class, separate school, or residential facility
PPS	91.5%	2.1%
State	53.1%	19.7%
State Target	62.0%	14.0%
Nation	43%	24%

- The district's pattern of educating young children in general education settings at rates far above the state and nation did not continue with school aged students.[23] Although PPS's rate (55.3 percent) for educating students inclusively (80 percent or more of the time in general education classes) is slightly higher than the state's rate (54.0 percent), both rates are lower than the nation's rate (61.1 percent). The district's rate (31.6 percent) for educating students in separate classes most of the day (less than 40 percent in general education) is higher than the state and national rates (22.3 percent and 14.0 percent, respectively). Furthermore, a higher percentage of district students are educated in separate schools (4.3 percent) compared to the state and nation (3.4 percent and 3.3 percent, respectively). (Exhibit 36.)

Exhibit 36. Percentage of Students by Educational Environment



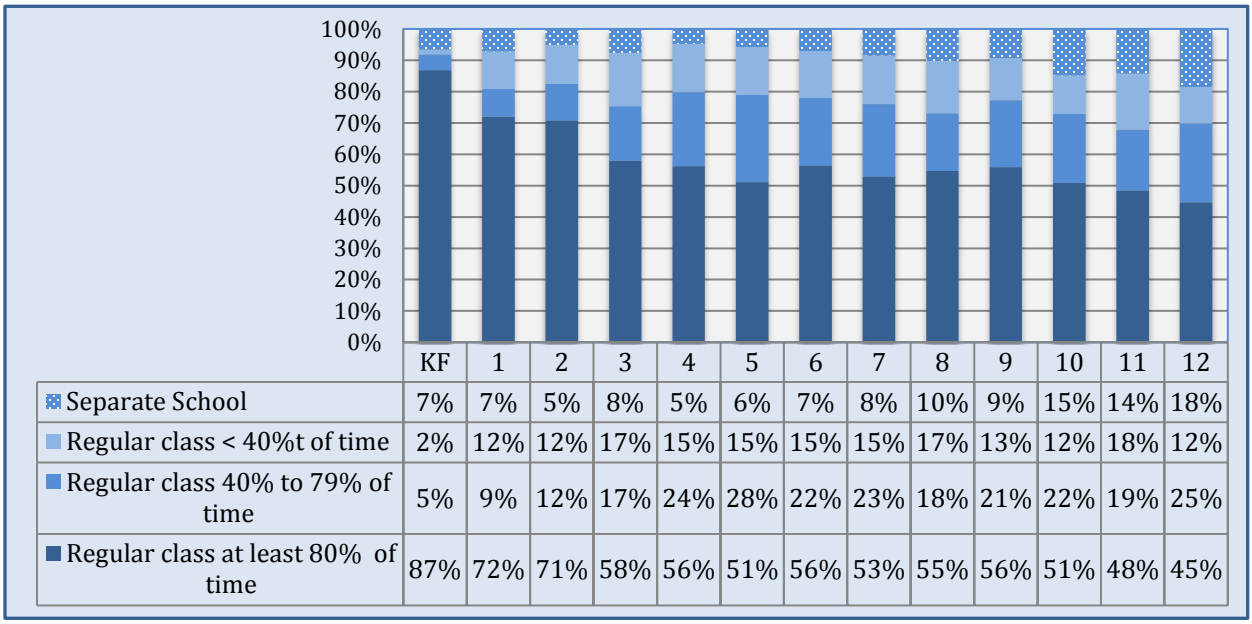
	80% or More in General Education	40%-79% in General Education	Less Than 40% in General Education	Separate Schools
District	55.3%	8.8%	31.6%	4.3%
State	54.0%	20.4%	22.3%	3.4%
Nation	61.1%	18.2%	14.0%	3.3%

[23] State data was retrieved from https://penndata.hbg.psu.edu/penndata/documents/BSEReports/Public%20Reporting/2014_2015/PDF_Documents/Speced_Data_Report_SD026_Final.pdf., and national data was retrieved from http://www2.ed.gov/fund/data/report/idea/partbspap/2013/tn-acc-stateprofile-11-12.pdf.

- Under the Every Students Succeeds Act (ESSA), it is expected that only one percent of all students in grades otherwise taking statewide assessments will take an alternate assessment. It is estimated that this alternative assessment to be appropriate for some 190 students with a significant cognitive disability. Based on data provided by PPS, 863 students are educated in separate classes most of the school day, and another 415 are educated in separate schools inside and outside the district. With this in mind, care should be taken to ensure that students who take the PSSA receive instruction aligned with the Pennsylvania Core Standards, even when they are being educated in separate classes and schools. The district has adopted new and different materials for low incidence students (the 1 percent), but the team was concerned that the district may also use these materials for all students in separate classrooms when, in fact, they will be taking the regular statewide assessment, not an alternate assessment.

- District students are educated in more restrictive settings as they progress from kindergarten to twelfth grade. An exception is for students educated in self-contained placements (less than 40 percent in regular classes) where the trend line goes down. A high percent (87 percent) of kindergarteners with IEPs begin school in regular classes at least 80 percent of the time. This figure remains high through second grade (71 percent), but drops significantly in third grade (58 percent), and fluctuates thereafter (between 56 and 45 percent). While only 18 percent of kindergarteners are educated in separate classes or in separate schools, this figure jumps in first grade (19 percent), third grade (25 percent), and eleventh grade (32 percent). (Exhibit 37.)

Exhibit 37. Percentage of Students by Grade and by Educational Environment



	KF	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Separate School	7%	7%	5%	8%	5%	6%	7%	8%	10%	9%	15%	14%	18%
Regular class < 40%t of time	2%	12%	12%	17%	15%	15%	15%	15%	17%	13%	12%	18%	12%
Regular class 40% to 79% of time	5%	9%	12%	17%	24%	28%	22%	23%	18%	21%	22%	19%	25%
Regular class at least 80% of time	87%	72%	71%	58%	56%	51%	56%	53%	55%	56%	51%	48%	45%

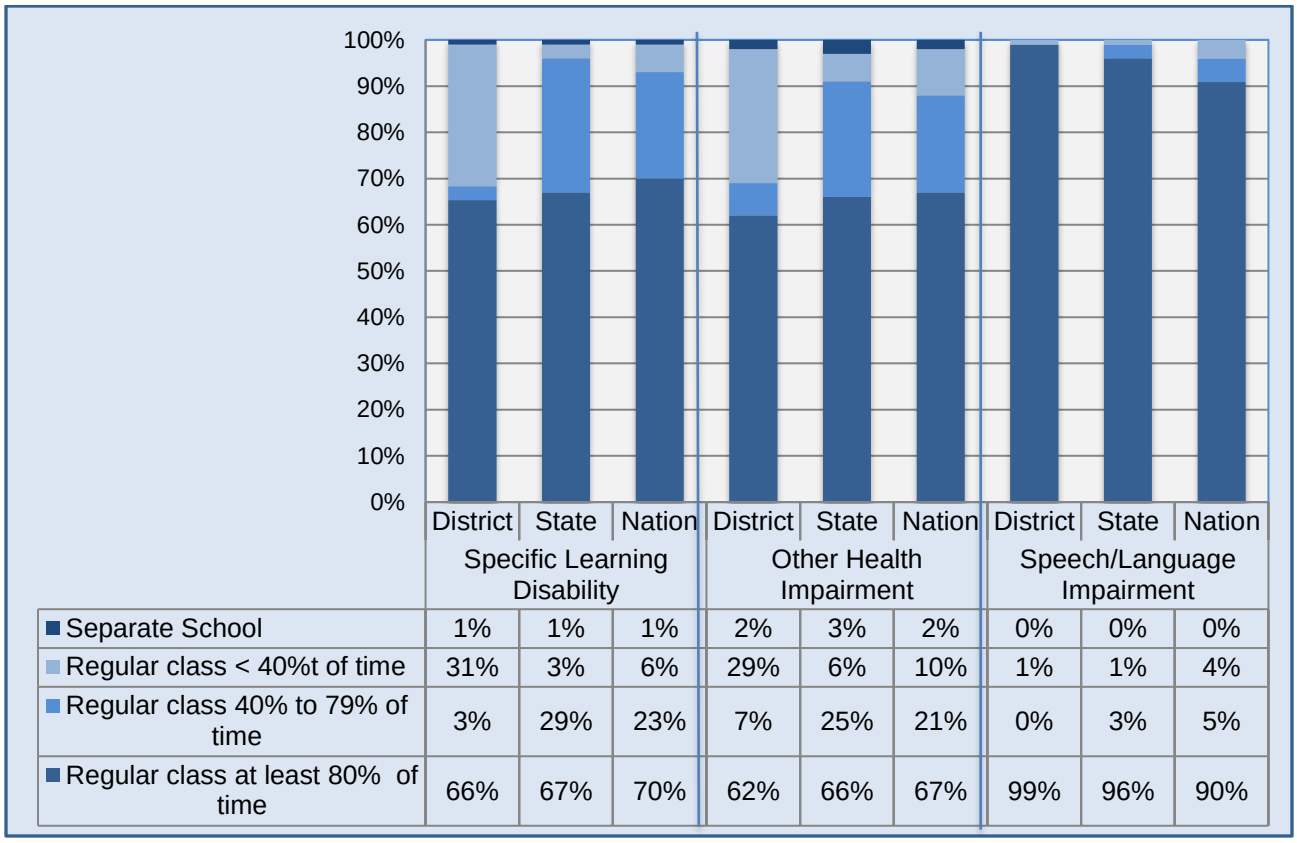
- Exhibit 38 shows the percentages of students in the district, state, and nation in the most common disability categories.[24] In almost all areas, PPS educates a disproportionately low

[24] Retrieved state and national data from http://www2.ed.gov/programs/osepidea/618-data/static-tables/index.html.

percentage of students inclusively (in regular classes at least 80 percent of the time) and a disproportionately high percentage of students in separate classes most of the time or in separate schools, compared to the state and nation. The exhibit shows the three disability categories (specific learning disability, other health impairment, and speech/language impairment) that have the highest proportions of PPS students educated inclusively. The categories of SLD and OHI also have high percentages of students educated in separate classes or schools most of the time.

- ***SLD.*** In the area of SLD, the district's 66 percent rate for educating students educated inclusively is 4 percentage points smaller than the nation's. PPS's 31 percent figure of students educated in self-contained classes (less than 40 percent of time in regular classes) is 25 percentage points higher than the state's rate and 28 points higher than the nation's.
- ***OHI.*** In the area of OHI, the district's 62 percent rate for educating students inclusively is 4 percentage points smaller than the state's rate and 5 points smaller than the nation's. PPS's 29 percent figure of students educated in self-contained classes is 23 percentage points higher than the state's and 19 points higher than the nation's.
- ***S/L.*** In the area of S/L, almost all PPS students are educated inclusively. The district's 99 percent figure was 3 percentage points higher than the state's and 9 points higher than the nation's.

Exhibit 38. Educational Environment for Students with SLD, OHI, and S/L



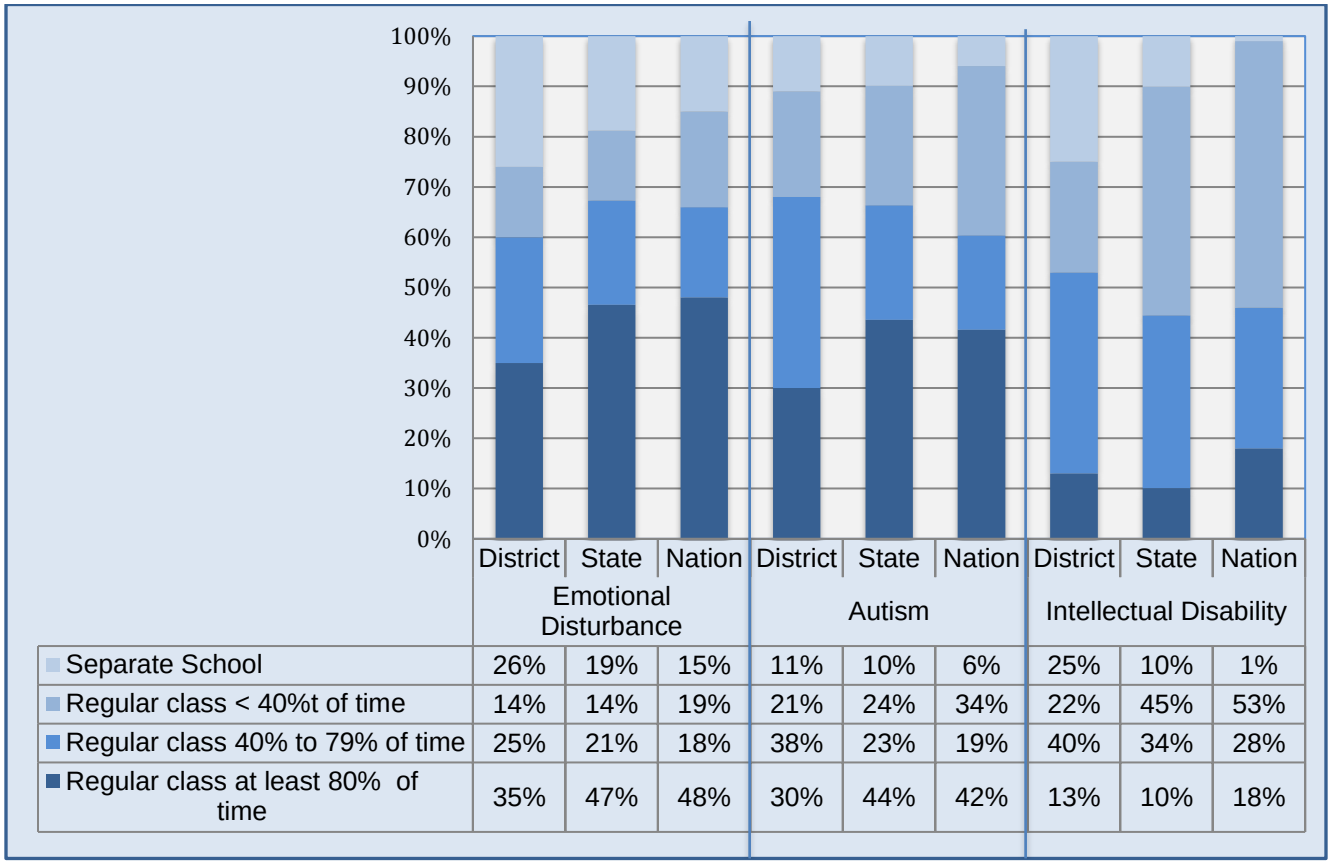
	Specific Learning Disability			Other Health Impairment			Speech/Language Impairment		
	District	State	Nation	District	State	Nation	District	State	Nation
Separate School	1%	1%	1%	2%	3%	2%	0%	0%	0%
Regular class < 40%t of time	31%	3%	6%	29%	6%	10%	1%	1%	4%
Regular class 40% to 79% of time	3%	29%	23%	7%	25%	21%	0%	3%	5%
Regular class at least 80% of time	66%	67%	70%	62%	66%	67%	99%	96%	90%

- Exhibit 39 shows the three disability categories (emotional disturbance, autism, and intellectual disability) with the highest rates of students spending most of their time in separate classes or separate schools.

  - ***ED.*** In the area of ED, the district's 35 percent figure of students educated inclusively is 12 percentage points smaller than the state's rate and 13 points smaller than the nation's. PPS's 26 percent figure of students educated in separate schools is 7 percentage points higher than the state's and 11 points higher than the nation's. Staff reported to the Council team that the district had a culture of placing ED student with disabilities in separate schools.

  - ***Autism.*** In the area of autism, the district's 30 percent figure of students educated inclusively was 14 percentage points smaller than the state's rate and 12 points smaller than the nation's. PPS's 11 percent figure of students educated in separate was 1 percentage point higher than the state's but 5 points larger than the nation's.
  - ***ID.*** In the area of intellectual disability, the district's 13 percent figure of students educated inclusively is 3 percentage points larger than the state's and 12 points smaller than the nation's. PPS's 25 percent figure of students educated in separate schools is 15 percentage point larger than the state's and 14 points smaller than the nation's.

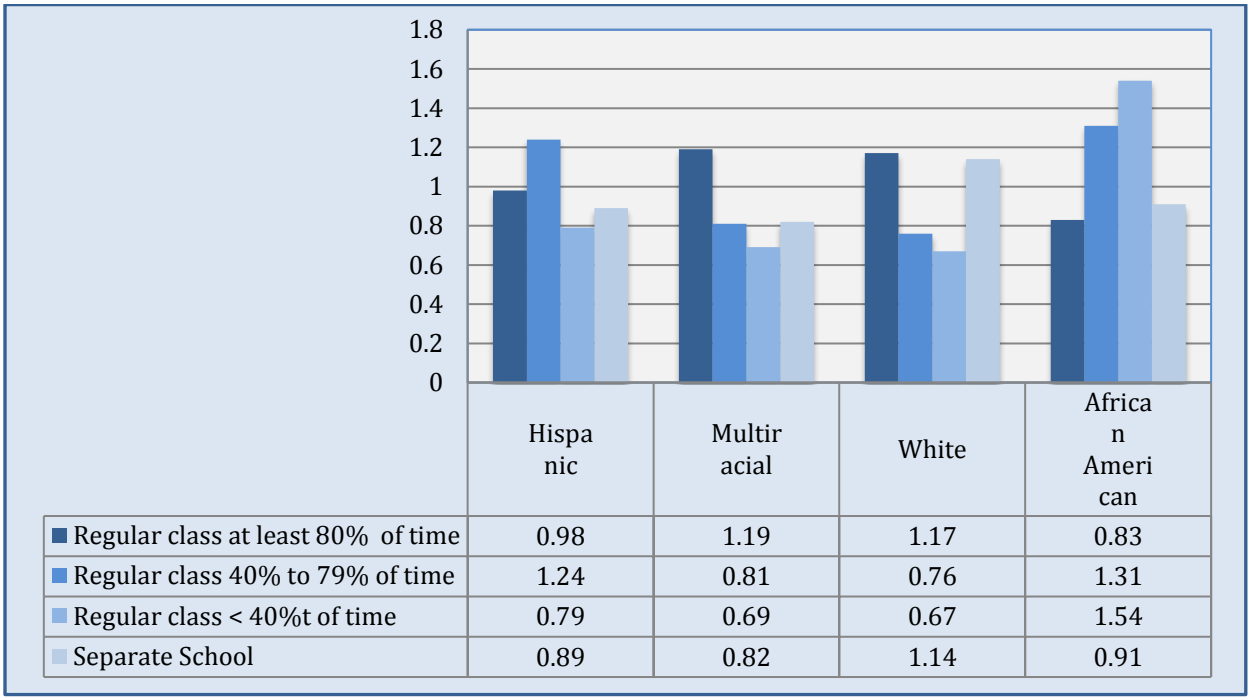
Exhibit 39. Educational Environments for Students with ED, Autism, and ID



	Emotional Disturbance			Autism			Intellectual Disability		
	District	State	Nation	District	State	Nation	District	State	Nation
Separate School	26%	19%	15%	11%	10%	6%	25%	10%	1%
Regular class < 40%t of time	14%	14%	19%	21%	24%	34%	22%	45%	53%
Regular class 40% to 79% of time	25%	21%	18%	38%	23%	19%	40%	34%	28%
Regular class at least 80% of time	35%	47%	48%	30%	44%	42%	13%	10%	18%

- Using the risk ratio methodology shown earlier, Exhibit 40 shows the likelihood that students from each racial/ethnic group would be educated in the designated educational environment compared to students in all other racial/ethnic groups. A risk ratio of "1" reflects no risk. Higher numbers reflect a greater risk or likelihood of placement in a particular setting. These data show that no racial/ethnic group of students is more likely than others to be educated in any particular educational environment. The highest area of risk for any racial/ethnic group to be placed in a particular educational environment applies to African American students who are 1.54 times more likely than other students to be educated in separate classes most of the time. However, this risk is below any level that is generally considered to be significant, e.g., a risk of "2" or "3."

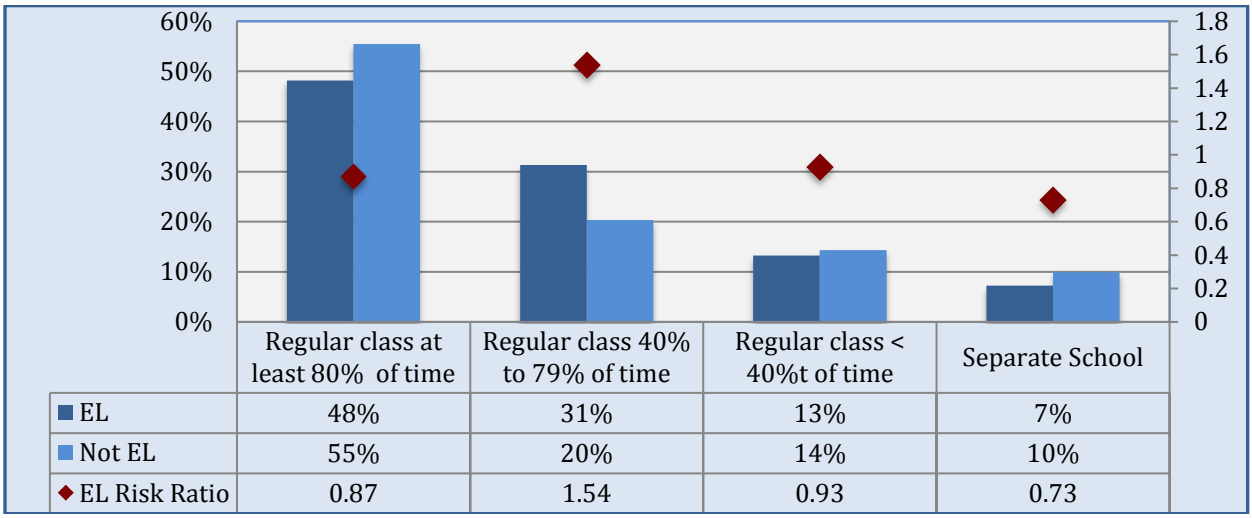
Exhibit 40. Educational Environment Risk Ratios by Race/Ethnicity



	Hispanic	Multiracial	White	African American
Regular class at least 80% of time	0.98	1.19	1.17	0.83
Regular class 40% to 79% of time	1.24	0.81	0.76	1.31
Regular class < 40%t of time	0.79	0.69	0.67	1.54
Separate School	0.89	0.82	1.14	0.91

- PPS students who are ELLs are educated in the four educational environments at about the same rate as students who are not ELLs. (See Exhibit 41.) The largest disparity applies to students educated in regular classes from 40 to 79 percent of the time. Some 31 percent of ELLs are educated in this environment, compared to 20 percent of students who are not ELLs. Although ELLs are 1.54 times more likely than students who are not ELLs to be educated in this environment, this risk level is not significant.

Exhibit 41. Educational Environment Risk ratios and Rates for ELLs and Non-ELLs



	Regular class at least 80% of time	Regular class 40% to 79% of time	Regular class < 40%t of time	Separate School
EL	48%	31%	13%	7%
Not EL	55%	20%	14%	10%
EL Risk Ratio	0.87	1.54	0.93	0.73

g. Special Education Staffing

- The new superintendent placed the executive director of special education on his cabinet—a good thing.
- While the head of PSE is on the superintendent's cabinet, she reports to the deputy superintendent rather than to the CAO. Previously, she reported to the chief of school performance.
- The superintendent recognizes the importance of having an executive director for special education who has both curriculum and special education expertise.
- The new executive director of special education has developed a 90-day plan and a program for PSE Milestones for 2016-17.
- Vacancies in the positions of deputy superintendent and chief of school performance—until recently—have hampered the development of a clear vision for the delivery of special education services.
- A good number of staff in the special education department are devoted to compliance responsibilities rather than instructional duties, so they are not well-positioned to assist schools with teaching students with disabilities or informing the instructional staff.
- Exhibit 42 shows the district's student-to-special-education teacher ratios, compared to 71 other urban school districts across the country. With 308 full-time-equivalent (FTE) special educators, PPS has an average of 13.7 students with IEPs (including those with speech/language impairments) for every special educator.[25] This ratio is close to the 14.5 teacher-student average of all districts on which we have data, and ranks PPS 33rd among

[25] Although special educators for the most part do not instruct students with speech/language impairment solely, as SLPs are the primary providers, these students were included as students with IEPs for all surveyed districts.

the 71 reporting districts. With 263 para-educators, PPS has an average of 16 students with IEPs for every para-educator. The district's para-educator-to-student ratio is close to the ratio of other districts (15 students for every para-educator), and ranked PPS 45th among the 71 reporting districts.

Exhibit 42. Average Number of Students for Each Special Educator

Areas of Comparison	Special Education Teachers	Para-educator
Number of PPS Staff FTE	308	263
PPS Student w/IEP-to-Staff Ratios	13.7:1	16:1
All District Average Ratios	14.5:1	15:1
Range of All District Ratios	7–37:1	5.26–56:1
PPS Ranking Among Districts[26]	**33rd of 71 districts**	**45th of 71 districts**

- Staffing ratios and other data on related-services personnel are summarized below and detailed in Exhibit 43.
  - ***Speech/Language Pathologist (SLP).*** With 31 FTE speech/language pathologists (SLPs) there is one SLP for every 136 students with IEPs in PPS, compared with the district average of 118 students. PPS ranks 57th of 70 reporting districts.
  - ***Psychologists.*** With 16 FTE psychologists there is one psychologist for every 263 students with IEPs, compared with the district average of 173 students. PPS ranks 55th of the 63 reporting districts.
  - ***Social Workers.*** With 40 social workers, there is one for every 105 students with IEPs, compared with the district average of 217 students. PPS ranks 17th of the 45 reporting districts.
  - ***Nurses.*** With 40.6 nurses, there is one nurse for every 104 students with IEPs, compared with the overall district average of 153 students. PPS ranks 21st among 57 reporting districts.
  - ***Occupational Therapists (OT).*** With seven allocated OTs, there is one OT for every 601 students with IEPs, compared to the overall district average of 371 students. PPS ranks 56th among the reporting 67 districts.
  - ***Physical Therapists (PT).*** With eight PTs, there is one PT for every 526 students with IEPs, compared with the district average of 1,011 students. PPS ranks 16th among the 67 reporting districts.

[26] Ranking begins with districts having a low average number of students to one staff person.

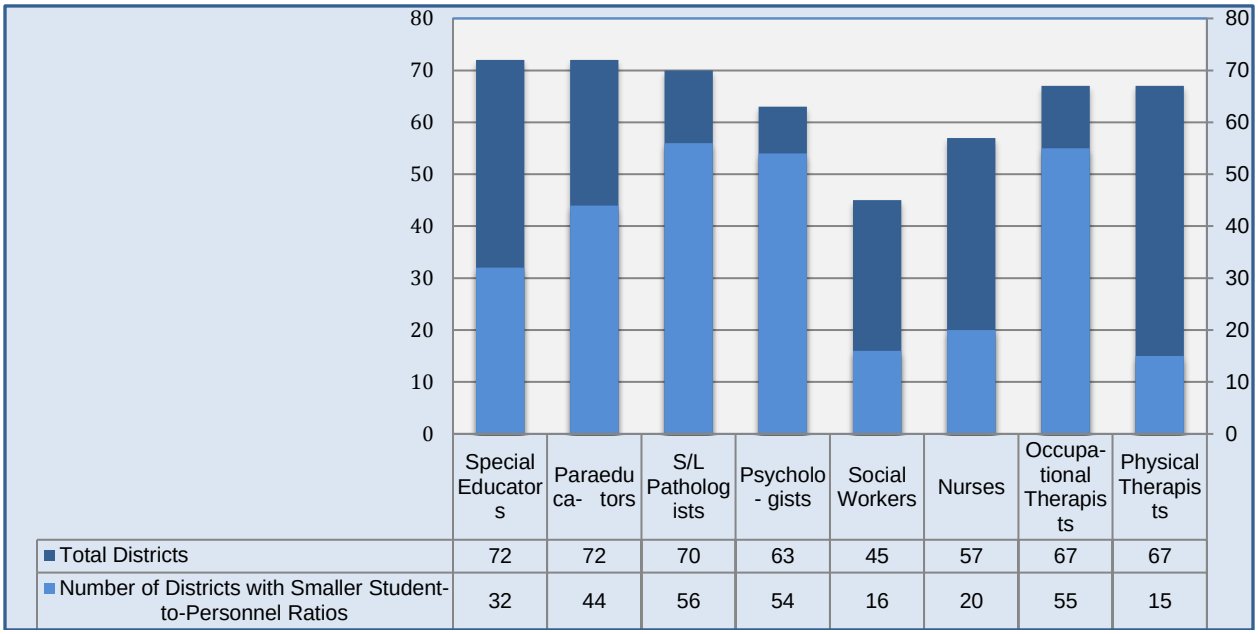
Exhibit 43. Ratios of Students with IEPs to Staff for Related-service Providers

Related-Services Areas	Speech/Language	Psychologists	Social Workers	Nurses	OTs	PTs
Number of PPS Staff FTE	31	16	40	40.6	7	8
PPS Students w/IEPs-to-Staff	136:1	263:1	105:1	104:1	601:1	526:1
All District Average Ratio	118:1	173:1	271:1	153:1	371:1	1011:1
Range of All District Ratios	26–596:1	31–376:1	26-673:1	58-834:1	64–1685:1	128–2941:1
PPS Ranking	**57th of 70**	**55th of 63**	**17th of 45**	**21st of 57**	**56th of 67**	**16th of 67**

- Exhibit 44 shows the number of districts having smaller staff-to-student ratios than PPS, i.e., fewer students with IEPs per staff member in each area. In three areas (social workers, nurses, and physical therapists), PPS has smaller ratios than most other districts. In three other areas (para-educators, speech/language pathologists, and occupational therapists), most districts have smaller ratios than PPS. In the area of special educators, the district has about the same ratio as half of the other districts.

  - ***Special Educators.*** Thirty-two of 72 districts have smaller ratios than PPS.
  - ***Paraprofessionals.*** Forty-four of 72 districts have smaller ratios than PPS.
  - ***Speech/Language Pathologists.*** Fifty-six of 70 districts have smaller ratios than PPS.
  - ***Psychologists.*** Fifty-four of 63 districts have smaller ratios than PPS.
  - ***Social Workers.*** Sixteen of 57 districts have smaller ratios than PPS.
  - ***Nurses.*** Twenty of 57 districts have smaller ratios than PPS.
  - ***OTs.*** Fifty-five of 67 districts have smaller ratios than PPS.
  - ***PTs.*** Fifteen of 67 districts have smaller ratios than PPS.

Exhibit 44. Student to Personnel Ratio Ranking Compared with Other Major Urban School Districts



h. Teaching and Learning in PSE

- The district generally supports the use of the Danielson Framework in teaching students with disabilities—mostly a good thing.

- There is a general lack of confidence among the district's special educators that general educators are differentiating instruction for students with disabilities in a manner that is meaningful and culturally responsive. They are also not confident in the quality of professional development for general educators on teaching students with disabilities.

- PSE program specialists have historically been focused on program compliance rather than the quality of instruction.

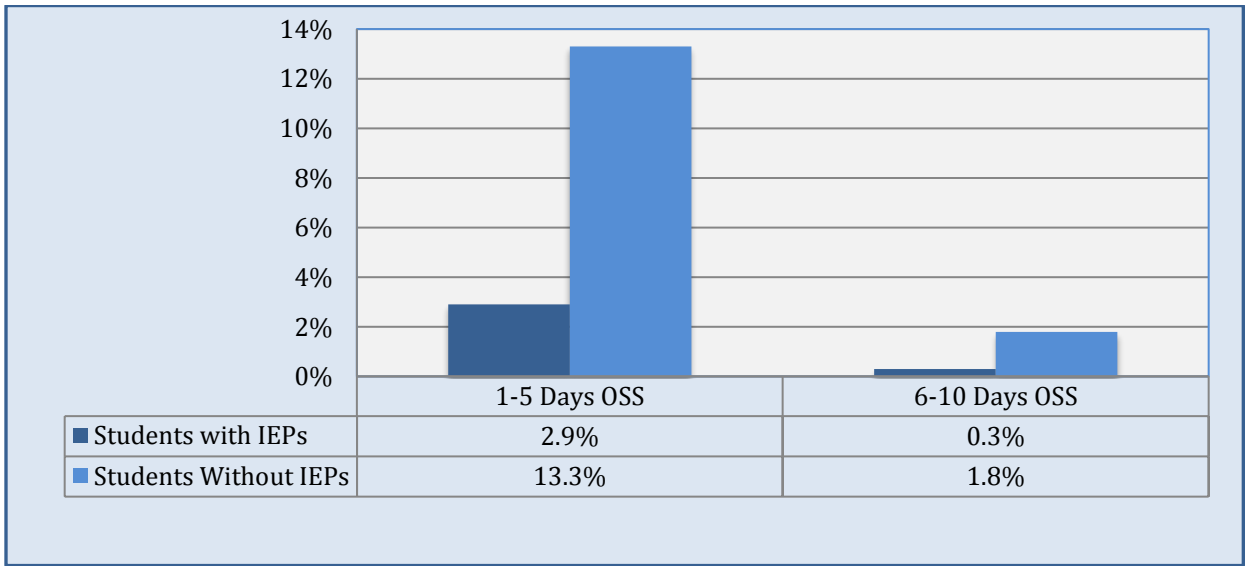
- The insufficient use of MTSS—academic and behavioral—and a weak Tier I instructional system result in a broad perception that special education is the only "place" to receive student support.

- The district has a number of strong community partners, who are very engaged and passionate about supporting students with disabilities—a good thing.

i. Suspensions and Discipline of Students with Disabilities

- In 2015-16, a relatively small number of students received an out-of-school suspension (OSS) totaling one to five days, and even fewer had an OSS of six to ten days. As shown in Exhibit 45, 2.9 percent of all students with IEPs and 13.3 percent of all students without IEPs had OSSs from one to five days. A much lower percent (0.3 percent) of all students with IEPs and 1.8 percent of students without IEPs had OSSs for six to ten days. (The low numbers, however, appear to be an artifact of how the district counts its OSSs.)

Exhibit 45. Out-of-School Suspension Percentages of Students with IEPs

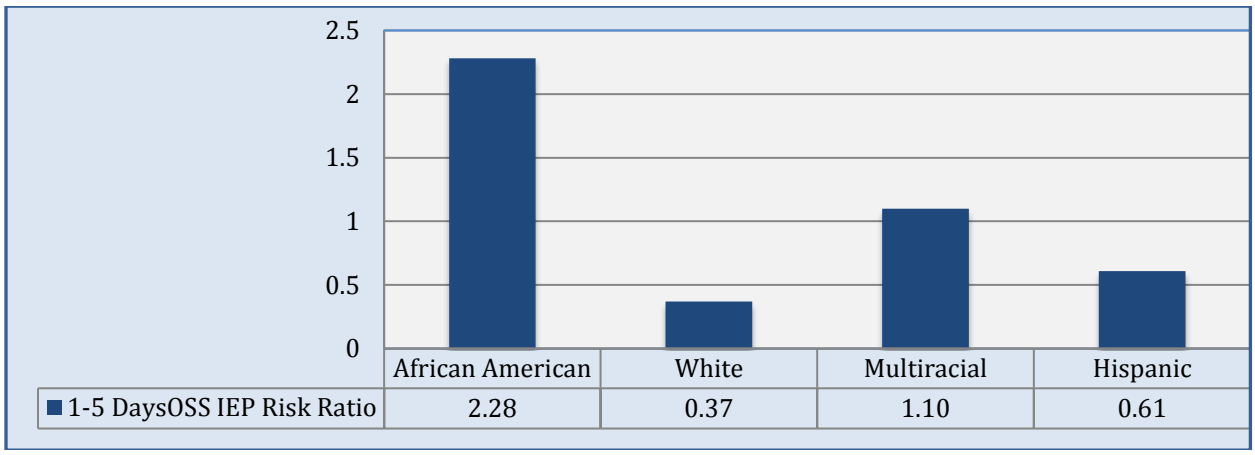


	1-5 Days OSS	6-10 Days OSS
Students with IEPs	2.9%	0.3%
Students Without IEPs	13.3%	1.8%

- Still, out-of-school suspension rates for students with disabilities were more than 10 percent higher than the state average.

- Exhibit 46 shows that African American students with IEPs are 2.28 times more likely than students in other racial/ethnic groups to receive an OSS of from one to five days. Risk ratios for other racial/ethnic groups ranged between 0.37 and 1.10. There were too few students who received an OSS for six to ten days to calculate a risk ratio for any racial/ethnic group. Again, the rates may be affected by the way the district counts OSSs.

Exhibit 46. Out-of-School Suspension Risk Ratios for Students with IEPs by Race/Ethnicity



- There were also concerns expressed to the team by interviewees over the placement of students with disabilities in self-contained classrooms and those pushed out for behavior into the Oliver Citywide Academy.

- Intensive behavioral supports do not always continue once a student has an IEP. There are legal implications that result from the lack of Functional Behavior Assessments and Plans when behavior is identified on an IEP.

j. Interdepartmental Collaboration & Communications

- The new superintendent has created administrative leadership teams/cabinet meetings to be more inclusive and improve collaboration and the sharing of information. (A good thing.)

- PSE was not placed under the teaching/learning unit organizationally until the new superintendent moved it. The result of the previous placement was weak collaboration around curricular issues.

- There is weak collaboration between PSE and student services in addressing areas of common concern, e.g., behavior supports.

- There needs to be stronger communications between PSE and the assistant superintendents who supervise the schools.

- There is no organizational presence in the networks or assistant superintendents' offices for PSE personnel, which may limit communications and coordination.

- There is a general overemphasis in PSE on special education compliance (e.g., evaluations, IEP meetings, manifestation determination meetings, dispute resolution, FBA and BIP, etc.).

C. Discipline and Behavior

In general, a considerable number of interviewees reported that school climate and student discipline were issues that interfered with the quality of classroom instruction. Yet the district does not have a strategy or program in place systemwide that would address the issues. In addition, the weight of the district's disciplinary actions appears to fall disproportionately on students of color.

- Teachers, parents, and principals interviewed by the instructional team expressed consistent concerns about school culture and climate, student discipline, and the effects of both on classroom instruction.

- The district does not have a systemwide PBIS program. A number of individual schools (four) have PBIS programming and restorative justice practices—along with the expertise to implement them, but there is nothing similar for the district at large. Anecdotal evidence suggested that restorative justice practices has reduced suspensions, but the team did not see statistical evidence.

- In general, the district had high out-of-school suspension rates compared with other major urban school districts. For instance, Pittsburgh saw 13 percent of its students suspended between one and five days in 2014-14, which was the highest rate of all major cities on which we have data on this length of suspensions. (Exhibit C-7) Districts ranged from 13 percent to about one percent on this measure. In addition, the district saw three percent of its students suspended out of school for between 6-10 days. Districts ranged from 5 to one percent of students suspended for this length of time. In all, some 17 percent of students in Pittsburgh were suspended over the course of the 2014-15 school year for anywhere from one and to over 20 days. (The district with the highest suspension rates saw 19 percent of their students suspended that year.) The result was that every 100 students in Pittsburgh missed approximately 76.5 instructional days per year due to out of school suspension. The rates ranged from a high of 146.3 days missed per 100 students to a low of about 5.8 days missed due to suspensions. (Exhibit C-8)

- Suspension rates and patterns in the district indicate that students of color are suspended at disproportionately high rates. This is also true of students with disabilities and ELLs. No one in the district is held accountable for these rates.

- The district's Code of Student Conduct was recently updated for 2016-17. The handbook calls for progressive discipline techniques to be used, e.g., positive behavior supports, peer mediation, behavioral contracts, and the like before imposing a suspension or expulsion. Students have the right to access and complete academic work during a suspension, but the

team did not find language that proactively ensured that students would be provided the work and expected to complete it.

- Student Achievement Centers exist for students who have been suspended between four and 10 days, while Alternative Education Centers exist for students who have been suspended for over 10 days. Suspensions over 10 days, where students are enrolled in these centers, are not counted as suspensions since students purportedly receive instruction in the centers. This practice is likely to present a misleading suspension count, and students reportedly receive weak instruction during the period.

- The district is piloting restorative practices in 22 schools with funds from the Department of Justice. The pilot will be evaluated by RAND. The Council team thought this was a promising development, and the best of the various pilot projects that the district was running.

- Suspensions are allowed by the district in the early grades, although the team was told that leadership had tightened up the criteria for suspending students in the early grades.

- The team was told that the district had eliminated insubordination as grounds for out-of-school suspension. Still, the code of student conduct appears to allow in-school suspensions for tardiness, truancy, and class-cutting. "Repeated disrespect/defiance" is considered a Level 2 infraction that can be handled with in-school suspensions or short-term (1-10 day) suspensions.

- There was some awareness among individuals interviewed by the instructional team of MTSS and how it could be used to address behavioral issues, but generally awareness of both instructional and behavioral components of MTSS was minimal. A number of individual schools implement MTSS on their own, but there is no districtwide MTSS system. MTSS, such as it is systemwide, is operated out of the special education office rather than being seen as a broad districtwide strategy. The team did not see written expectations for or guidelines for the implementation of MTSS, either academic or behavioral.

D. Research and Data

Overall, the district does not have the data systems, organizational capacity, or program evaluations to provide teachers and principals with the information they need to improve the quality of their instructional practice.

1. Organizational Structure and Accountability

- The district does not have a functioning research department. Historically, the Pittsburgh Public Schools had one of the best research departments of any major urban school district in the nation. It was looked to by other urban school systems nationally for leadership, technical expertise, and quality research products.

- The former research department of the school district was dismantled several years ago when the school system was pursuing its "teacher effectiveness" and other work, and the

result is a data vacuum that has left administrators and schools without program evaluations, assistance in interpreting data, and guidance on the use of data. A number of people in the district have unsuccessfully attempted to fill this void. For example—

- The director of research has attempted to continue the work with limited staffing and capacity,
- Principals and teachers have created their own spreadsheets and data-analysis tools without guidance, training, or consistency, and
- The IT department has attempted to fill the void with data reports, although the reports often contain little actual analysis or determination of data accuracy or integrity.

- The organizational structure of the research unit is bifurcated between research, which is largely a one person unit, and assessments. Assessment responsibilities have been further divided by interim assessments and state assessments. Staff are not only divided by responsibility, but also located at differing sites. The staff do not operate under a clear organizational structure, and are inadequate in number for the responsibilities and workload they carry.

- Because of repeated changes to the district's organizational structure over the years, there is confusion at all staff levels as to who the point of contact is for data, troubleshooting computer issues, and training on data. For example, staff are not sure whether they should contact the research or IT offices for data, since IT has the data but they don't always provide interpretations or analysis of the data. The research unit has historically provided this type of support, but now there is limited capacity – currently only one individual – to support schools. In addition, the apparent lack of communications between departments has harmed the quality of district data.

- Even though this division's staff have been moved to other units or have left the district entirely, district and school staff hold the current director of research in high regard. She is trusted to provide reliable data and support staff on data literacy. When the team asked interviewees (aside from IT staff) who they felt most confident in asking for data and support, they indicated that the director of research was that person.

- Nonetheless, this division does not have the resources to conduct the necessary research to benefit the entire district or to conduct program evaluations that provide key information on whether programs initiated in the district need improvement or should be continued.

2. *Data and Reports*

- There does not appear to be a data governance policy for the district. Clear policies outlining the availability, usage, and access levels for data have not been developed.

- Teachers and administrators are using data they personally collect on a day-to-day basis to inform their classroom instruction—a good thing. However, principals have developed their own spreadsheets and data guides to compensate for the lack of district tools—a bad thing.

- Data are not readily available for the research division. IT controls the data, which then must be requested by the director of research. Without quick and easy access to student data systems, the research unit cannot process and analyze data in a timely fashion or respond to the requests of others. In addition, limited data access inhibits the research unit from performing data quality checks. On more than one occasion, those interviewed reported that the data they received was not always accurate or did not match the original request, undermining any analyses conducted or reports distributed. (The Council team also encountered data accuracy problems in its requests.)

- Staff are often relegated to creating their own data guides in the absence of consistent data reporting and guidance from the district on how to use data to inform instruction and assess the effectiveness of interventions.

- The data teachers receive from assessments does not provide enough information on their students to be useful at the classroom level. The lack of support from a research department in helping teachers and administrators understand assessment results likely contributes to this issue.

- Professional learning for the district's teaching staff is not driven by data. In addition, there is a lack of professional development on data interpretation and use to help inform instructional practice.

- Internal and external stakeholders expressed concerns about the quality and reliability of data due to discrepancies they see in data reports. For example, it was stated during interviews that data are often reported by schools to the district with no procedures or quality checks on data accuracy.

- Interviewees consistently shared examples of challenges ensuring the accuracy of enrollment and other data submitted by schools.

- District staff and teachers are not sure where to go or whom to ask for data. The first issue involves the fact that data are housed in various divisions, but staff does not know who houses what. The second issue involves the lack of support on how to interpret or utilize the data, resulting in the inconsistent application of data to inform instruction from school to school.

- A number of individuals indicated their concerns about the capacity of the new data systems to house and produce data reports that were useful in driving decisions based on student outcomes. Many asserted that reports and benefits of the former system (i.e., Real Time Information or RTI) were not carried over to the new system. The result is a significant gap in reports and analyses currently available to and needed by staff.

- There is a general lack of accountability for the collection and dissemination of accurate or timely data due to the undefined roles of district staff. When roles shift like they did in the phasing out of the research department individual responsibilities became blurred.

- The work of individuals around data is often siloed and disconnected rather than mutually supportive. For example, within the assessment group, the Council team observed that the state testing group and the benchmark testing group worked independently rather than as a unit. In addition, SDSS data-entry efforts, IT reporting, and data accountability do not work in tandem or collaboratively. This has fostered a lack of respect, understanding, and trust in the expertise of others.

- Student achievement gaps need to be measured for various demographic groups (e.g., minorities, students with special needs, ELLs, at-risk students). These reports should be shared at district- and school-level staff meetings to spur discussions about why the gaps exist and what can be done to narrow them. The team learned that professional learning communities for teachers and staff are inconsistently used across schools and rarely have the appropriate data to inform discussions.

- Parents and community members indicated that they had difficulty getting the information they wanted on the progress of individual schools.

  For example, parents reported that do not have easy access to publicly available student data. Non-English speaking parents, in particular, felt disconnected from the school district due to the lack of information in their native languages. Community members and external partners questioned whether schools were using student performance data to improve instruction for students and whether it was driving professional development for teachers. The system's website that might otherwise have data on student achievement, attendance, and other information is reported as forthcoming. The Council team did not see much evidence that the research unit and the communications group collaborated on website data reporting.

3. Assessments

- Assessments have sometimes been created or selected without a clear curriculum in place. The first step in assessment selection or development is aligning assessments to the curriculum. This cannot be successfully completed without a clear understanding of the curriculum and expectations for student learning outcomes.

- Teachers and staff are not confident that the district's assessments, including benchmarks, are aligned to the state standards.

- There also appears to be a misalignment of the curriculum to the assessments. As a result, the assessments are not providing teachers with the appropriate data to help inform needed changes in the curriculum or differentiated instruction at the classroom level. This has led to a sense among internal and external stakeholders that teachers are not delivering strong instruction, in part, because they lack the data and assessments needed to help them improve practice.

- Some schools use their own assessments in addition to district and state tests.

- Many school staff do not feel that assessments are reliable for tracking student performance on content standards and consequently cannot provide a good gauge or prediction of end-of-year assessment results. Moreover, interviewees stated that there was no early warning data systems and no predictive assessments to help identify weaknesses that could then be corrected.

- Concerns were raised by interviewees about the alignment between the district curriculum and the district-developed Student Learning Objectives (SLOs). Individuals indicated that there were significant gaps between the rigor of the curriculum and the expectations for student performance on end-of-year state assessments and SLOs.

- The evaluation data from SLOs and VAM are reported to be not useful to principals or teachers in determining strengths and weaknesses in student skills. Observations, student data, and reports from ITLs and ITL2s appear to be the main ways for the district to determine when and how to support teachers.

- Interviewees reported that district meetings on assessments are often "deficit-focused" or reactionary instead of articulating student strengths (or what they *can* do), and how it might be replicated across the system.

- There is a lack of accountability for test administration and security in the district. Currently, the assessment team is solely responsible for administration and security, but the human resources available are not adequately aligned to perform this task. This is exacerbated by having separate staff conducting state and local assessments, and not being able to support each other. (Staff are even in separate locations.) In addition, other district staff are inadequately trained to support the assessment division. As a result, there is a lack of integrity and fidelity to a districtwide test administration protocol.

- All assessments need to be reviewed for purpose, quality, and redundancy. There is currently no framework to guide a process by which such reviews are conducted.

- The assessment and IT divisions do not collaborate on reviewing and improving the capabilities of computer-based testing in the district

- There is a perception that students are over-tested and assessment data are not helpful in the classroom. (The Council's study of testing and testing time in the member districts indicated that Pittsburgh was ninth highest out of 67 districts in the amount of time devoted to testing.[27])

4. Professional Development

- There is no formal training for teachers and other school-based staff on how to interpret and use data effectively to inform instruction, although the team heard that the district is developing a professional development system for administrators and principals focusing on data use with their associate superintendents.

[27] Council of the Great City Schools, 2015. *Student Testing in America's Great City Schools: An Inventory and Preliminary Analysis.*

- The superintendent has developed an expanded cabinet called the Academic Cabinet to include staff outside of the executive team that now includes the research and assessment directors.

5. *Evaluations*

- The district does not have a regular schedule of program evaluations to determine the effectiveness of the district's work.

- There are no standardized reporting or evaluation processes identified for school improvement or student achievement. It appears that most of the central office's energy and resources are focused on data for the teacher evaluation system. Key strategic initiatives in the district have not been evaluated for their effectiveness or impact on student outcomes. For example, several math pilot programs have been implemented with no evaluation of their impact on improving student math achievement.

E. Financial and Operations

In general, the Pittsburgh Public School system's financial and operations functions could be more effectively organized and more strategically managed. In addition, the district is significantly underestimating its annual revenues and over-estimating its annual expenditures.

1. *Organization and Staffing*

- The team observed that many of the individuals in the various finance and operations units were highly skilled and dedicated, and that pockets of excellence are present.

- The team saw evidence that goals and objectives are established on an annual basis, with accompanying timelines and performance measures, for some individuals in some departments—but it was largely not systemic.

- The district has received the Governmental Finance Officers Association's (GFOA) Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting and the Association of School Business Officials International's (ASBO) Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting for its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR).

- The district has been very consistent over the years in reporting their key performance indicator data to the Council of the Great City Schools. (The district did not report in 2016 for the 2014-15 school year, however, because of the significant leadership transition in the district.)

- The team noted that certain critical financial positons do not exist in the district's organization. Specifically –

    - There is no Chief Financial Officer (CFO). Some CFO responsibilities are currently performed by the Chief Operations Officer (COO), but the superintendent and board of education do not enjoy the benefits of a dedicated high-level financial advisor and

manager. Further, the current arrangement does not provide the appropriate separation of duties between operations and finance.

- There is no budget director. This position was eliminated when the incumbent was promoted to the position of COO. The expectation that the COO can successfully perform the duties and responsibilities of the budget director as well as those of the COO is unreasonable and puts both the operations and finance functions at risk. Further, the span of control for the COO (13 direct reporting relationships) created by the current circumstances is unwieldy and inefficient.

- A number of functions and organizational units are misaligned.[28] For example –
  - Vital core functions are fractured and organizationally scattered throughout the district. These include –
    - Informational Technology (IT) Management: information islands and IT resources reside in the Human Resources (HR), Food Service, Facilities, and other units outside of the formal IT department.
    - Risk Management: various risk functions are located in Finance (workers' compensation), HR (employee health & medical), Facilities (safety training and environmental issues), and the Legal office (property, casualty, and liability insurance).
    - Facilities Management: facilities functions and resources are in Finance, Plant Operations, and Facilities Maintenance.
    - Procurement Management: units including Facilities and Food Services that conduct their own decentralized purchasing operations.
  - The director of compensation has an eclectic group of tasks reporting to her, including emergency management, workers' compensation, and Medicaid reimbursement collections, in addition to employee payroll processing.
  - The maintenance of the district's non-bus ("white") vehicle fleet is placed organizationally within Custodial Services, rather than within the Transportation unit or the Maintenance unit.
  - The functions normally associated with a board secretary positon (the collection, organization, and archiving of board materials and official records) are under the COO rather the board or the superintendent.

[28] It was reported that some organizational misalignments were the result of the assignment of additional tasks and resources to individuals in order to justify increased salary levels, rather than for the enhancement of the enterprise's effectiveness.

- The team did not see that there has been any effort to right-size the operations or finance units and the team noted several instances where incumbents in leadership roles lacked the appropriate experience or skill sets for their assignments.

- The official organizational charts presented to the team for review contained non-descriptive position titles and disputed reporting relationships.

2. *Functions*

- The district has achieved 100 percent participation of its employees in the direct payroll deposit system and employees can view their payroll "stub" details on-line.

- School principals were complimentary of the customer service and responsiveness of individuals within the budget, payroll, and financial units.

- Based on the team's interviews, there appears to be a universal belief that the district schools are clean in their appearance.

- In the recent past, it appears there has been a culture within the finance and operations areas that has discouraged innovation, initiative, or change that might lead to systemic improvements.

- There seems to be no enterprise-wide governance structures districtwide to define strategic priorities and activities in the system. For example –

    - There is no Information Technology steering committee to guide the allocation of resources, oversee the progress of system modifications and development, establish enterprise-wide system architectures, create uniform IT standards, and approve software acquisitions.

    - The current budget-development process does not provide for cabinet-level discussions and vetting of competing initiatives and programs.

    - There is no stakeholder oversight of or input into facilities and capital planning.

- There is a general lack of planning within the district, as well as within the finance and operations areas, and decisions appear to be driven by transactional and operational needs rather than a strategic direction. For example –

    - It was reported that cabinet-level budget discussions are not focused on the district's overall strategic priorities.

    - While district enrollment has declined in past years, there is no plan to deal with the inefficiencies of underutilized facilities.

    - The team did not see a Facilities Master Plan and there is no current Facilities Condition Index from which to determine the scope of capital needs.

- Suitability studies have not been conducted to determine classroom standards of appropriate space and functionality for current and future instructional programs.

- There is no strategic technology plan, formal guidelines for software acquisition, or an apparent understanding of how technology should be integrated into instructional delivery to improve student outcomes.

- The team saw no evidence of a formal budget planning process that identifies and prioritizes the district's strategic objectives linked to the district's ability to fund them or to evaluations of program effectiveness.

- The units within the finance and operations area do not—for the most part—have departmental business plans with goals, objectives, timelines, or performance measures—this operation was one of the few that had such measures.

- There has been no planning for how to cope with the nationwide bus driver shortage, which is already impacting the district's ability to provide timely transportation services.

- The district has no enterprise-wide risk assessment system.

- The consideration and approval of grants is not strategic and does not subject grants to a review for program compatibility or sustainability.

- The team did not see that the district uses basic analytical tools to test assumptions, explore alternatives, validate decisions, or direct operations. For example -

  - It does not appear that there has been any analysis of the unintended consequences of the adoption of the Community Eligibility Provisions (CEP)[29] on allocations of Title I funds to individual schools and how these allocations might need to be modified.

  - The team saw no district analysis of the potential benefits of bringing transportation services in-house.

  - School Police reported that they use an Automated Police Reporting System (APRS) to track incident and arrest data; however, they do not use data collected by the system to explore the strategic management of safety and security resources districtwide.

  - The district appears to lack an understanding of the total cost of ownership of its technologies and systems.

[29] As a key provision of The Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act (HHFKA, Public Law 111-296; December 13, 2010), CEP allows the nation's highest poverty schools and districts to serve breakfast and lunch at no cost to all enrolled students without the burden of collecting household applications. In the past the data from these applications has been used as a basis for the allocation of federal ESEA Title I funds that provide schools with added resources to improve the academic achievement of disadvantaged students.

- The district captures almost 23,000 work orders each year in Plant Operations, but there is no analysis of these work orders to identify and prioritize capital and building systems requirements.

- The team noted a number of situations where there were weak or non-existent internal controls within finance and operations. For example –

  - Procedural weaknesses that exist within the district's Position Control system render it so ineffective that it has little value. To illustrate -
    - HR can create positions without budget authority.[30]
    - The system does not provide for unique positon numbers.
    - Payments can be made to individuals without a budgeted position.
    - Systems data must to be sent to schools each year for manual validation.
  - The district lacks central controls over purchasing and does not have procurement policies, procedures, and standards that reflect best practices. For example –
    - The Finance, Facilities, and Food Service units can issue purchase orders without the Procurement unit's approval.
    - There is no formal vendor and contractor evaluation system.
    - Neither the Capital Program nor the Transportation unit enforces the performance accountability provisions in their contracts.
    - The Capital Program does not have a mechanism for oversight of change orders.
    - Computer software licensing is not centralized, resulting in individual purchasers being unable to take advantage of economies of scale.
  - The team noted a number of weaknesses in the internal controls over the accounts payable and payroll disbursement functions. For example –
    - The Food Service unit is able to make payments to vendors without the Accounts Payable unit's oversight.
    - The Accounts Payable unit can issue payments without contracts or purchase orders.
    - The team was told that the Accounts Payable unit issues six to ten procedural violation letters to schools and departments each month, but there is no reporting to the Chiefs-level of these infractions and there is no accountability for repeat offenders.

[30] It was reported to the team that while HR works with organizational units on position-by-position reviews, they are unable to assist in assessing the ability of departments to function as effective units.

- The district's payroll system pays employees based on anticipated time (rather than on actual hours worked), which results in overpayments of salaries and benefits.

- The superintendent and the school board are not provided the quality of financial information that is necessary to make informed decisions. For example –

  - The district has consistently underestimated its year-end General Fund balance. To illustrate, the following table (Exhibit 47). Comparison of Budgeted and Actual General Fund Ending Balances 2011 – 2015) displays the district's budgeted and actual year-end General Fund balances for the past five years and shows an annual underestimate of the balance by between $14.5 to $35.2 million and the that ending balance has grown from $77.8 million in 2011 to $129.8 million by the end of 2015.

Exhibit 47. Comparison of Budgeted and Actual General Fund Ending Balances 2011 - 2015[31]

General Fund	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Budgeted Fund Balance	$ 63,189,345	$ 56,041,599	$ 75,255,728	$ 96,066,618	$ 98,835,394
Actual Fund Balance[32]	$ 77,756,393	$ 85,116,608	$110,455,927	$ 125,082,000	$ 129,811,691
Variance: Actual over Budget	$ 14,567,048	$ 29,075,009	$ 35,200,199	$ 29,015,382	$ 30,976,297

  - The district consistently underestimates its General Fund revenues. The team found that during the five years 2011 to 2016 the district underestimated its four major revenue streams (Real Estate Taxes, Earned Income, Real Estate Transfers, and Basic Instructional – State) 16 times, while overestimating one of these revenue sources only four times.[33]

  - There is no recognition of authorized, but unfilled, positions (salary lapse), which results in the over-budgeting of expenditures in major salary accounts.

  - The district's annual budgets project that future deficit funding will result in "insolvency." For example –

    - The 2015 Budget indicated that "Insolvency will not happen until 2017."[34]

[31] Data for 2011 through 2015 Budgeted and Actual General Fund Balances are from the District's CAFRs, 2011through 2015

[32] The Team was advised that District policies provide for an ending balance from 5% to 15% of General Fund expenditures; however several of these balances exceed 20%.

[33] Data for 2011 through 2015 Budgeted and Actual General Fund major revenue sources are from the District's CAFRs , 2011through 2015

[34] 2015 Final Budget, School District Of Pittsburgh, Budget/Financial Information - Page XLV

- The 2016 Budget states that "Insolvency will not happen until 2018."[35]

  Based on the ending balances displayed in Exhibit 1, the consistent underestimation of revenues and the continued overestimates of expenditures, the team finds no reason to find these statements to be credible, since the district is not spending down its ending balances.

- The monthly interim financial reports lack useful management information because they fail to provide an analysis of major revenue and expenditure accounts comparing the adopted budgets to projected actual results.

- There are no periodic budget adjustments to reflect updated forecasts of revenue and expenditures.

- It was reported that the food services program, with a $17 million expenditure budget, carries a fund balance of over $10 million—or almost 60 percent.

- The team identified several major issues with the district's budget development processes. For example –

  - The district's fiscal year is on a calendar-year basis, which is inconsistent with the district's school-year business cycle and results in annual budgets and accounting information lapping over two school years.[36]

  - Board members, senior managers, and school principals have only limited active engagement in the development of the annual budget.

  - The process used to develop school-based budgets each year creates the perception that funds are taken from the "have" schools to provide for the "have-not" schools, which leads to unnecessary and unwarranted resentment among "donor" schools.

  - There appears to be no formal evaluation of instructional programs to inform the budget development process.

  - It appears that the annual budget development does not consider revenue and expenditure trend data.

  - There is no strategic approach to using the General Fund's increasing ending balance to fund unaddressed priorities.

- Internal and external communications problems were identified in the areas of finance and operations. For example –

  - Facilities reported they "own" and maintain security cameras without the involvement of the Safety and Security unit.

[35] 2016 Final Budget, School District Of Pittsburgh, Budget/Financial Information – Page XLIV
[36] In addition, some state financial reports are required on a fiscal year ending June 30th basis.

- There is a reported lack of communications with parents and principals when buses are late or cancelled, or routes are changed.
- Principals are not always notified of changes in custodial personnel.
- Instructional staff is not consulted when capital projects are planned and designed.
- Principals indicated that school buses were not arriving and departing on schedule and the lack of buses resulted in doubling-up of routes for some buses.
- Technology support was reported as "nonexistent" and the team was told that district systems do not communicate with one another.
- It was reported that schools wait an inordinate length of time for the delivery of goods and services processed centrally on purchase orders.

- School principals interviewed by the team expressed dissatisfaction with most central non-instructional support services, and the lack of operational support for schools forces principals to create "work arounds" to address their needs. For example –
  - Principals reported a lack of responsiveness and communication from the maintenance operations regarding outstanding work orders, and getting work done may be dependent on "who you know."
  - The team heard there were issues with the quality and quantity of food provided for students in school cafeterias, and that many elementary schools lacked lunch trays for their students.
- However, school principals reported to the team that their ability to control lunch periods helps reduce long lines in school cafeterias and provide reasonable amounts of time for students to eat their meals.

3. *Information Technology*

- The team had several concerns with the Information Technology (IT) systems and policies of the district. For example –
  - The district ERP software version is over 12 years old, is unsupported by its vendor, and appears to be underutilized.
  - There is no automated time and attendance system.
  - The Maintenance unit is not supported by a job-cost system.
  - Schools are able to acquire computer hardware and software without regard to the central IT unit's ability to support and maintain it.

- IT has built a data warehouse that houses teacher evaluation data to make staffing decisions more efficient.

- IT has a process in place for ensuring that data sent to Mathematica is correct for teacher evaluations.

- The data team in IT seems to have a strong understanding of IT systems, although the Council's research team did not consist of IT specialists.

- The construction of a data warehouse in the IT unit is an accomplishment to build upon, even if it does not do everything a comprehensive data warehouse would do.

- While the IT data team has a strong understanding of IT systems, the support team was not confident in their understanding of the use and reporting of data to inform data-driven instruction and decision making. The Council team reviewed a number of reports that IT generated from pre-populated data sets that included no analysis of the data, e.g., enrollment reports that do not analyze changes over time or make projections.

- Principals have to rely on their own Excel spreadsheets rather than on data reports provided by IT or EdInsight. They expressed a lack of confidence in the reports provided to them and ask their teachers to populate their data in school Excel spreadsheets.

- The process for reviewing district assessment data uploaded into PIMS is extremely time consuming due to incompatibility issues with the new technology. Clear procedures for handling data integrity in the system have not been developed collaboratively between IT and other divisions.

- District staff and teachers were not confident in the integrity of data reports provided by IT from EdInsight. EdInsight was described by a number of groups interviewed by the Council team as being less than capable of producing district-level data for decision making. Principals are collecting their own data and creating their own dashboards in Excel for their teachers to populate with classroom data to compensate for gaps in the central office's system.

  For example, a number of staff members (district administrators, principals and teachers) mentioned to the Council's teams that they were on a selection committee to select a new data system. After reviewing all proposals, they recommended one company they believed best suited the district's needs. Their recommendation, however, was overturned by what committee members believed were conversations within the IT department, procurement, and/or other district leaders. One reason for the selection may have been the desire to use a local company despite the disadvantages of the product.

  The decision by the executive staff to overturn the committee action sent a message that cross-level collaboration was not valued. The Council team found a number of instances of similar dynamics where a committee made recommendations or developed tools that were later rejected or buried. In each case, it appears that no one was given an explanation for why committee work was rejected. Instead of breaking down staff silos and building

ownership in the committee's decision, the result was frustration and a lack of "buy-in" for the new system. Moreover, it appears that the new system ultimately was not adequate to meet the needs of the district, and many benefits of the older system were lost.

- Technology priorities have been driven by the teacher evaluation system. However, the technology systems have been developed without the influence of practitioners needs.

- There is a lack of communications between IT and other district and school staffs. School and district staff members report feeling excluded from conversations about data and reports that they will be required to use.

- There is a lack of clear role expectations of staff involved in data collection, reporting, and analysis. School staff do not know who to call to troubleshoot various systems and supports for data reports.

- A number of interviewees indicated that current data systems have operating issues. ESchool Plus is reported to be faulty, but it populates EdInsight—thereby causing larger problems. Interviewees also reported that EdInsight matches on student name, not on student ID, which is problematic. Matching on student name should never be the basis for merging or comparing student records.

- A number of issues with the district's Students Data Systems Specialist (SDSS) process were described by interviewees. First, part-time SDSS staff members at a number of schools delay the district's collection of enrollment and daily attendance data. In some cases, schools do not have real-time information on student attendance or new enrollments. There are also no formal data quality checks in place, and data entry errors are reviewed only when staff informally identify concerns.

4. *Transportation*

- Several transportation operations matters came to the attention of the team. These included–

    - The establishment of school start and dismissal times is decentralized, resulting in inefficiencies in school bus routing and scheduling.

    - The Transportation unit contracts with 18 different vendors, which can be administratively cumbersome and inefficient.

    - Parents interviewed by the instructional team reported safety and discipline issues on school buses.

5. *Procurement*

- The district still manually manages all low-dollar Purchase Orders, which represent as much as 95 percent of all Purchase Order generation.

6. *Facilities*

- The district enjoys a custodial ratio of approximately one custodian for every 23,879 square feet, which is lower than the national median among CGCS districts of one custodian for every 25,451 square feet.[37] (The district's ratio has dropped from 32,842:1 in 2011-12 to 25,854:1 in 2012-13 to 232,879:1 in 2013-14. No data were provided for 2014-15.)

- The district's custodial cost per square foot dropped slightly from $3.39 per square foot in 2011-12 to $3.32 per square foot in 2013-14. (No data were provided for 2014-15.)

- Operational issues identified in the custodial area included--

    - The daily requirements for substitute custodians exceeds the 25 workers available in the substitute-pool, leaving a number of custodial absences uncovered.

    - Structural compensation differences between elementary, middle, and high school custodial staff contribute to the high turnover of custodial staff since they must change schools to receive higher compensation.

7. *Safety and Security*

- School principals praised the communication and responsiveness of the School Safety unit.

- The School Safety unit conducts a debriefing following any significant security incident to critique their performance and seek ways to improve their techniques and tactics.

- Safety and security operational issues identified included –
    - The lack of a district-wide uniform system to control school access and track school visitors.

    - Training and drilling on active shooter scenarios that is available from the School Safety unit is not required of all schools.

    - The staffing of School Security personnel may be overly weighted to secondary schools, a pattern that is similar to other major urban school districts.

    - Incidents of bullying or harassment remained at between 3.1 per 1,000 students in 2011-12 and 3.5 per 1,000 students in 2013-14. Both rates were somewhat higher than the Great City Schools median.

    - The number of people incidents per 1,000 students ticked up slightly from 24.5 per 1,000 in 2011-12 to 28.9 per 1,000 in 2013-14. The district rate is comparable to the Great City Schools median in 2013-14 of 28.0 per 1,000. (The district did not report data on 2014-15.)

[37] "Managing for Results in America's Great City Schools, A Report of the Performance Measurement and Benchmarking Project, Results from Fiscal Year 2014-15", Council of the Great City Schools, October, 2016.

- In 2013-14, the district reported higher rates of assault and battery incidents per 1,000 students (9.0 per 1,000) than the median Great City School district (5.1 per 1,000). (The district did not report data on 2014-15.)

- Safety and security expenditures per 1,000 students increased modestly between 2011-12 ($197) and 2013-14 ($207)—a slower rate of increase than the median Great City School district. At the same time, safety and security expenditures as a percent of the district's budget declined from 0.93 percent in 2011-12 to 0.83 percent in 2013-14. During this period, district staffing per 1,000 students on safety and security remained about the same. (The district did not report data on 2014-15.)

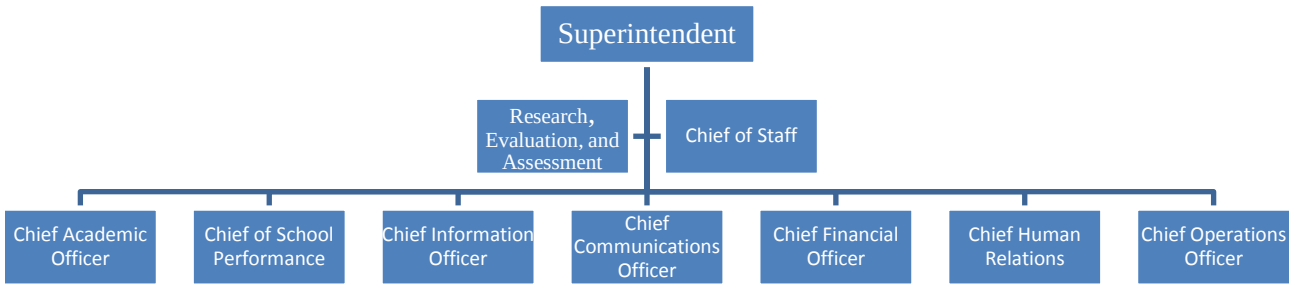
RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROPOSALS

The following are proposals made by the Council's teams to address issues identified in the previous chapter. Many of these recommendations can be implemented in multiple ways, and the superintendent should be given maximum flexibility in doing so.

General Organizational Recommendations

1. Consider a reorganization of functions reporting to the superintendent. Propose that direct line reports to the superintendent would include the chiefs of academics, schools, information, communications, finances, human relations, and operations. This recommendation increases the span of control of the superintendent in the short run while he is revamping the school system, but assumes that the span of control would be reduced over time as reforms take hold. A proposed organizational structure under the board of education is found below in Exhibit 48.

Exhibit 48. Proposed Main Organization Chart for the Pittsburgh Public Schools



2. Turn the deputy superintendent into a chief academic officer and place under the CAO all functions dealing with curriculum and instruction, early childhood, professional development, special education, ELLs, student services, and career and technical education. An alternative would be to do what the new superintendent has already done: create a CAO position and place that position and the chief of school performance under the deputy.

3. Create a new office of research, evaluation, and assessment that would report either directly to the superintendent or to a chief of staff who would report to the superintendent. (See more on this in the sections below.)

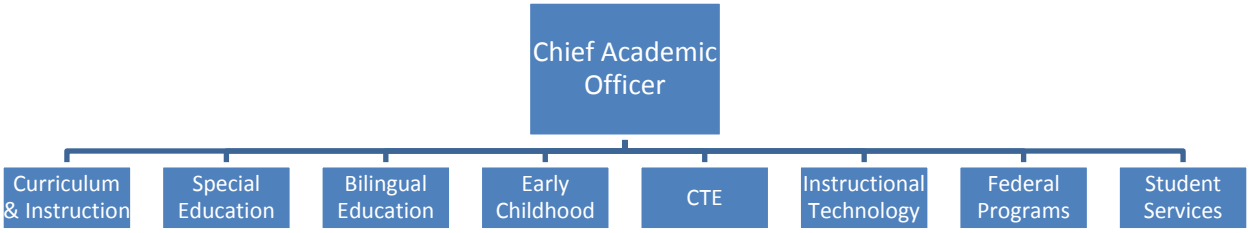
3. Develop a description of all networks and department structures from the organizational chart. Clearly define staff roles and responsibilities within each network and department, as well as their focus and points of contact for district staff, school-based staff, parents, and community members to use.

Instructional Recommendations

Organization

4. Revamp the organizational structure of the instructional unit of the district. One option for doing so would be to pursue what the new superintendent has already put into place with a deputy superintendent who has direct reports from the CAO and the chief of school performance. The second option would be to eliminate the deputy slot in the short run and have both the CAO and chief of school performance report directly to the superintendent. This second option would place the principals one step closer organizationally to the superintendent, which is generally considered good practice. Either way, the Council would organize functions under the CAO as follows (Exhibit 49)—

Exhibit 49. Recommended Organizational Structure under the CAO



5. Keep all assistant superintendents with supervisory responsibility for principals under the chief of school performance, but have student services report to the CAO.

4. Revamp the principal supervisory system under the chief of school performance to enhance the instructional responsibilities and capacities of assistant superintendents and curtail their operational duties. Broward County, Cleveland, and Des Moines could serve as models. (The Council can provide detailed descriptions of how these programs work.)

6. Appoint or hire an additional assistant superintendent at the secondary school level to relieve the two current principals of their dual and competing responsibilities as both principals and principal supervisors.

7. Move any assessment, evaluation, or research responsibilities out from under the CAO and place them within a research department reporting directly to the superintendent or to a chief of staff. Place professional development under curriculum and instruction. Also consider moving several data analysts out of IT and into the new research office.

8. Consider having the equity office report to the chief academic officer rather than to the superintendent.

9. Have the executive director of PSE and the director of English Language Learners report to the chief academic officer. (More on this in the instructional section below.)

10. Consider creating a "dotted line relationship" (signifying established collaboration) between PSE program staff and the assistant superintendents, and a solid line to the PSE executive director (signifying a formal reporting relationship).

11. Consolidate federal instruction-related programs and place organizationally under a chief academic officer with a staff liaison between the CAO and the budget office.

12. Convene regular meetings of department heads—including curriculum and instruction, PSE, ELL, student services, HR, and budget—to discuss common instructional issues and progress. Hold all staff accountable for collaborating with each other on the district's academic priorities.

Leadership and Governance

13. Clearly articulate a case for the changes the school system will need to make in order to improve, and build a change-management strategy into the district's broader strategic plan. Teachers need flexibility on *how* to best meet the needs of their students, but *what* students need to know should not vary across the district no matter where the school is located. When teachers aim at achieving differing or unclear goals for what students are to learn and at what depth, then learning gaps develop across grade levels and become more difficult to overcome. Teachers should help identify gaps and work to prioritize how to build stronger academic priorities, but it is the job of the central office to provide the direction and supports that teachers and others need to ensure grade-level learning and minimal achievement gaps.

14. Utilize the data gained from the *Look, Listen and Learn* tour by the superintendent, letting teachers and students know that their voices were heard.

15. Articulate a clear district philosophy about what expectations the district has for student learning, and what evidence the district will use to assess whether that learning is occurring.

16. Have the board and new superintendent articulate clear long term and short term academic goals for the district that will be the basis for a renewed focus on instruction throughout all levels of the organization. Share with parents and the community.

17. Reorient the board's meeting agendas and work schedule around monitoring progress on the district's academic goals.[38]

18. Discontinue the practice of allowing late Board action items ("tabs") to be placed on the Board Agenda without processing them through the administrative approval procedures and without a specified deadline, e.g., seven days.

19. Build the superintendent's evaluation around progress on the academic goals that the board and superintendent set.

[38] The school board is currently working with the Council of the Great City Schools on setting goals, governance responsibilities, and work schedules.

20. Clarify and communicate which instructional decisions the district holds "tight" and what flexibility schools have to tailor instruction on their own to meet the needs of their students. The Council would propose having the district define the overall instructional vision, the curriculum*, Tier I instructional expectations and materials, options for interventions, and assessments. (*The district's curriculum is different from a packaged commercial program. There is no perfect textbook or program. But the district should be clear about what the district expects of students at each grade level.)

21. Develop a strategic plan for implementing college- and career-readiness standards and for managing systemwide change. We understand that the strategic planning process is now underway, and recommend that the work involve a cross-functional team of internal staff as well as community partners.

    - The strategic plan should include implementation benchmarks,[39] articulate the roles and organizational relationships of multiple levels of staff, allocate resources necessary to build internal capacity and achieve greater equity, and build accountability across departments for meeting the district's expectations. Expect teamwork across departments for meeting the district's expectations in the planning process.

    - Review and adjust the allocation of resources that the plan will require, including the strategic allocation of local and state resources along with various federally funded programs like Titles I, II, and III.

22. Based on the strategic plan, develop and commit to sustaining a well-defined and commonly understood core set of initiatives. These core initiatives should work in tandem to advance the district's strategic priorities for instructional quality and improvement, which should be centered on strong implementation of college- and career-readiness standards. Curtail initiatives that do not serve the district's strategic goals. (In the past the district invested time and resources in a number of initiatives and programs that it eventually abandoned—such as LETRS, and possibly ITL 2's—without clear evidence that data supported the decision.)

    - Have the superintendent and board serve as champions of the district's college- and career-readiness standards and the district's new strategic direction.

    - Broadly circulate the new vision and priorities to stakeholders inside and outside the district before finalizing.

    - Design a comprehensive community engagement strategy for building capacity and uniting stakeholders behind district priorities.

[39] See *Indicators of Success: A Guide for Assessing District-level Implementation of College- and Career-Readiness Standards.* Council of the Great City Schools, Summer 2016.

Curriculum and Instruction

23. Ensure that all curriculum and instructional staff in the central office have the appropriate background knowledge and experience for their positions in order to accomplish the recommendations below.

24. Fully align all curriculum documents, grade-level instructional units, professional development offerings, interim assessments, and RISE to the Pennsylvania common core standards and district expectations so that all students receive grade-level classroom instruction to meet college and career-readiness standards. It is the responsibility of the curriculum department and central office to provide the guidance and support necessary to enable teachers to meet the needs of all students. This means that general instruction (Tier I), scaffolding, and interventions are built into all guidance documents. This includes reviewing all the ESL sheltered courses to ensure that they are not compromising the rigor of the courses.

25. Overhaul the district's core Tier I instruction by—

- *Using the draft literacy handbook (Excellence for All) that was jettisoned as the instructional literacy guide for the district.* In order to build a shared understanding of grade-level instructional expectations and equity across the district, it is vital to have written guidance. The draft literacy handbook provides an overview of what K-5 literacy instruction should look like and details how to use the 120-minute K-5 literacy block. It also contains roadmaps that describe the content, concepts, and skills that students should learn throughout the school year. Moreover, each unit includes overarching questions, essential questions, classroom artifacts and student work-products, along with performance assessments and rubrics. Finally, there is explicit attention given in the handbook to what should be taught, why it is important, and sample methods for how concepts could be taught.

- *Building ownership among teachers, principals, assistant superintendents, and other key instructional leaders in the central office around the review, revision, and implementation of the guide.* This might initially entail holding an orientation on the handbook, and establishing that it requires review and revision in order to clarify instructional expectations—rather than simply distributing it to schools and requiring that it be used. There are areas in the handbook that need to be revised, including items related to the availability of materials that are specifically referenced in the units. Determine whether these units provide sufficient exemplars about what to teach and at what level of understanding.

- *Revising the draft K-5 instructional math plan to become the new K-12 math document for the district.* Review and revise it as necessary to ensure that it explicitly addresses what students should be learning and clarifies and makes explicit all math learning progressions. Include—

    - Clarifications for what must be taught and at what level of depth to reflect college- and career-readiness standards at each grade level. (The textbook provides assignments and materials to use, but there is no articulation of "what" students are to learn.)

  - Standards-aligned expectations for all students at each grade level. Differentiate how student work should look at varying points during the school year.
  - A scope and sequence that references back to the instructional framework to allow teachers to connect the two documents and how each one provides needed detail.
  - Forecasting about how you connect prior learning to current learning
  - An articulation of any unfinished learning that may exist and explicit identification of common misconceptions that may appear during an instructional segment
  - The role of assessments in measuring student achievement

- Detailed guidance to math teachers about how units and chapters from multiple texts connect to each other and to the state's standards.

26. Develop a clear and consistent sequence of math courses across the district, including pathways or sequences of courses for students at the high school level. This will ensure that high school courses reflect the intent and content of the standards in high school math. Eliminate courses that do not meet the standards if necessary. Monitor implementation to minimize gaps at the high school level. Align the ESL sheltered math courses to courses in the pathway with a focus on developing mathematical competency (rather than English acquisition).

27. While working on overhauling Tier I instruction, simultaneously define and communicate a districtwide MTSS system that includes the following features:[40]

    - A districtwide MTSS leadership team
    - Written expectations for an MTSS framework in both academics and behavior (Tier I, Tier II, Tier III instruction, Restorative Justice, PBIS, etc.).
    - Universal design for learning (UDL) feature that is integrated into the MTSS framework (to the extent possible). Consider sending a team to the Harvard University UDL program.
    - A plan for using a system of universal academic and behavioral screeners districtwide that are appropriate at various grade levels and with differing levels of language acquisition.
    - A map of districtwide intervention needs and a plan for filling gaps with research-based academic and behavior interventions.
    - A plan for providing professional development to implement MTSS with fidelity
    - Data supports that integrate academic and behavioral progress

28. Conduct an inventory of the instructional materials (including core materials, supplemental materials, interventions, and assessments) currently being used in schools districtwide to better understand what teachers are using and what they think is effective.

29. Move forward with a decision on which literacy and mathematics materials to adopt and procure systemwide. Employ tools such as IMET and GIMET-QR to help select materials that are high quality and aligned to the state's college- and career-readiness standards. (Also use

[40] See Council of the Great City Schools. *Common Core State Standards and Diverse Students: Using Multi-tiered Systems of Support*. Washington, DC: October 2012.

the Council's ELA and math criteria for ELL materials.[41]) Having classroom materials aligned to the district's curriculum and expectations make it easier for classroom teachers to prepare lessons for classroom instruction that match the district's academic goals.

30. Identify gaps in rigor and content in the math and reading materials recently purchased by the PSE department for low incidence disabilities, and supplement them to ensure that these students have the necessary opportunity to access and meet grade-level expectations.

31. Charge the curriculum department with partnering with PSE to ensure appropriate modifications are made in all instruction and materials to ensure that students in an LRE setting have full access to grade-level instruction.

32. Charge the curriculum leadership with working with ESL staff to ensure that instruction in core subjects and all instructional materials explicitly address the language development needs of ELL students as they learn core content consistent with the state standards.

33. Discontinue overlapping piloting of materials that lack a stringent evaluation plan. (This would apply to all pilots except the RAND project)

34. Develop a list of research-based intervention programs and guidelines for districtwide use during intervention periods. Ensure that interventions are used consistently from school to school, providing guidance and training to teachers. Guidance should include—

    - How to use screening tools, e.g., DRA, SRI, SMI, and DIBELS, in order to plan for next steps in the intervention process.
    - How to assess or diagnose specific student learning needs or unfinished learning that, when addressed, would move students to higher levels of performance.
    - How to differentiate instruction.
    - How to select and provide appropriate scaffolding and supports.
    - How to monitor student progress to effectively address student learning challenges.
    - How to evaluate the effectiveness of the district's intervention programs on student achievement.

35. Expand the 25-minute ESEP period to 50 minutes daily for teachers. Devote three days per week of this time for individual teacher planning, and devote two days per week to PLCs. Devote PLCs specifically to reviewing student work, interpreting and analyzing student data, building teacher capacity, and linking student learning outcomes to specific instructional practices. Tie classroom observation look-fors, in part, to the content of the PLCs. Inform and involve principals and principal supervisors.

36. Normalize the structure and use of the intervention block across schools to provide corrective instruction in small groups based on data and to ensure continuing progress toward grade- level proficiency. This does not necessarily mean using the same materials in every school, although the district should provide a menu of approved interventions/resources.

[41] Council of the Great City Schools. *Framework for Raising Expectations and Instructional Rigor for English Language Learners* (ELD 2.). Washington, DC: August 2014. Council of the Great City Schools. *Framework for Re-envisioning Mathematics Instruction for English Language Learners*. Washington, DC: December 2016.

37. Provide teachers and administrators with guidance on what to look for in student work, what to look for during walk-throughs, and how to assess student learning to provide evidence that assignments and student work are aligned to grade-level instructional expectations. Establish a mechanism for gathering, analyzing, and acting on walk-through results.

38. Clearly define and communicate what "culturally responsive" instruction looks like, what is expected, and how it is applied across subject areas. (This could also be part of the district's broad strategic plan.)

39. Clarify for principals who they should contact in the central office for help on various instructional and operational problems. (See Des Moines First Responder system.) Name operational partners (e.g., facilities, transportation, payroll, etc.) in the central office who could broker services for assistant superintendents.

40. Outline a specific strategy for addressing the district's turnaround schools. Use a cross-functional team of district staff and teachers to devise strategies.[42] (See the report referenced in the footnote for strategies.)

Professional Development

41. Develop a comprehensive professional development plan to build central office, principal, and teacher capacity to implement college- and career-readiness standards. Ensure that all professional development offerings are coherent, vetted, and aligned to the instructional priorities of the district.

42. Build and provide consistent professional development around rigorous content, focused on implementation of the literacy and mathematics framework (found in the draft handbooks).

43. Ensure that professional development is differentiated to meet the needs of district and school staff.

    - Tailor district-provided professional development to meet the specific needs of central office staff, principals, ITLs, teachers, and other specialized staff in the central office and at the school level. For example, ELA teachers should receive training on implementing the literacy framework, while principals need to know what to look for to ensure implementation of the literacy framework in the classroom; and ELA and math teachers should receive professional development on the intersection of language and content to ensure that all students have access to grade-level content.

    - Differentiate professional development on the basis of experience, previous training, and performance.

44. Develop a system of professional learning communities (PLCs) at every school that will focus on the implementation of standards-based instruction, examine student work, review best

[42] Council of the Great City Schools. *School Improvement Grants: Progress Report from America's Great City Schools*. Washington, DC: February 2015.

practices, share and resolve common problems of practice, collaborate on lesson planning, provide time for classroom planning, design differentiated instructional approaches, and use assessment data to inform instructional decision making.

45. Charge the ITLs (or others, such as lead teachers or principals) with assisting in the leadership and implementation of newly revamped PLCs, with appropriate support from central office staff (where necessary). Add a component to the evaluation of the ITLs on their progress in running the PLCs.

46. For ITL 2s, remove their responsibilities for personnel evaluations and redefine them (and literacy specialists) as school-level content-based coaches focus on instructional quality rather than the implementation of RISE. (In other words, merge the ITL 1s and 2s into a single position around instructional coaching.)

    - Provide these new coaches with intensive levels of content training so they are equipped to assist teachers with the implementation of the standards. This should include methods for supporting teachers in planning for grade-level teaching, reviewing student work and gauging it against the standards, and using data to address unfinished learning and to propel student learning.
    - Reduce the number of informal "touch-points" that principals are required to do in evaluating teachers annually.

47. Retain the early literacy specialists and charge them with meeting periodically with the appropriate assistant superintendents and central office literacy staff to share best practices and results in order to inform districtwide instructional strategies, identify and solve emerging problems, and make decisions about where additional interventions might be needed.

48. Evaluate districtwide professional development for both implementation and effectiveness in improving teacher practice and student achievement.

49. Incorporate the results of regular reviews of student work into professional development so all staff know how to assess the quality of work against the standards, determine student proficiency levels, identify and use effective strategies to address unfinished learning, address misperceptions, and inform practice.

50. Establish an ongoing principal and leader preparation, induction, and on-boarding program (including APs, principals, assistant superintendents, etc.) to build the district's leadership pipeline for all positions. (The Council has numerous examples.)

51. Develop feed-back loops to the central office—particularly staff in the curriculum and professional development units—to determine needed adaptions, assess ease of use in Tier 1 instruction, and gauge the effectiveness of PLCs, professional development, and instructional reforms. Use the results along with data from walk-throughs to inform instructional practice and district strategy. (This should include reviewing and refining existing resources and tools to guide instruction.)

52. Build assistant superintendents into the ongoing instructional professional development of principals and teachers, and provide additional training for these principal supervisors on both their instructional and coaching roles.

Staff Evaluations

53. Develop an accountability system for central office staff that both ensures staff responsibility for progress on the district's academic goals and incentivizes collaboration in cross-functional teams for jointly addressing major district challenges (e.g., the overhaul of professional development, the strengthening of Tier I instruction, and a revamping of data systems). Include assistant superintendents on these cross-functional teams.
54. Realign the bonus system for central office staff, assistant superintendents, and principals to ensure that it aligns with progress on the districtwide score card. Restrict bonuses for central office and school-level administrators to progress on student achievement. If there is no progress, there should be no bonuses.

55. Amend the PULSE evaluation system for principals so that it includes their ability to retain highly–effective teachers and their progress on reducing disproportionality in gifted and talented programming, suspensions, special education, and advanced placement course enrollment.

56. Leave the RISE system alone for the moment while revamping the instructional program, the organizational structure, and making sure that the right people are in the right spots. The RISE system needs to be overhauled but now is not the right time to do it. The district's time would be better spent reforming other parts of the system and allowing principals and teachers to become familiar with the instructional and other reforms before insisting on more formalized accountability. The district needs to invest in growing and developing teachers and then assessing results of the reforms.

English Language Learners

57. Design and implement a districtwide instructional strategy and program for ELLs built around the twin goals of acquiring English proficiency and content mastery. The program should presume the shared responsibility of both general education and ESL staff for the performance of ELLs. Build the strategy around the precepts laid out in the Council's publication, *A Framework for Raising Expectations and Instructional Rigor for English Language Learners* (ELD 2.0). The framework calls for two critical strategic components: Focused Language Study (FLS) and Discipline-specific Academic Language Expansion (DALE).

58. Conduct a comprehensive needs analysis of newcomer students—identifying both numbers and needs. Then, determine the necessity of additional services and instructional programs in the Regional ESL Centers to address the needs of those students OR identify schools that require specific professional development in these areas.

59. Build out a clear strategy for the use of Title III funds to acquire supplemental materials that enhance the rigor of Tier I instruction for ELLs (rather than remedial work), as well as to

improve the quality of professional development in the 10 Regional ESL Centers. Consider the broader use of a co-teaching model in general education classrooms with multiple ELLs.

60. Establish a PLC network of the 10 schools with the highest numbers of ELLs in order to share lessons, maximize high-quality professional development and materials, and examine data to improve ELL achievement. Charge the central office with coordinating meetings of the group.

61. Build a support and information system to serve families that send their children to these 10 schools, and include resettlement agencies in the execution (they may have resources to assist). Title I resources could be used to help support this effort.

62. Use the 10 Regional ESL Centers to create a council or committee for refugee families and resettlement agencies to enhance collaboration and supports for students, as well as for building translation services in the district. A council or committee could also be charged with working to dissipate tensions between Somali and African American students, and with helping to prioritize the documents that need to be translated and determining the communications that ELL families most need.

63. Rather than creating an in-house ESL certification course, consider partnering with a third party to create a course that best suits the district.

64. Incorporate ELL data into the district's emerging data dashboard system or data warehouse to allow the central office to monitor the achievement of ELLs across the district on an ongoing basis.

    - Provide professional development for teachers and school leaders on how to use ELL data to make instructional decisions.
    - Charge the ELL office and a new research office with tracking, analyzing, and reporting on ELL enrollments by ELP levels, time-in-program, services received, and content achievement, etc.

65. Conduct an audit of districtwide interpretation/translation needs, and work to ensure that there are sufficient interpreter services and translations for parents in all geographic areas of the district, and in all necessary languages.

66. Develop an ELL pathway to graduation that is integrated to the district's overall secondary course offerings and make revisions to the year-to-year promotion requirements for promotion to be responsive to ELL needs and maximize their chances of graduating

Special Education

67. Standardize the process for determining whether students have a disability. Include relevant teachers and behavioral/related services staff in the process.

68. Review the local operating standards for determining eligibility to ensure they are clear, user friendly, and accessible to all stakeholders with supportive documents and forms.

69. Communicate the expectation that staff from the curriculum and instruction unit, ELL office, and PSE collaborate in determining student eligibility for special education services.

70. Analyze staffing data (special education teachers, psychologists, speech/language, etc.) to assess district staffing ratios compared to other urban school districts across the county. (See analysis in the section on findings.)

71. Establish how schools will differentiate instruction for students, including students with disabilities in general education classes, ELLs, and gifted/talented students—along with targeted professional development to support the differentiation.

72. Reduce referrals to regional/self-contained classrooms by supporting more inclusive practices for Tier I instruction and better-defined reading and math interventions.

73. Charge relevant departments with establishing a master plan for placing students back into a Least Restrictive Environment.

74. Review the standards being used in each self-contained program. Ensure that they are accessible to all stakeholders, and that there are processes in place (including school walk-throughs) to monitor implementation of standards for all students.

75. Have PSE collaborate with community schools and external partners to expand special education transition services and opportunities for students with moderate/severe disabilities and emotional issues.

76. Base special educator staffing patterns on student needs rather than educational setting, and consider placing coaches at each school to assist in LRE settings.

77. Allow new school staff to visit other schools that support inclusive instruction.

78. Include PSE staff in regular meetings with network/assistant superintendents and their respective schools.

79. Charge the instructional department, student services, PSE personnel, and assistant superintendents with developing a plan to reduce the disproportionate identification of African American students as ED and placement of these students outside of traditional school settings. Work with legal counsel to provide input. Consider building accountability measures for disproportionate identification and placement.

80. Review the specifications for each Regional Day Class (RDC) or self-contained classroom to clarify the enrollment criteria and program specifications. Review the instructional practices provided in these RDCs to determine whether more rigorous instructional and professional development is needed for staff. In addition—

    - Review data pertaining to RDCs
    - Collect feedback from the community and parents about services at these special center schools, specifically at the Oliver Citywide Academy, and establish a plan for addressing and resolving any concerns.

81. Review the characteristics of the relatively small number of students attending the academy and center schools, and reasons why PPS is unable to meet their needs in district schools. With input from stakeholders, including PSE, school student services, parent advisory groups, and others, develop guidance on the instruction and services needed to keep students in district schools, or for transitioning students in academy and center schools back to regular district schools in a timely manner. As part of this process, consider per child average costs at OCA and the centers, including transportation costs

Discipline and Behavioral Recommendations

82. Implement a districtwide PBIS program that provides protocols for minimizing any lost instructional time. This plan should explicitly address—

    - Early childhood suspensions
    - Disproportionality
    - Long-term suspensions
    - Short term (1-3 day) suspensions

83. Consider expanding restorative justice practices (based on the RAND study) as part of the district's PBIS plan.

84. Consider eliminating suspensions in PreK-2 that do not involve immediate physical threats to the safety of students.

85. Strengthen the district's data systems to enable the district to determine the precise number of instructional days lost to suspensions.

86. Incorporate a measure into the data system for capturing the number of days spent in alternative education settings—these days are not currently counted as suspensions.

87. Strengthen the quality and alignment of instruction offered in alternative education settings. Based on interviews, days spent in these settings represent lost instructional time because of the poor quality of instruction.

Research, Evaluation, and Data Recommendations

Organization

88. Create a Research and Evaluation department (RAE) that would report directly to the superintendent or the superintendent's chief of staff. (See earlier recommendation.)
    - Hire a Research, Assessment, and Evaluation chief or director.
    - Move data and reporting staff from IT to the new RAE chief.
    - Ensure that the new department has a program evaluator and/or statistician. Fund this position by ensuring a percentage of grants and funds are dedicated to evaluation (usually 5-10 percent of external grants) and charge external agencies for data and research-related services (similar to FOIA charges for staff time).

- Identify a staff member to work collaboratively with the curriculum and instruction unit and the office of schools to support teachers and principals in analyzing, interpreting, and using data to inform instructional practice, and to provide data literacy training for teachers, principals and administrators through PLCs.
- Provide ongoing school board, superintendent, and executive team briefings on data and performance. (The research office should provide the data on the KPIs used to assess progress on the board's goals.)
- Regularly update data, reports, and evaluations (with positive and negative findings) on the district website and through other communications tools.

89. Organize the new research unit in the following way—

Exhibit 50. Recommended Organizational structure for New Research, Assessment, and Evaluation Unit

Organize staff functions around the following—

- Accountability, Reporting and Data Quality – this unit would be responsible for all data quality; federal, state, and district accountability (including state and federal reporting); priority and focus school identification (in conjunction with federal programs); cross department collaboration with IT, HR, and other data dependent groups in the district; and data literacy training for PLCs, teachers, and administrators.

- Research and Evaluation – this unit would be responsible for assisting and monitoring the district score card, managing external research requests, and managing all internal project and program evaluations. The unit would also develop, in collaboration with principals and other administrators, periodic reports on district progress in meeting SMART goals, and producing periodic reports for principals – in conjunction with the curriculum and instruction office – on the progress of students school by school. Reports should include a) changes in student achievement (e.g., math and reading performance), b) feedback on student strengths and weaknesses from diagnostic exams, and c) formative feedback on student mastery of specific content during the school year.

- Assessment – this unit would be responsible for the successful and secure administration of all federal, state, and local assessments—excluding those assessments conducted to

identify special needs. Responsibilities would include the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), all state mandated assessments, English proficiency assessments (with support from the ELL department), gifted screeners (with support from the talented and gifted department), district benchmark (content mastery) assessments, and district student progress (ability) assessments.

90. Charge the Research, Accountability, and Assessment department with working closely with the school performance unit on data reports and program evaluations to identify what is working and where weaknesses are in schools. The new unit should also be deployed to provide—

    - analyses on the performance of various student groups in the district,
    - predictive analyses that will allow the district to be proactive,
    - analyses that will inform executive decision making, such as evaluations of district and school level programs to demonstrate which programs are effective and meeting their objectives or identifying where improvements need to be made,
    - analysis of data at a granular enough level to help staff at the school level inform their instructional practices and serve as the basis of teacher examination of results in school-based PLCs,
    - accurate assessment data on all standardized district exams and coordinate testing across the district.

91. Charge the new research office with working with the human resources division on staff and teacher evaluations; conducting analysis that links classroom practices and effectiveness; working with teachers on SLOs; and utilizing classroom data for continuous improvement and effective PLCs.

Data, Data Governance, and Reports

92. Establish a data governance committee to draft policy and procedures around data collection, integrity, management, and use.

93. Work collectively with the SDSS team, instructional technology, research, assessment, principals and educators to identify specific data issues and develop a quality control system to hold everyone accountable for reporting accurate data. Provide full-time SDSS liaisons in every school if possible. Develop quality review procedures to be proactive about the integrity of the data, and ensure every SDSS is properly and routinely trained on data entry expectations.

94. Develop a districtwide Balanced Scorecard or dashboard system to assess overall school system progress. Ensure the results are transparent to the public. Include predictive measures of success (EWS) and lagging indicators.

95. Expand the district's data warehouse to include test scores, student interventions, suspensions, attendance, etc. Provide longitudinal data across years with differentiated access to educators and district staff.

96. Immediately correct data-quality issues in attendance, enrollment, etc. Create formal data-quality protocols to discover and correct data errors, including audit reports and daily, weekly, and monthly checks on school reviews for PIMS, attendance, discipline, and other data.

97. Consult a cross functional focus group of educators and district staff about reports they would find useful in a new data management system, as well as reports and information missing from the new data management system. Use this feedback to prioritize reports and information needed to support staff and stakeholders. Note that the strategic abandonment of some data systems or supplemental data systems may be required if current systems cannot meet stakeholder needs. Provide feedback to stakeholders on why data systems are ultimately chosen.

98. Standardize reporting processes on school improvement, teacher effectiveness, and student achievement. These reports are necessary to make informed decisions about programs, interventions, professional development, and classroom practices, and should be more uniform in terms of what the data are telling district leadership about progress.

99. When holding meetings to review data, ensure that multiple sources are used to draw conclusions about students' progress, including what teaching practices were used to produce gains (and what could be replicated). Also be sure to track and discuss early warning indicators for students at risk in order to be proactive in meeting student needs.

100. Cultivate a data-driven culture across all levels of the district by routinely reviewing data, using it for continuous improvement, and applying it to decision making. The culture around data use should be set by the executive staff and encouraged at all levels. Leadership has to be supportive of data teams by giving them time to meet and analyze data, devise action plans based on it, and communicate results. In addition, consider—

    - Working with parent groups to keep them apprised of improvements made to the district and their children's school.

    - Making data on district and school improvements readily available on the district website so community members can access it.

    - Providing links on the district's website to state data and reports on the district's performance.

Assessments

101. Develop a clear assessment framework based on the district's new curriculum to include guidelines on the purchasing or development of assessments to inform student progress, measure changes in student ability, predict student performance on state and national assessments, identify individual student's strengths and weaknesses (diagnostic exams), and

assess content mastery (benchmark exams). This assessment plan should articulate the purpose and appropriate use of all assessments. As part of the assessment planning process—

- Review ALL assessments for alignment to district standards and purpose, and consider the strategic abandonment of some assessments.
- Ensure the district has benchmark assessments at all grades to monitor student progress and appropriate diagnostic assessments to identify individual strengths and weaknesses.

102. Curtail the use of individual school assessments being used as substitutes for state and district tests.

103. Maintain the optional content-based assessments for teacher use, but ensure they are aligned to the curriculum and standards.

104. Develop a formal test security and monitoring plan for all state assessments, specifying that every central office staff member should be available for test monitoring when needed. Ensure monitors receive appropriate training on testing protocols and monitoring expectations.

105. Correct fragmented testing across the district by consolidating test administration from various departments into one office (ESL, Gifted, etc.) and ensuring the assessment department is adequately staffed to coordinate all central office assessments. This office should ensure that every district staff member is trained on testing protocols and monitoring expectations, and is readily available for test monitoring during test administration.

106. Consider the following sequence of steps to address the district's technological infrastructure—

- In the short term, address test scanning and bubble sheet technology by investing in updated OCR scanning and software
- During the 2017-18 school year, plan to transition to online assessment platforms, ensuring the district develops a plan to update school based technology to transition all assessments to online platforms.
- Ensure the IT department is working with each school to identify hardware and software needs to transition to online assessment platforms.

107. Contract for a review of the psychometric characteristics of assessments developed within the district if they are proposed for use in the teacher evaluation system or other high stakes decisions.

Professional Development

108. Name a cross functional team to determine what type of training would be most useful in building staff capacity to interpret and use data effectively. Ask teachers what professional development they most need to help deepen their conceptual understanding of content

standards, all assessments, instructional practices, and culturally responsive practices to meet the needs of students. Fold the results of this inquiry into ongoing district professional development programming.

109. Provide data support and technical assistance to help classroom teachers understand and use all data pertaining to their students (e.g., attendance, retention, behavioral, special education, classroom assessments, diagnostic assessments, teacher's observation data of students, etc.), determine the academic needs of their students, and guide classroom instruction.

110. Provide professional development on test-item writing to personnel in the district who are creating the district's curriculum-based assessments, and then contract out the psychometric work to a research bureau to get necessary feedback on how effective the test questions are for diagnostic purposes and end-of-year assessment. Purchasing predictive assessments has the advantage of being built with valid and statistically reliable test items that are aligned to the state standards, but it comes at a large cost to the district. Consider this option if cost is not? an issue in test procurement.

Evaluations

111. Create a calendar of regularly-scheduled program evaluations to assess the effectiveness of major district initiatives. Report the results publicly.

Finance and Operations Recommendations

Organization and Staffing

112. Consider reorganizing the financial, operational, and business service functions of the district, with the chiefs of human resources, communications, information, operations, and finances reporting directly to the superintendent. The following charts are suggestions only and could be implemented in a number of differing ways at the discretion of the superintendent. Recommended functional organizations of these departments would be the following—

Exhibit 51. Recommended Organizational Structure of Human Resources

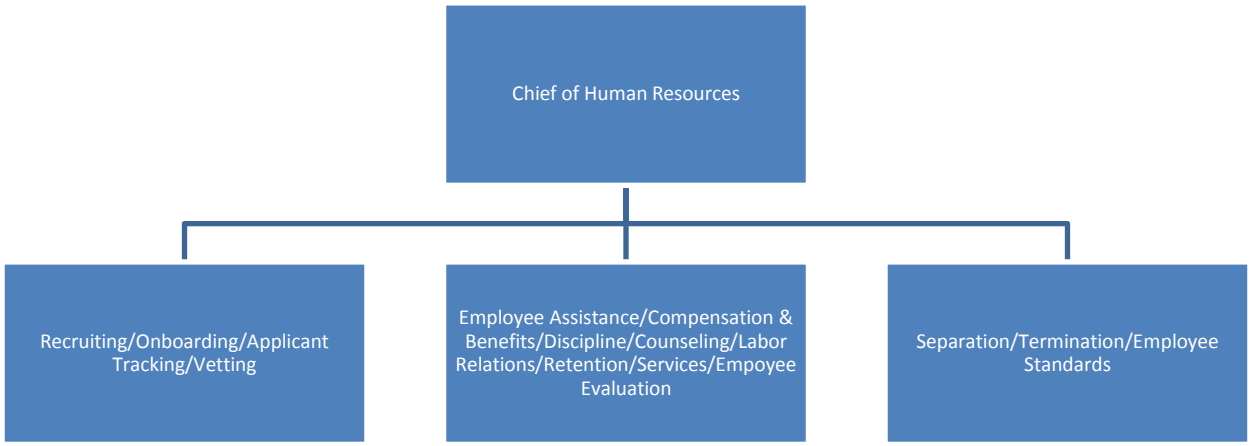


Exhibit 52. Recommended Organization of IT Office

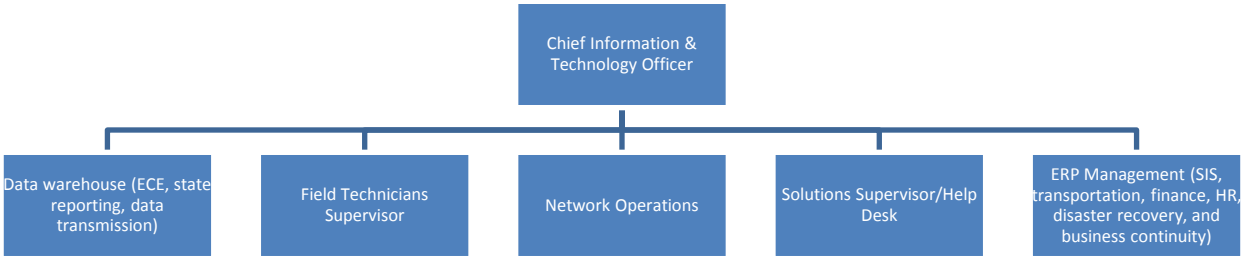


Exhibit 53. Recommended Organization of Communications Office

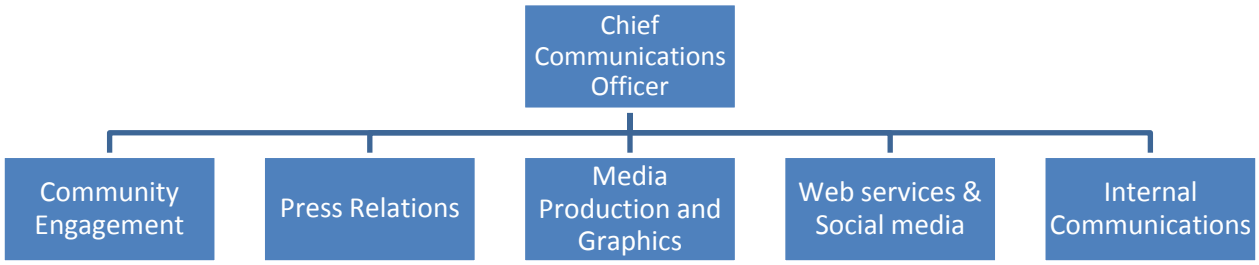


Exhibit 54. Recommended Organization of Finance Office

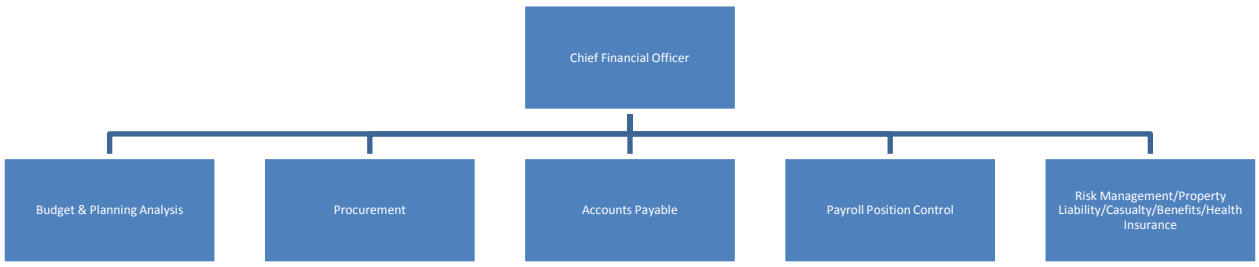
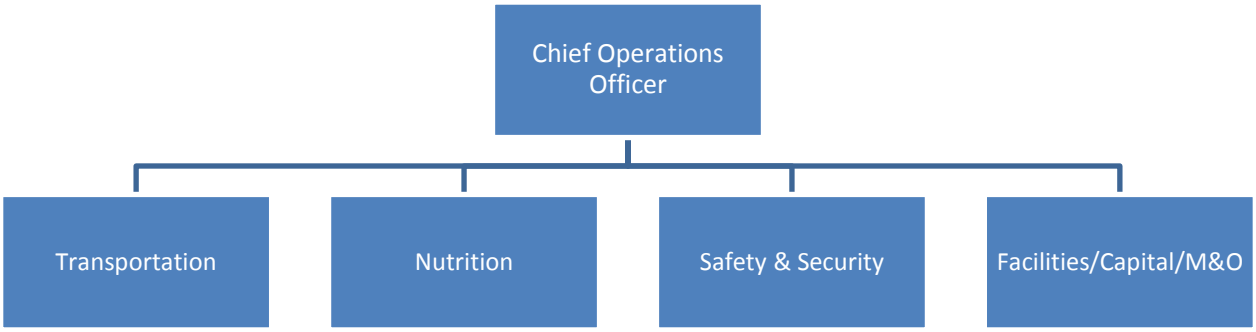


Exhibit 55. Recommended Organization of Operations Office



113. Recruit and hire a Chief Financial Officer (CFO) with the appropriate experience and skill set. This position should be a direct report to the superintendent and serve as the primary financial advisor and manager of the district. The CFO's direct reports should include the director of finance (financial accounting and reporting, accounts payable, and payroll) and the budget director (see below).

114. Consider recruiting and hiring a budget director with the appropriate experience and skill set. This position should be a direct report to the CFO and serve as the primary budget development and budget control manager in the district. The budget director's direct reports should include a manager of budget development (including revenue forecasting and expenditure projections) and an administrator budget management and operations (including positon control).

115. Consolidate resources of core functions in order to create a critical mass of role-related assets, which can be focused around strategic directions. These include –

    a. Information Technology Management
    b. Risk Management
    c. Facilities Management
    d. Procurement Management.
    e. Safety

116. Review the resources devoted to core functions to ensure they are right sized and staffed with leadership that possesses the appropriate experience and skill sets for these assignments.

117. Communicate the organizational structure of the district's financial and operations functions through organization charts that reflect actual reporting relationships and unambiguous position titles.

118. Establish a culture of strategic planning and develop enterprise-wide governance structures to define priorities and oversee the execution of action plans for each major functional area. This strategic planning should include –

    a. A Facilities Master Plan that addresses the district's underutilized schools, recognizes the deferred maintenance backlog through a current Facilities Conditions Index, and establishes instructional classroom standards.

b. A Technology Plan that provides for the integration of technology into instructional delivery systems, defines the enterprise-wide technology architecture, contains standards and guidelines for software and hardware acquisition, and provides a timeline for critical systems renewal.

c. An enterprise-wide risk assessment that identifies and measures risk and develops strategies to mitigate, minimize, and manage risk.

119. Create annual business plans for individual departments and units with clearly defined goals and objectives (linked to the district's Strategic Plan), as well as timelines and defined accountabilities.

120. Institute the use of analytical business tools to test assumptions, explore alternatives, validate choices, and guide decision making, including –

a. Return on investment
b. Total cost of ownership
c. Frequency and correlation analysis
d. Scenario analysis

Functions

121. Conduct a comprehensive review of the district's internal controls and implement changes to safeguard assets; ensure compliance with laws, policies, and plans; deter and detect errors, fraud, and theft; and ensure the ability to produce accurate and reliable management reporting. Areas for review should include –

a. Accounts payable structure, systems, and processes
b. Procurement organization, policies, methods, procedures, and practices
c. Payroll system's policies, rules, processes, and procedures
d. Budget development's policies, rules, processes, and procedures
e. Human Resources policies, rules, processes, and procedures

122. Improve the quality of budget development and interim financial reporting to the superintendent and the school board, including –

a. Possible modification of the district's budget cycle and annual financial reporting of the fiscal year to resemble the actual school-year business cycle by adopting a July 1st to June 30th fiscal year.

b. Increase the involvement and participation of the board and superintendent, cabinet-level staff, department heads, and school-based managers in the establishment of budgetary priorities, the vetting of competing new initiatives or augmentation of existing programs, and the evaluation of continuing instructional and support programs.

c. Adjust the calculation and presentation of school-based budgets to eliminate the perceptions of "donor" and "receiver" schools.

d. Improve the accuracy of annual budgets by considering revenue and expenditure trends and incorporating an allowance for unfilled positions.

e. Enhance the value of interim reports by providing analyses of major revenue and expenditure accounts comparing the adopted budgets to projected actual results.

f. Discontinue the practice of predicting the district's "insolvency" without a reasonable expectation of such an outcome.

g. Make periodic adjustments to the adopted budget to reflect updated forecasts of revenue and expenditures.

h. Develop strategies for the prudent spending down of the general fund and the food service program throughout the year to avoid excessive year-end fund balances.

123. Make concerted efforts in the areas of finance and operations to improve internal and external communications and customer relations with school–based clients.

Information Technology

124. Enhance the district's Information Technology (IT) capabilities, including –

a. Updating or replacing the outdated and unsupported ERP system
b. Installing an automated time and attendance system
c. Incorporating a job-cost system in the maintenance unit

125. Re-evaluate the utility of E-school Plus and EdInsight to ensure the systems are providing the necessary information for children, parents, teachers, schools, and the district. It was reported that these systems were not the right fit for the school system.

126. Shift the focus of the IT department away from an emphasis on teacher evaluation to the more traditional functions of an IT unit. Technology decisions and priorities need to be made jointly with cross-functional teams and driven by student, teacher/classroom, and principal/school needs.

Transportation

127. Analyze the feasibility and economics of bringing all transportation services in-house and/or substantially reducing the number of bus contractors.

128. Centralize the determination of school bell schedules to allow for multi-tiered school bus scheduling.

129. Consider expanding the use of bus aides/monitors on school buses, more explicit rules for student drop-offs, and safe houses for walk zones. Collaborate with neighborhood police programs to ensure that there are heavier patrols during times when students are walking to and from schools.

Procurement

130. Automate the low-value purchase order process through the ERP and Procurement Card programs, so that the purchasing department can focus strategically on generating savings, internal controls, and performance evaluations of vendors.

Facilities

131. Expand the custodial substitute pool to provide better coverage to schools for absent employees.

132. Consider conducting a custodial compensation study to establish salaries based on duties and responsibilities rather than the grade-level of school sites.

Safety and Security

133. Mandate active shooter training and drills at all district locations.

134. Review the assignment of school-based security personnel based on incident analysis rather than by grade-level.

135. Create a uniform system for controlling and documenting school visitors.

SYNOPSIS AND DISCUSSION

The Pittsburgh Public Schools have pursued a number of aggressive, high profile reforms, particularly in teacher effectiveness, over the last decade or so. A great deal has been learned from this work, not only in Pittsburgh but nationally. At the same time, the school district now finds itself in a place where it is achieving limited results from the work, and student outcomes are little better off than what they were before the reforms.

In fact, analysis of student achievement trends shows little to no improvements since 2007. Although some scores went up and others went down over the period, achievement gaps are about the same—if not wider—than they were when the work started.

The point of underscoring this unfortunate fact is not to point fingers, lay blame, or characterize any of the people involved or the work conducted. But now is the time for asking hard questions about why the reforms did not produce better results, and what it teaches us about how the district might now move forward more productively.

The lesson to be learned from the Pittsburgh reforms is similar to the lessons of reform efforts implemented in other major cities: human capital reform without an instructional focus only gets a district so far in improving student achievement. What appears to have happened here in Pittsburgh was that the district pursued the human capital side of the work, but took its eye off of instructional improvements until just the last couple of years. Ultimately, the human capital side of the work in Pittsburgh was watered down to a point where it is now unable to discern which teachers are most effective and which ones are the least.

As a result, the district is now left with an instructional system that doesn't work properly and a human capital system that can't do what it was designed to do. Paired with the district's lack of research, data, and evaluation capacity to determine what works and what doesn't, this leaves the school system with no clear direction or strategy for improving student achievement. The instructional tools that the system has developed do not provide ample guidance to teachers and other school-based staff about what to teach and at what level of rigor. Instead, the district has, for all intents and purposes, delegated responsibility for improving student outcomes to school-based staff without providing them with the guidance or support they need—and no mechanism for improving the capacity of its people to produce better results.

It also appears that the district has considerable work to do in the area of student attendance and discipline. The comparative data that the Council of the Great City Schools gathered as part of this project indicates that absenteeism is unusually high in Pittsburgh, and suspension rates are also high relative to other city school systems. Moreover, it was clear that instructional opportunities in the district, like access to Advanced Placement courses, were uneven from school to school.

At this point, the district's organizational structure has become warped and misaligned as a result of all the reforms, and there is a marked lack of staff collaboration. The district also lacks some key staff positions like a chief financial officer and a budget director. Most of these functions fall under the chief operating officer, but the span of such responsibilities is too much for any one

person, no matter how talented. A number of other operating systems and business services in the school district work reasonably well, but there is need to revisit everything because of their interconnection.

In addition, the district, perhaps to its credit, has been very conservative with taxpayer dollars. However, this extreme conservatism has meant that the district may be underutilizing the resources it has at its disposal to support its schools and improve instructional programming.

The Council, which was asked to conduct this review by the new superintendent and school board, made an extensive series of recommendations based on what the organization has learned over many years about why and how some urban school systems improve and others don't. The proposals begin with goal-setting and strategy development, proceed through organizational restructuring, and include both instructional and operational recommendations. Most critically, the proposals focus on leadership and what is now required of it, and emphasize strengthening the district's instructional systems, capacity-building functions, and data operations to help it determine what works. The report also suggests how reforms might be paid for, at least in part.

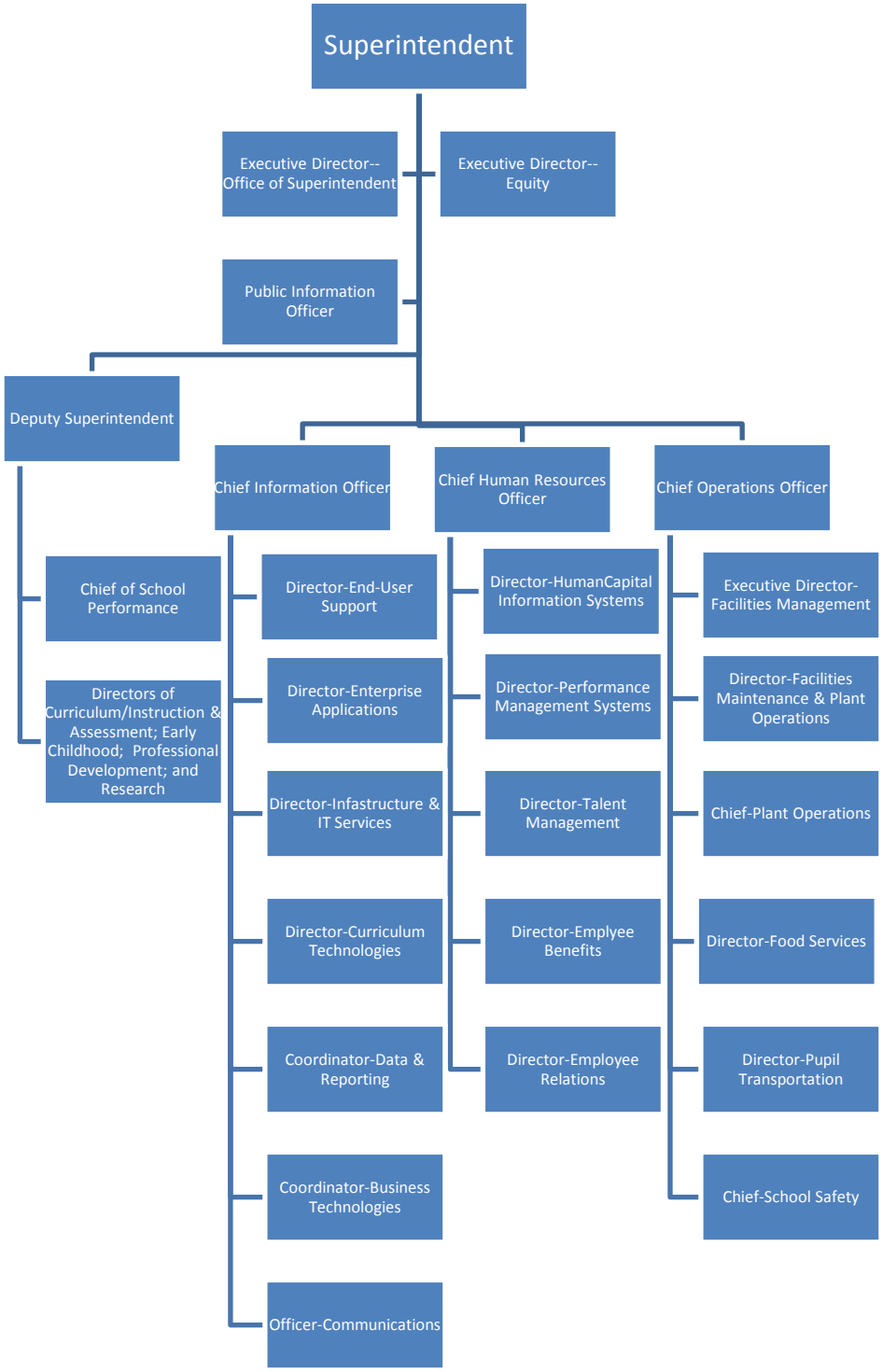
The Pittsburgh Public Schools has the advantage of a talented staff and teacher workforce that share a commitment to improving the system on behalf of students. It also has a rare opportunity to make substantial progress under the leadership of a new and talented superintendent and a freshly elected school board. Not every urban school system in need of improvement across the country gets this chance.

For the public's part, it is important to know that it has handed its new school superintendent and school board a momentous task. It is going to take some time to get things back on track. The public needs to be patient as leadership and schools get started on the work they need to do. At the same time, the district will need to be extra transparent, and perhaps even downright aggressive, in its outreach and communications with the public so it knows what the district is doing and why.

There is a lot of work to be done, but there is no reason to believe that the Pittsburgh Public Schools cannot rebound and make substantial improvements over the next several years. In fact, there is no reason why it can't be the highest achieving urban school district in the nation. It has the talent, the will, and the determination. The Council of the Great City Schools stands ready to help the district at every turn as it works to become the school system that its community—and children—need.

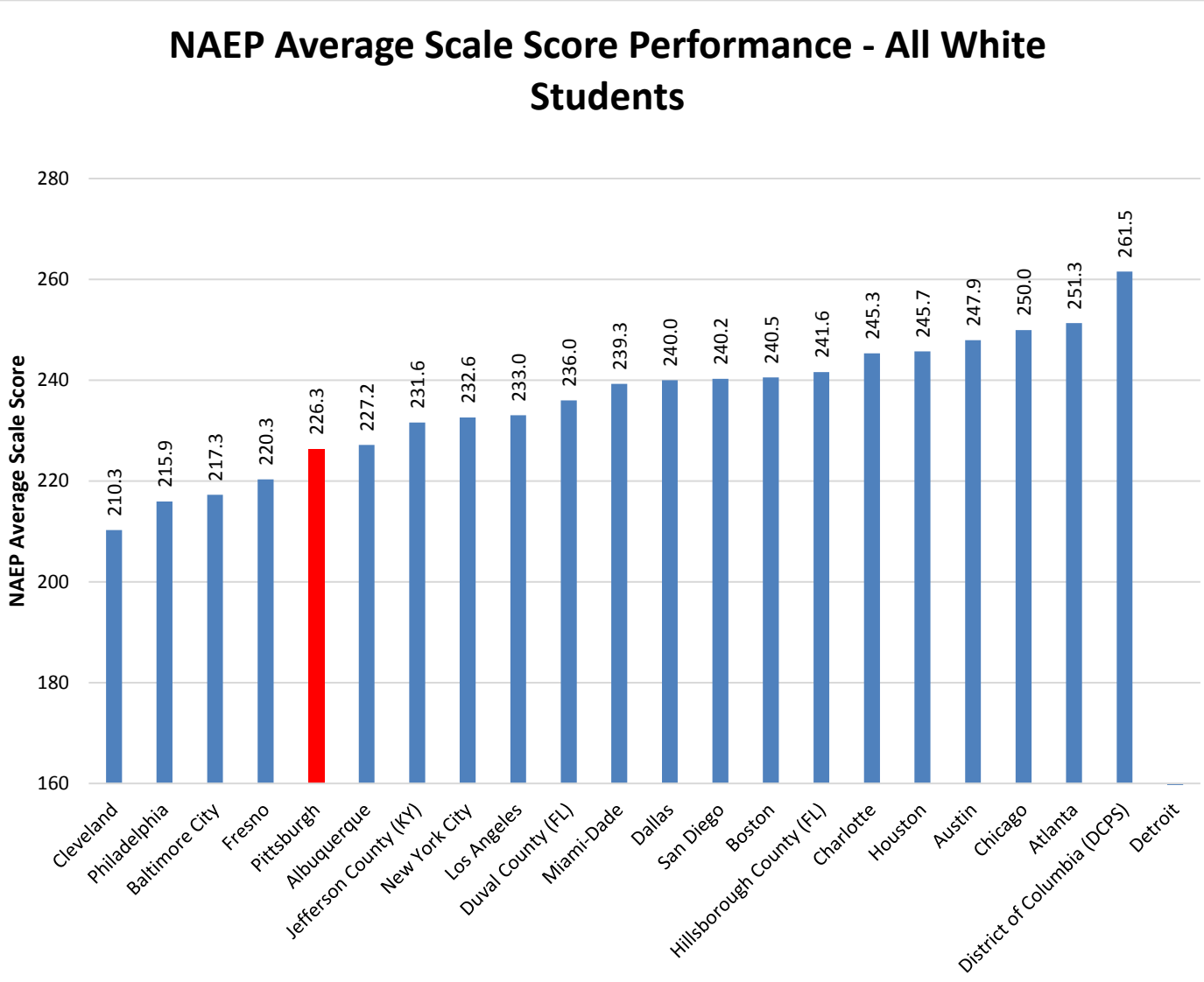
APPENDIX A. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Exhibit A-1. Organizational Structure of the Pittsburgh Public Schools



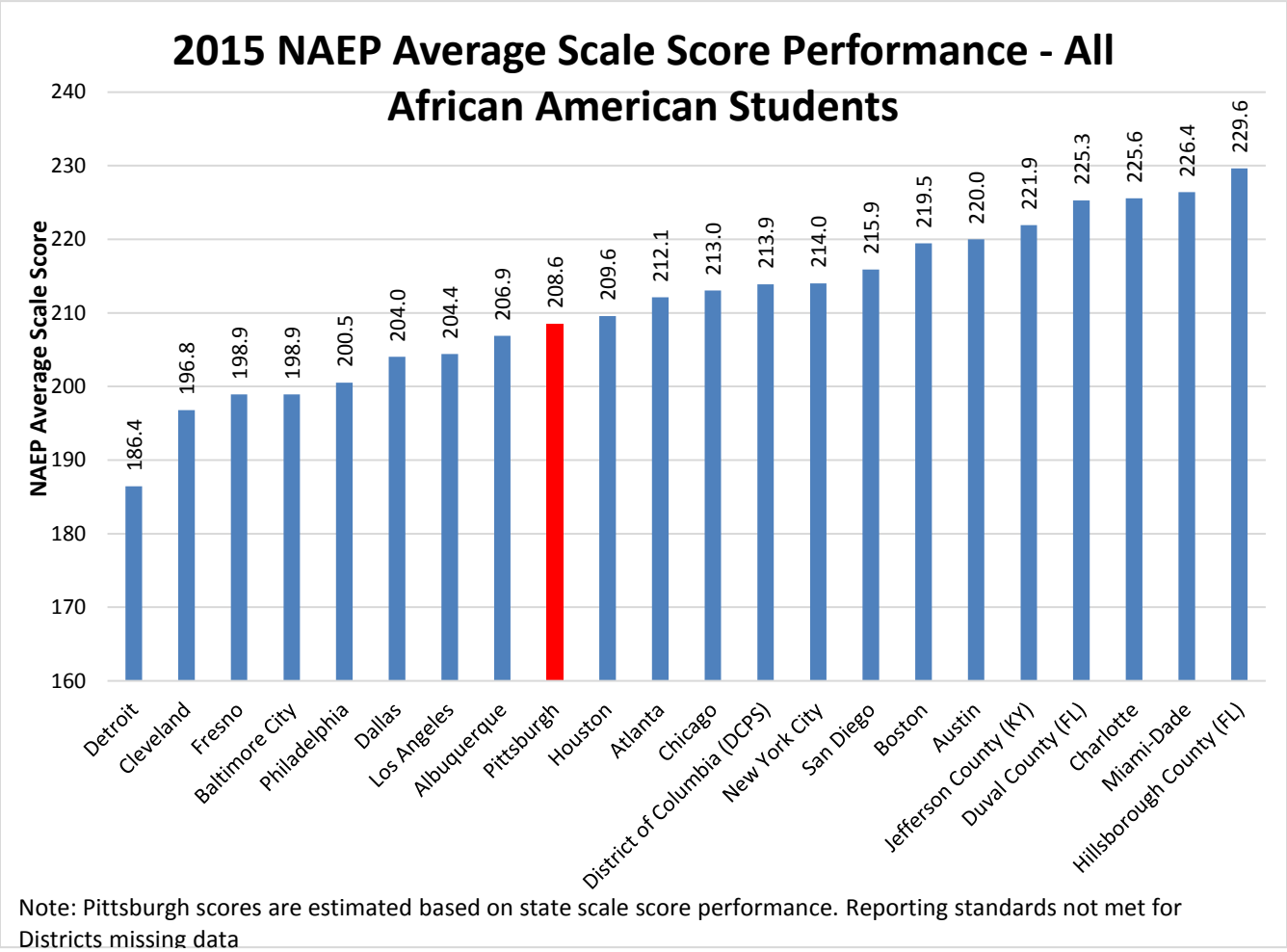
APPENDIX B. ANALYSIS OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT—NAEP-EQUATED PSSA DATA

Exhibit B-1. Comparison of Pittsburgh's White Fourth Graders in Reading with White Students in Other Major Cities



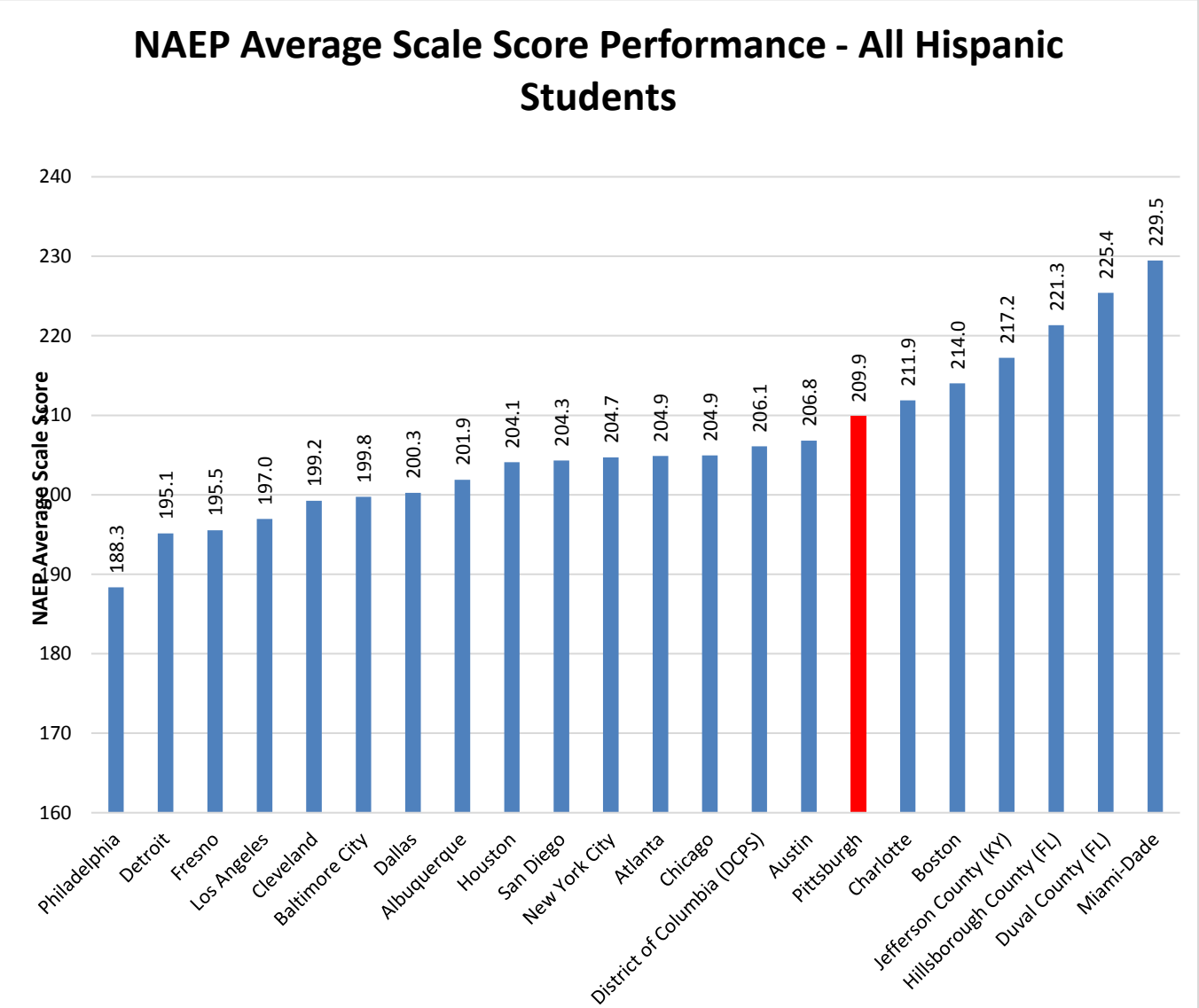
Note: Pittsburgh scores are estimated based on state scale score performance. Reporting standards not met for Districts missing data

Exhibit B-2. Comparison of Pittsburgh's African American Fourth Graders in Reading with African American Students in Other Major Cities



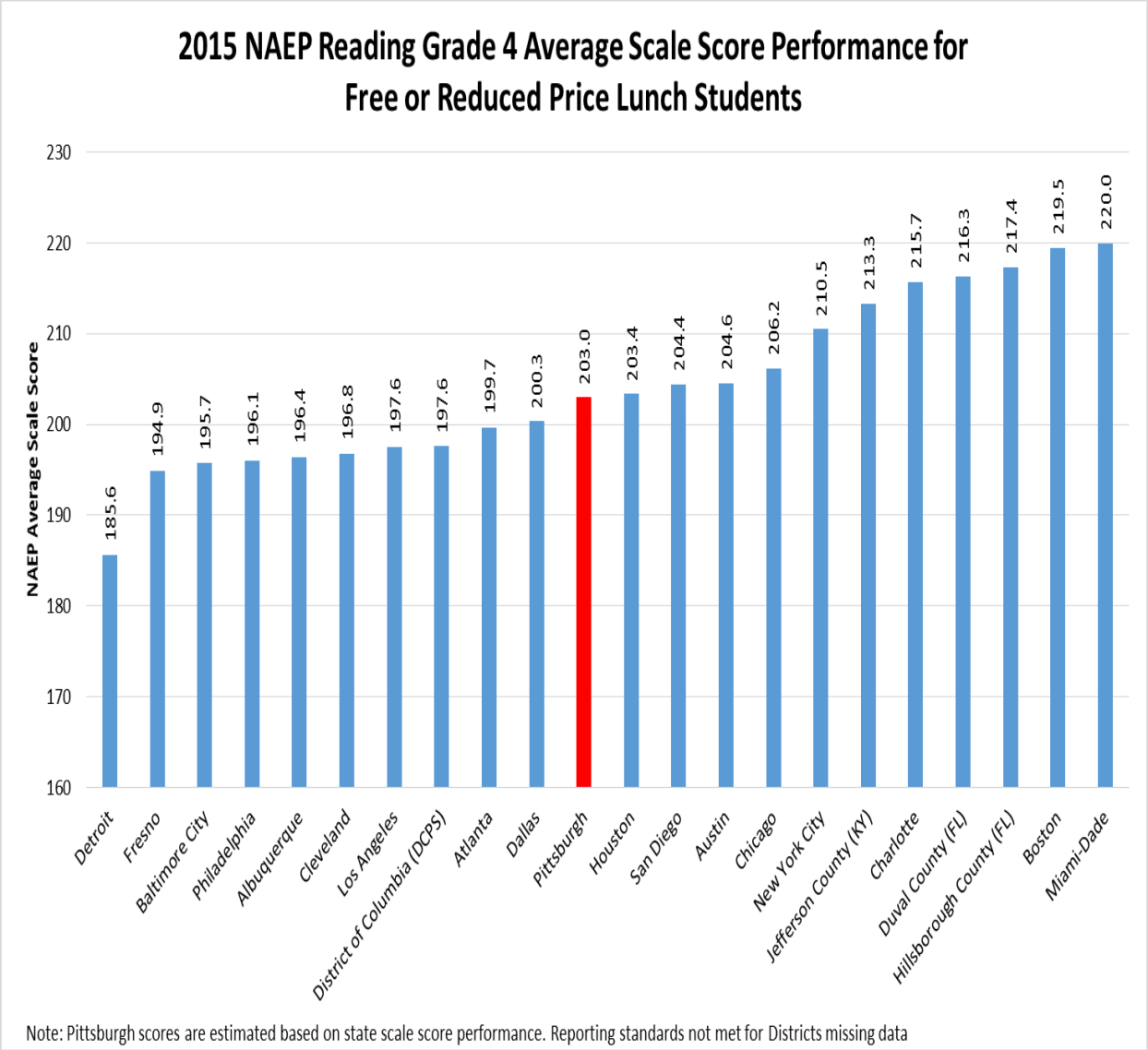
Note: Pittsburgh scores are estimated based on state scale score performance. Reporting standards not met for Districts missing data

Exhibit B-3. Comparison of Pittsburgh's Hispanic Fourth Graders in Reading with Hispanic Students in Other Major Cities



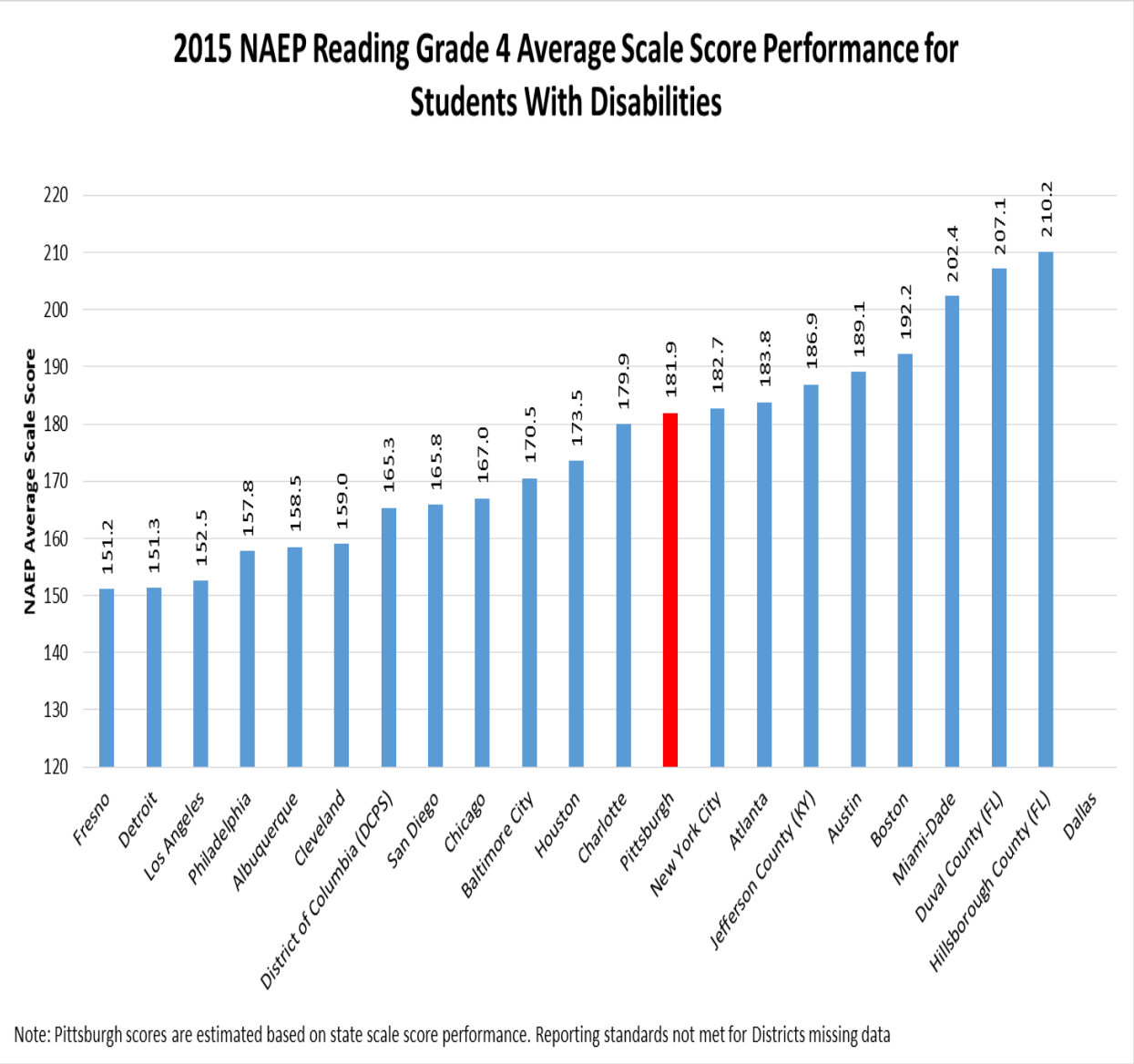
Note: Pittsburgh scores are estimated based on state scale score performance. Reporting standards not met for Districts missing data.

Exhibit B-4. Comparison of Pittsburgh's Fourth Graders Eligible for Free or Reduced Price Lunch in Reading with Poor Students in Other Major Cities



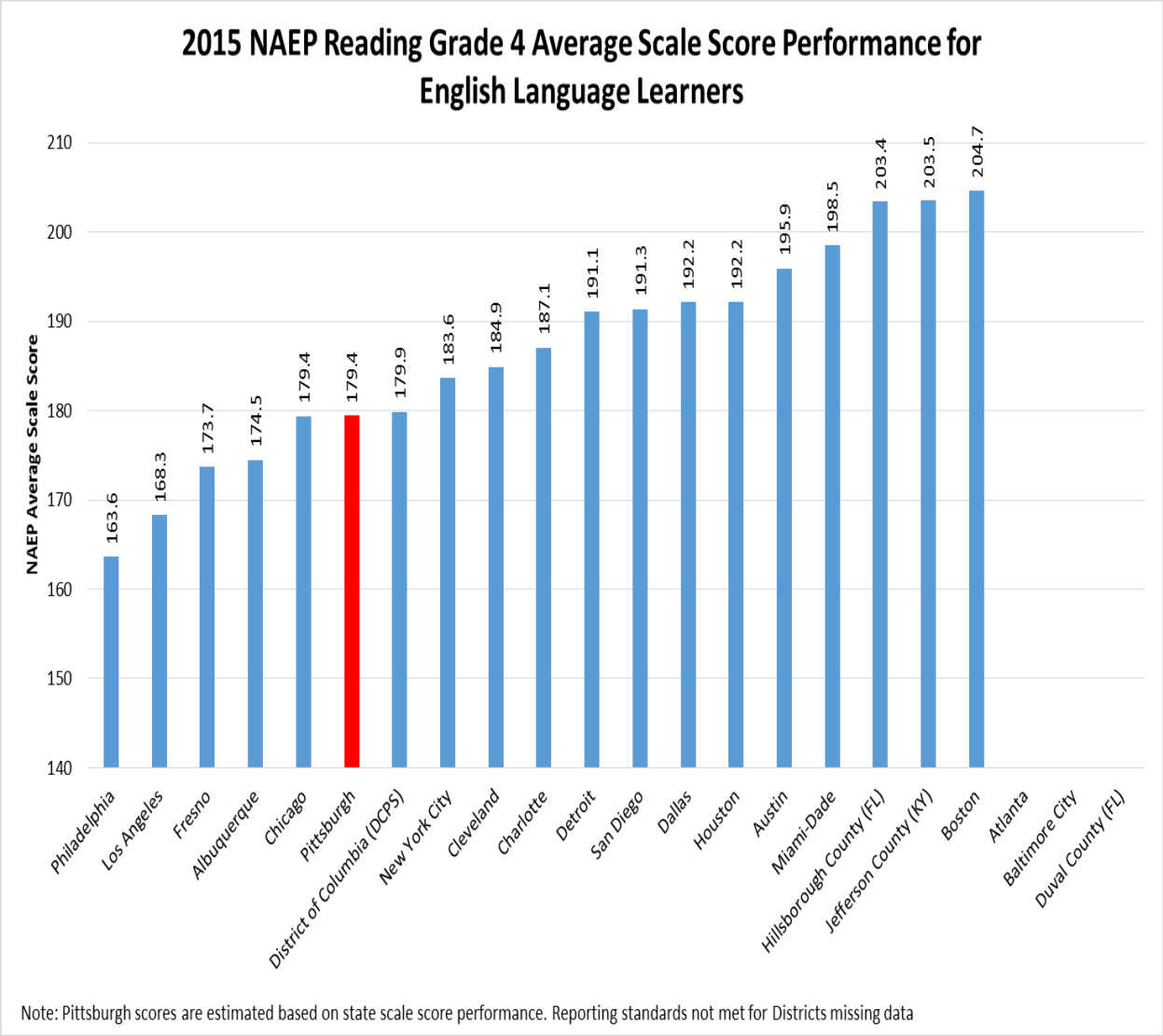
Note: Pittsburgh scores are estimated based on state scale score performance. Reporting standards not met for Districts missing data

Exhibit B-5. Comparison of Pittsburgh's Fourth Graders with Disabilities in Reading with Students with Disabilities in Other Major Cities



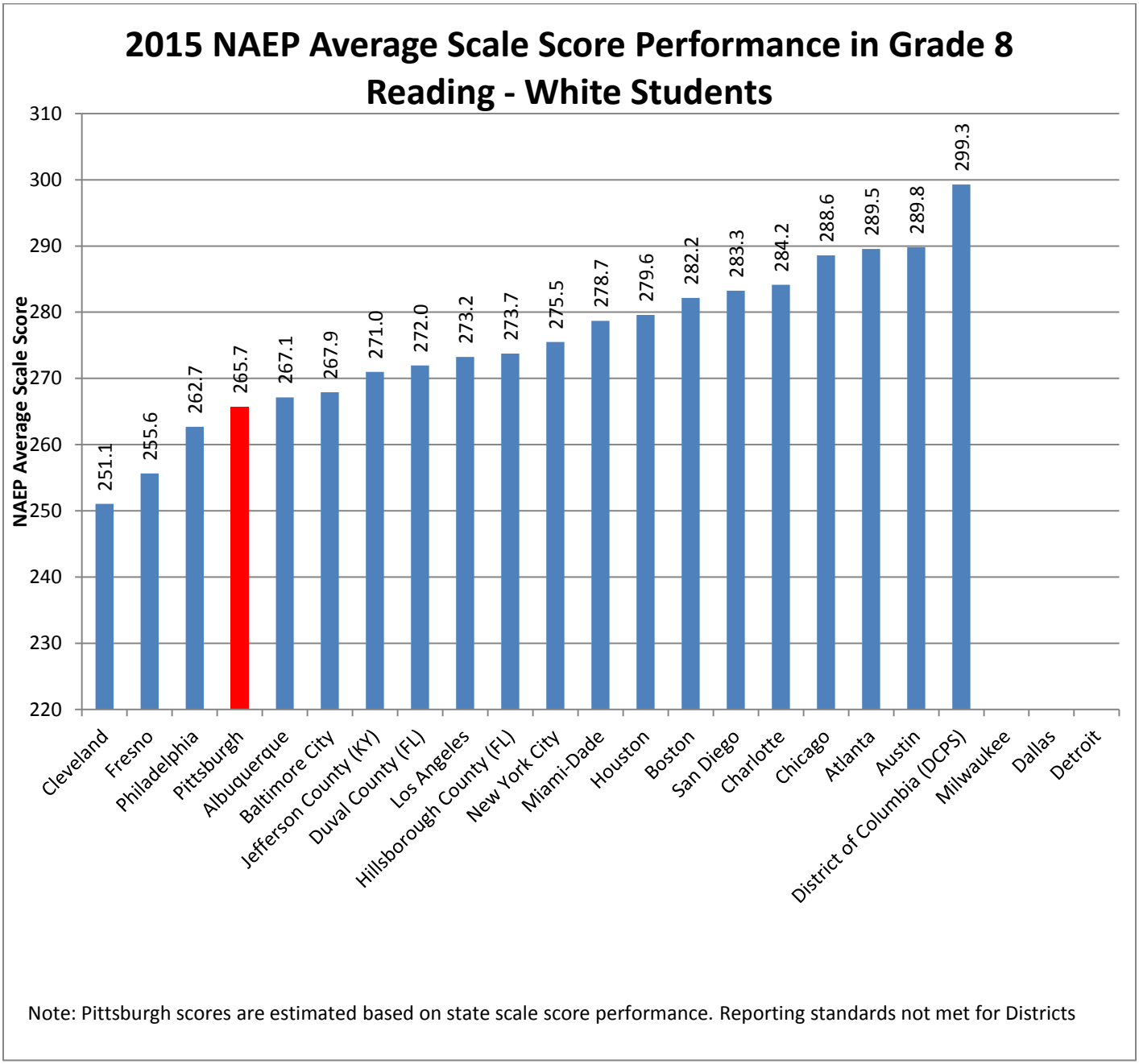
Note: Pittsburgh scores are estimated based on state scale score performance. Reporting standards not met for Districts missing data

Exhibit B-6. Comparison of Pittsburgh's ELL Fourth Graders in Reading with ELLs in Other Major Cities



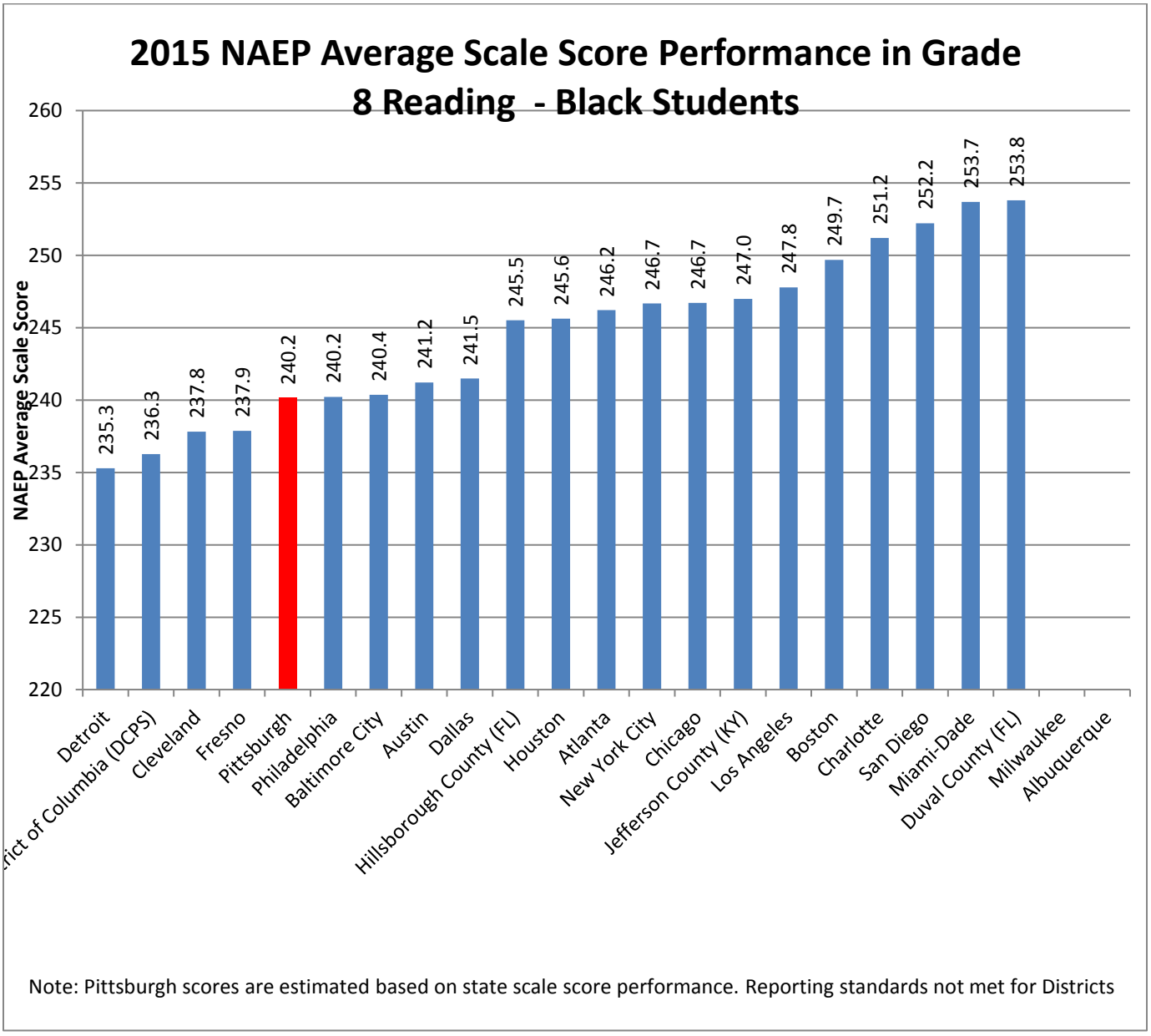
Note: Pittsburgh scores are estimated based on state scale score performance. Reporting standards not met for Districts missing data

Exhibit B-7. Comparison of Pittsburgh's White Eighth Graders in Reading with White Students in Other Major Cities



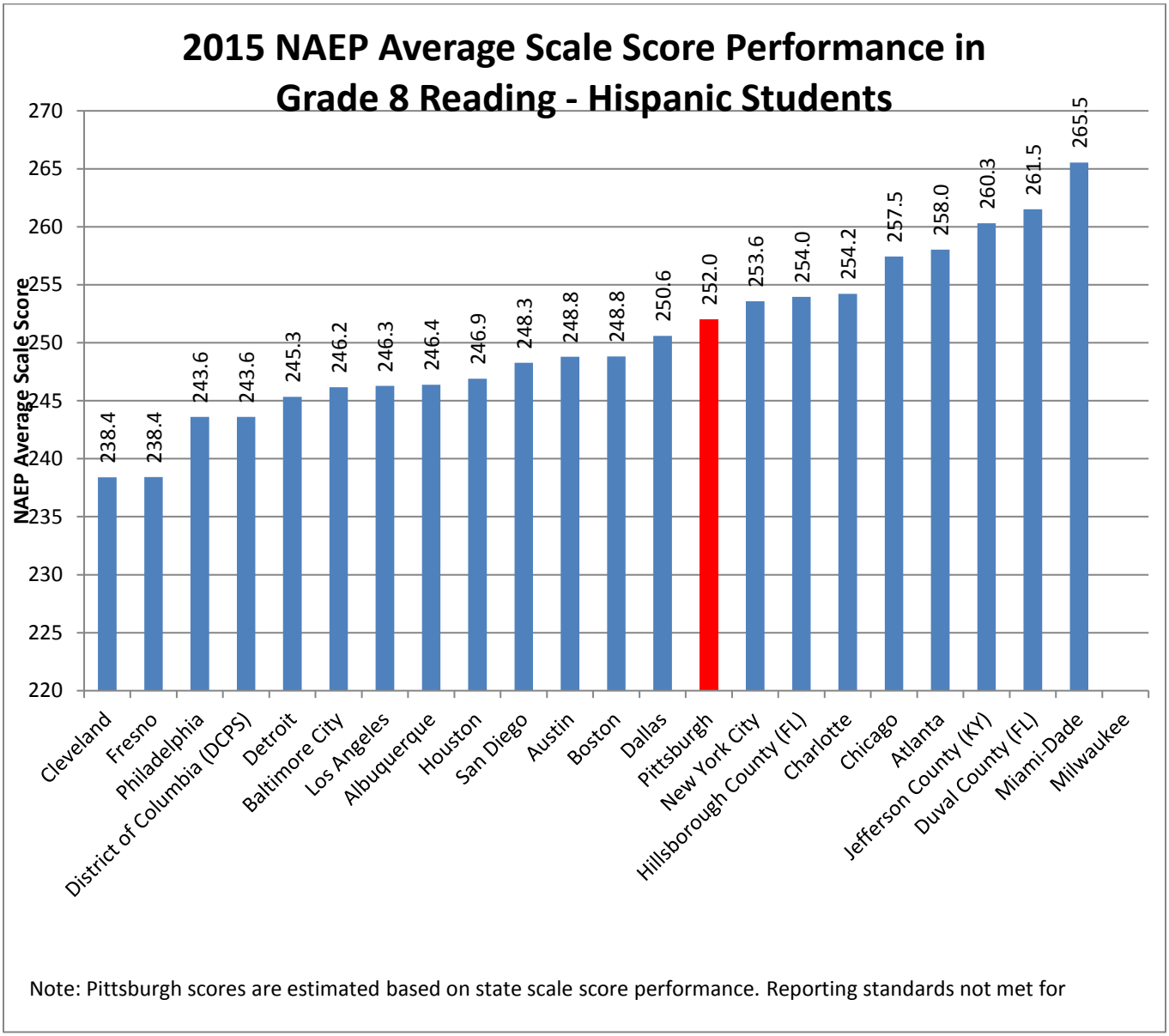
Note: Pittsburgh scores are estimated based on state scale score performance. Reporting standards not met for Districts

Exhibit B-8. Comparison of Pittsburgh's African American Eighth Graders in Reading with African American Students in Other Major Cities



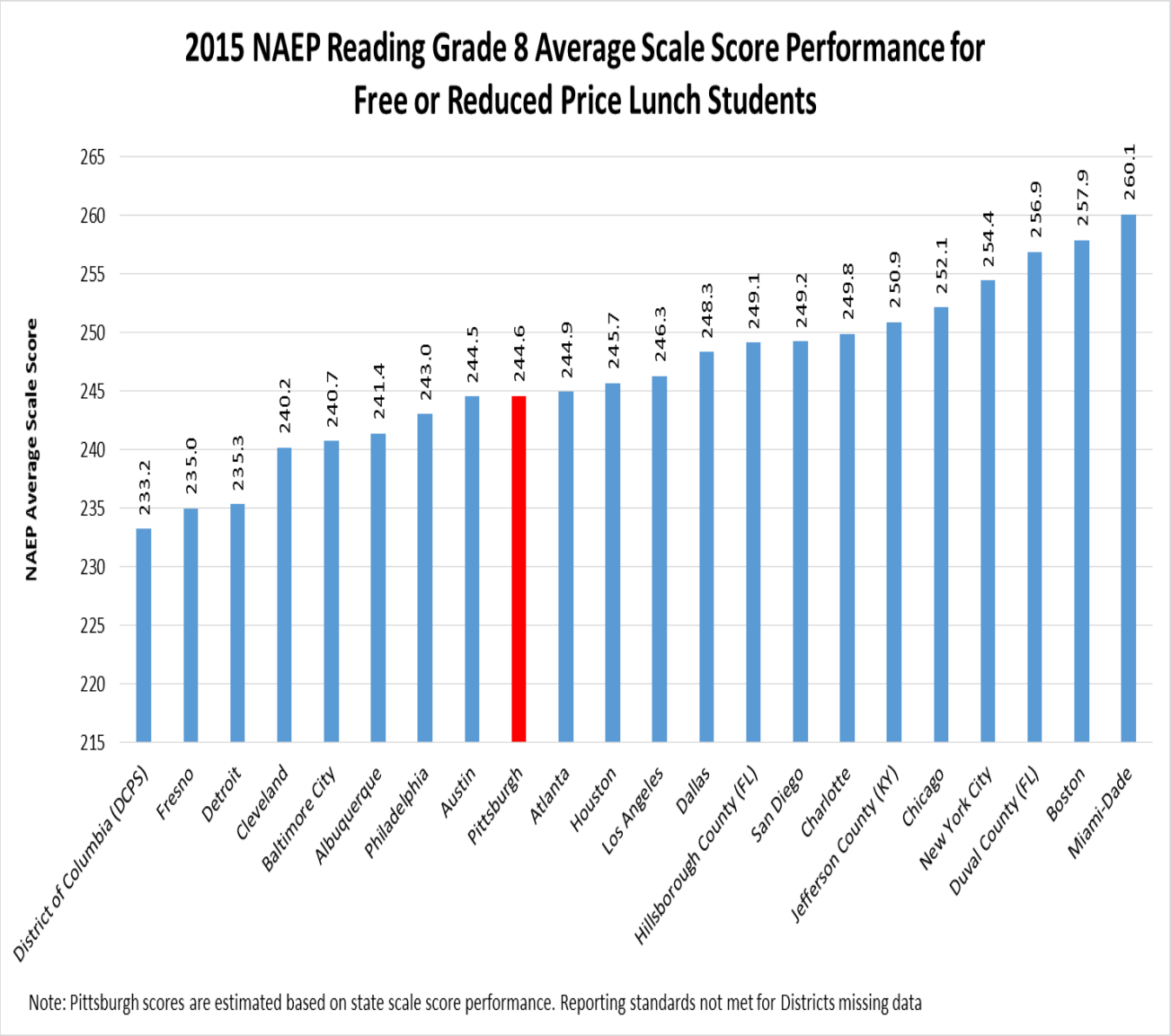
Note: Pittsburgh scores are estimated based on state scale score performance. Reporting standards not met for Districts

Exhibit B-9. Comparison of Pittsburgh's Hispanic Eighth Graders in Reading with Hispanic Students in Other Major Cities



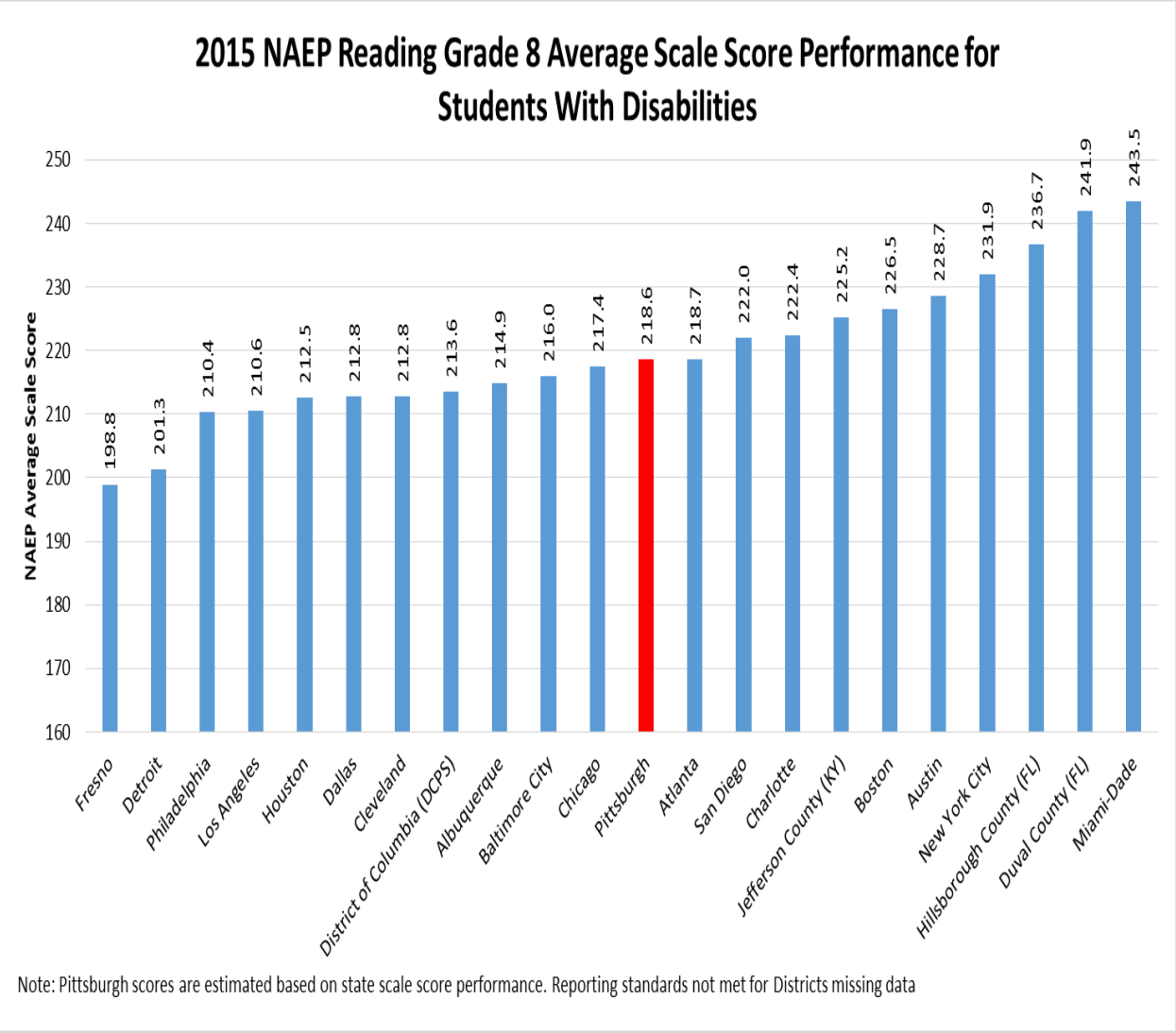
Note: Pittsburgh scores are estimated based on state scale score performance. Reporting standards not met for

Exhibit B-10. Comparison of Pittsburgh's Eighth Graders Eligible for a Free or Reduced Price Lunch in Reading with Poor Students in Other Major Cities



Note: Pittsburgh scores are estimated based on state scale score performance. Reporting standards not met for Districts missing data

Exhibit B-11. Comparison of Pittsburgh's Eighth Graders with Disabilities in Reading with Students with Disabilities in Other Major Cities



Note: Pittsburgh scores are estimated based on state scale score performance. Reporting standards not met for Districts missing data

Exhibit B-12. Comparison of Pittsburgh's ELL Eighth Graders in Reading with ELLs in Other Major Cities

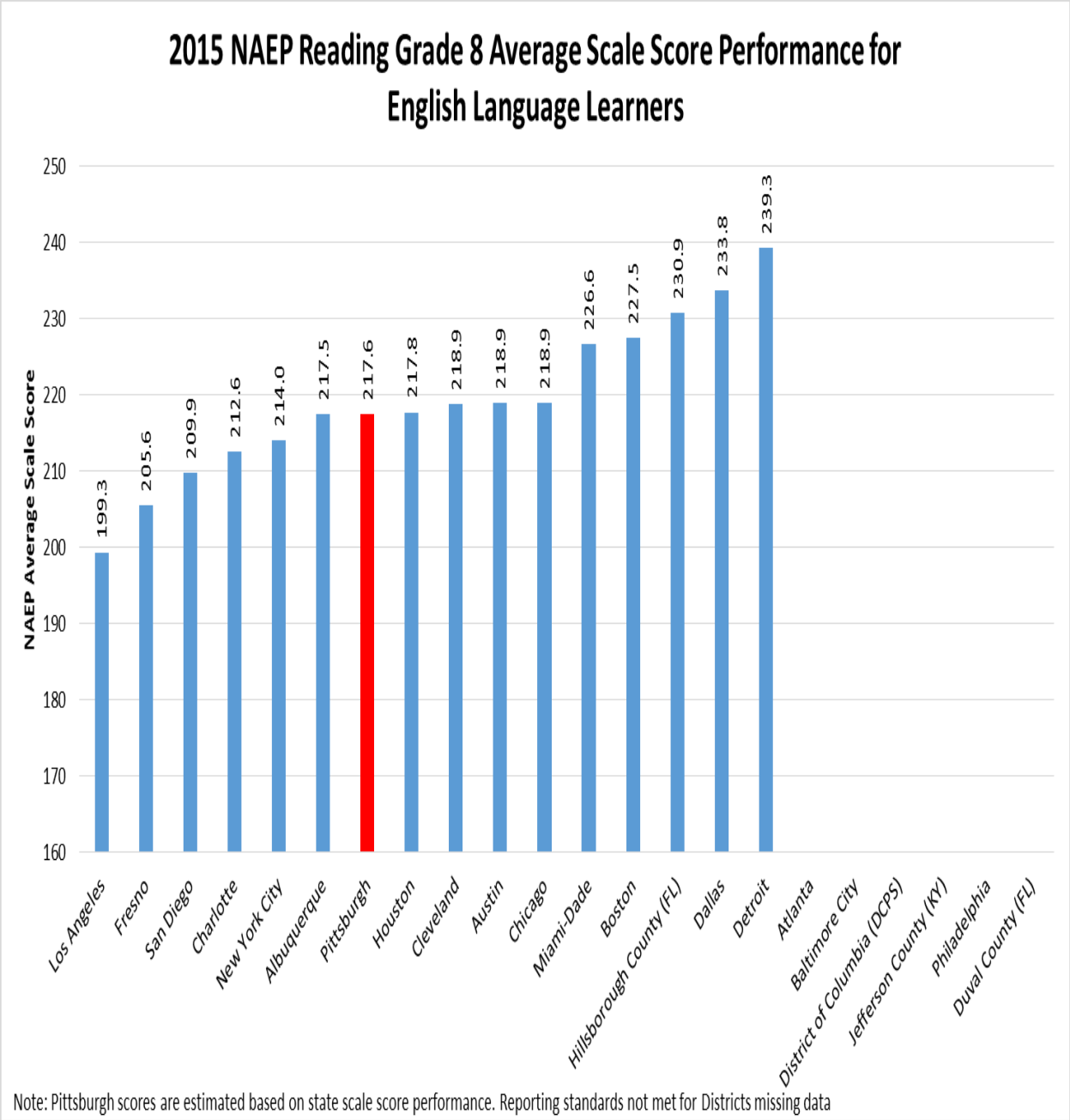
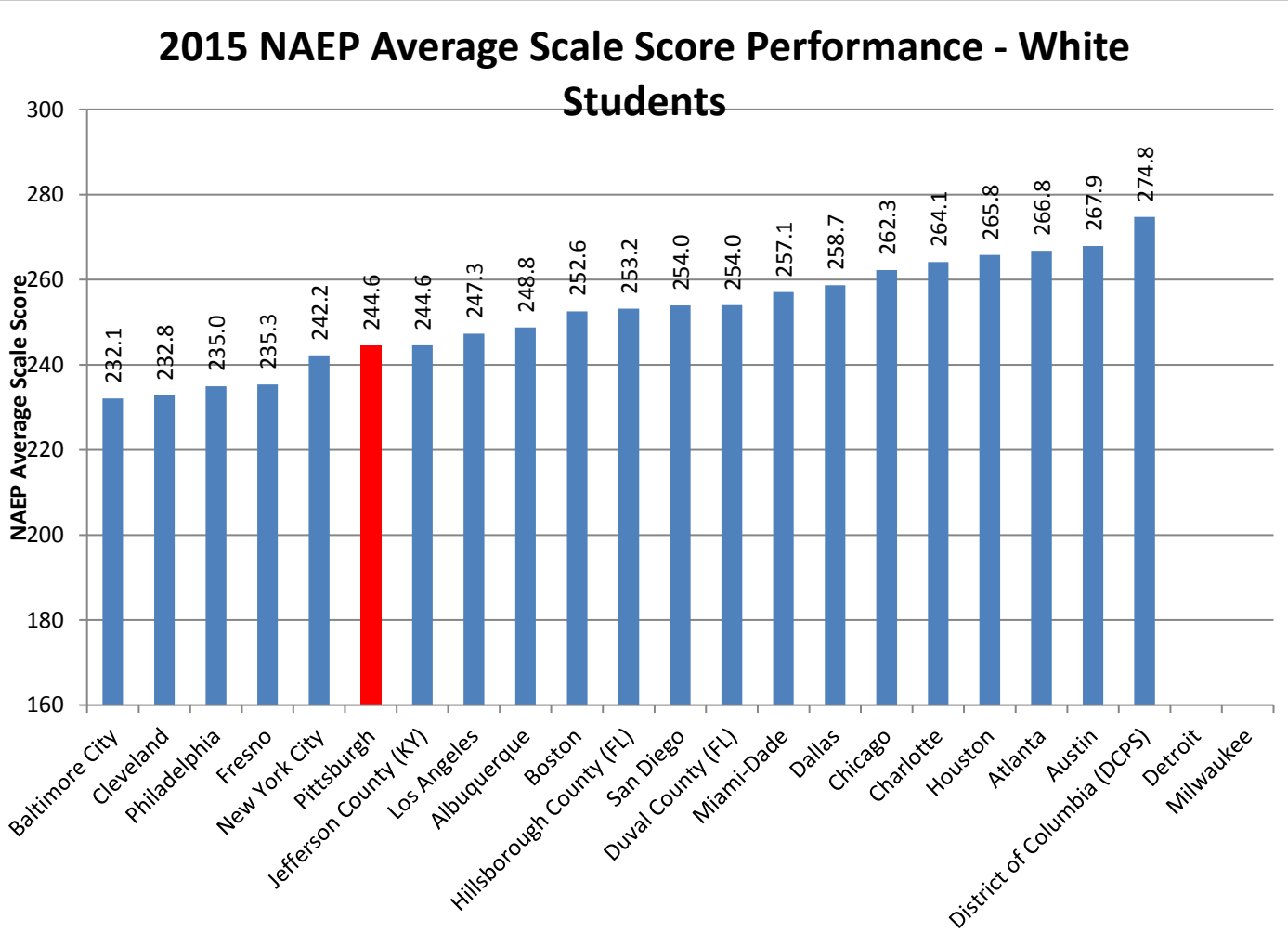
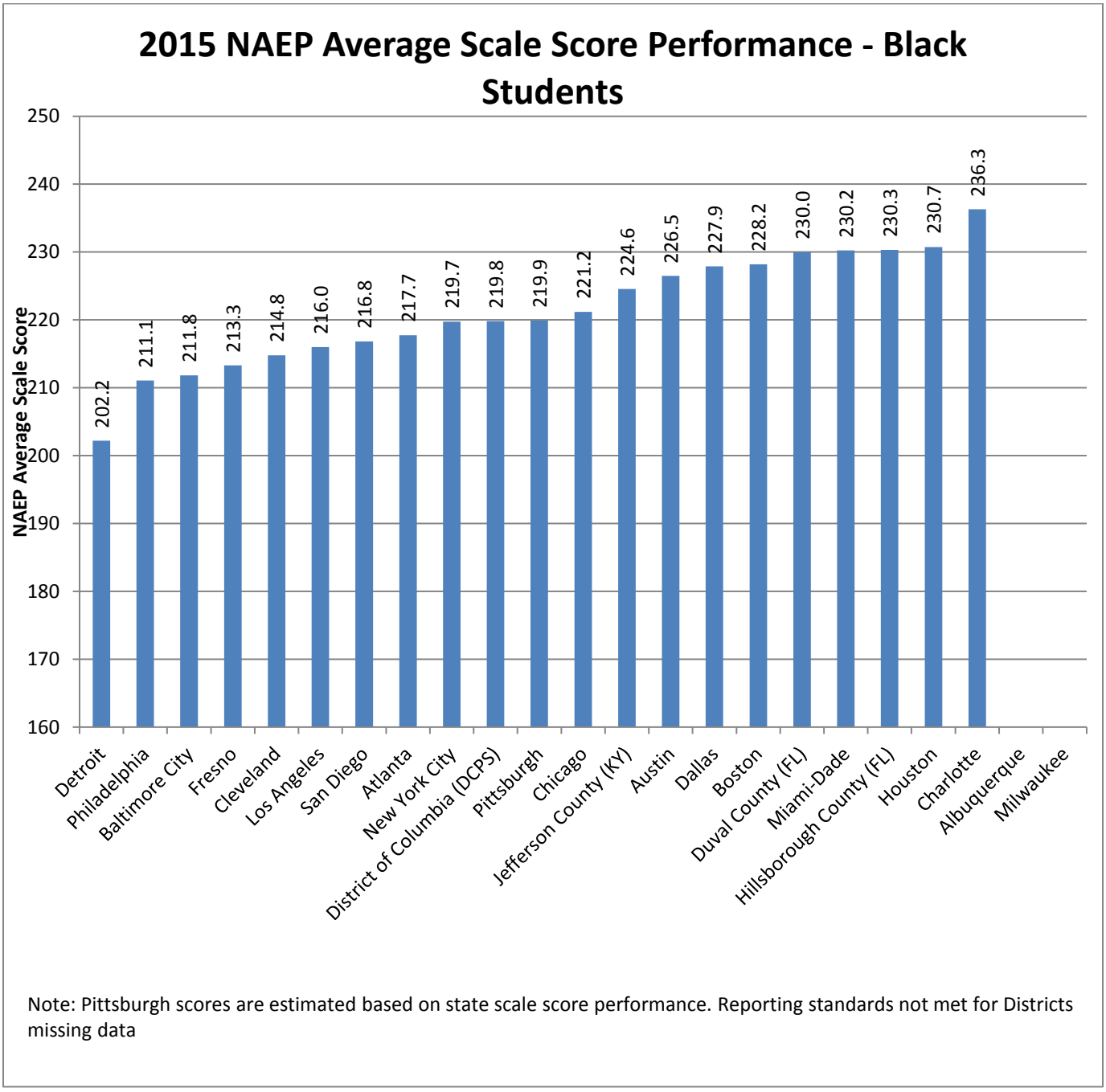


Exhibit B-13. Comparison of Pittsburgh's White Fourth Graders in Math with White Students in Other Major Cities



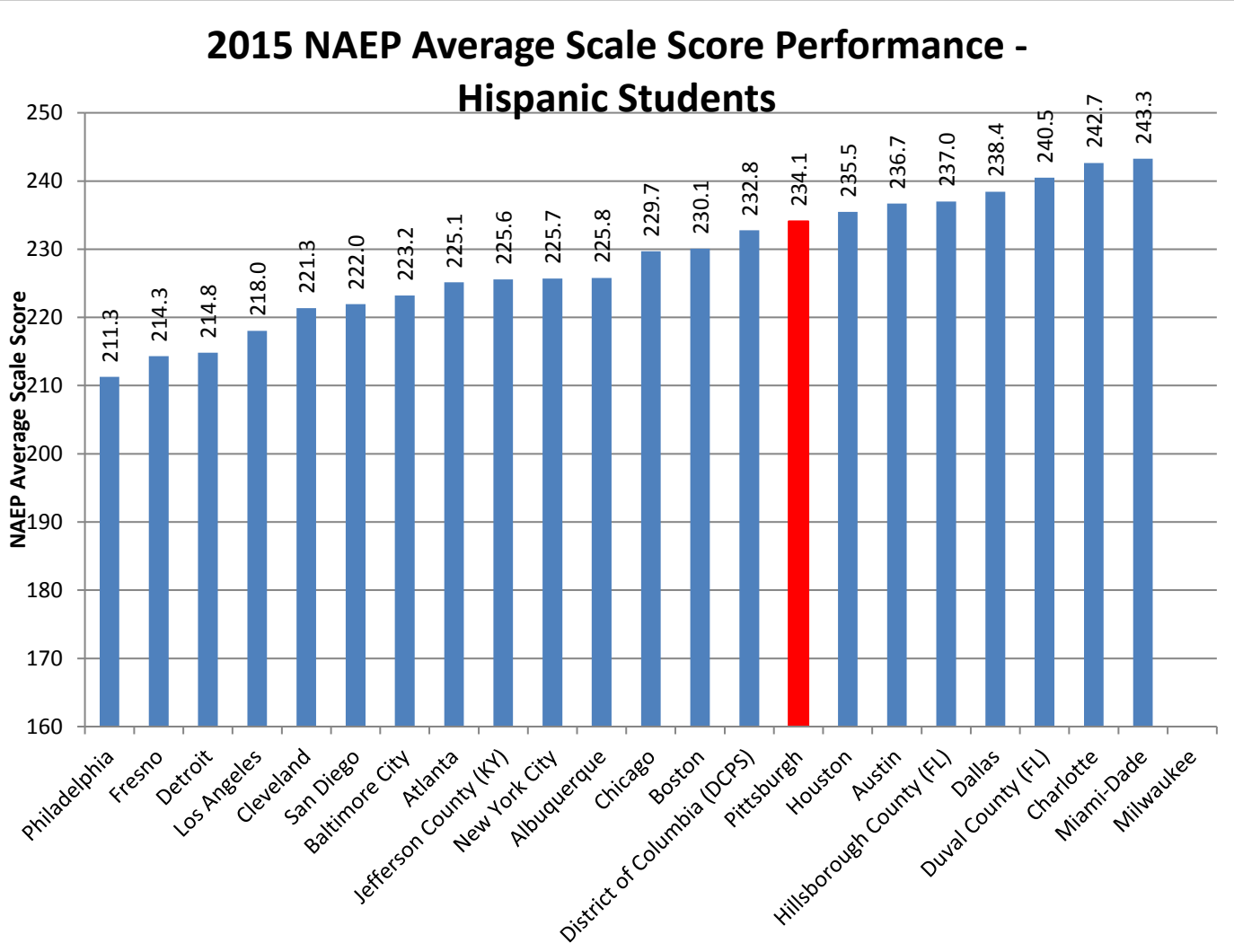
Note: Pittsburgh scores are estimated based on state scale score performance. Reporting standards not met for Districts missing data.

Exhibit B-14. Comparison of Pittsburgh's African American Fourth Graders in Math with African American Students in Other Major Cities



Note: Pittsburgh scores are estimated based on state scale score performance. Reporting standards not met for Districts missing data

Exhibit B-15. Comparison of Pittsburgh's Hispanic Fourth Graders in Math with African American Students in Other Major Cities



Note: Pittsburgh scores are estimated based on state scale score performance. Reporting standards not met for Districts missing data.

Exhibit B-16. Comparison of Pittsburgh's Fourth Graders Eligible for a Free or Reduced Price Lunch in Math with Poor Students in Other Major Cities

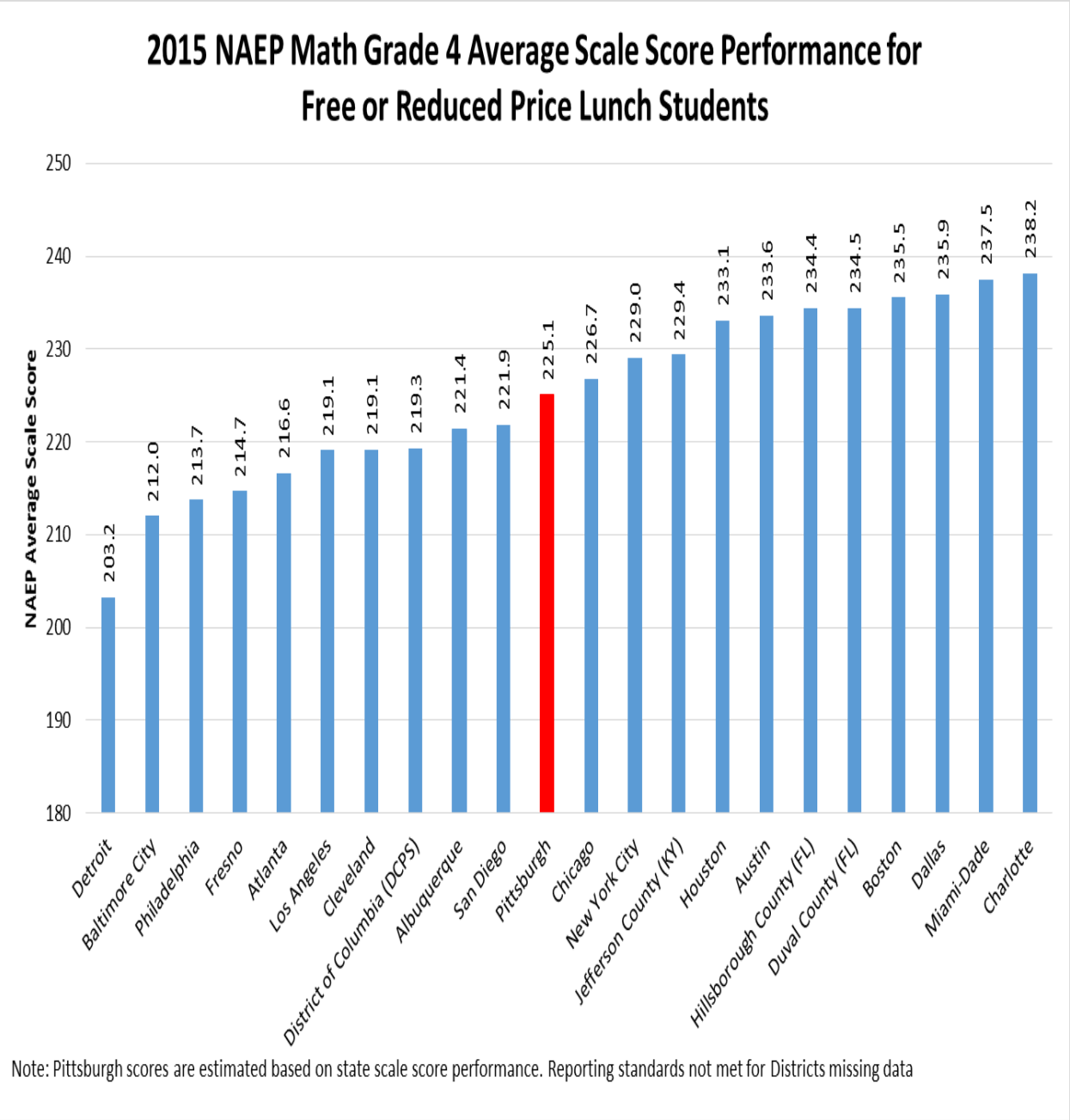
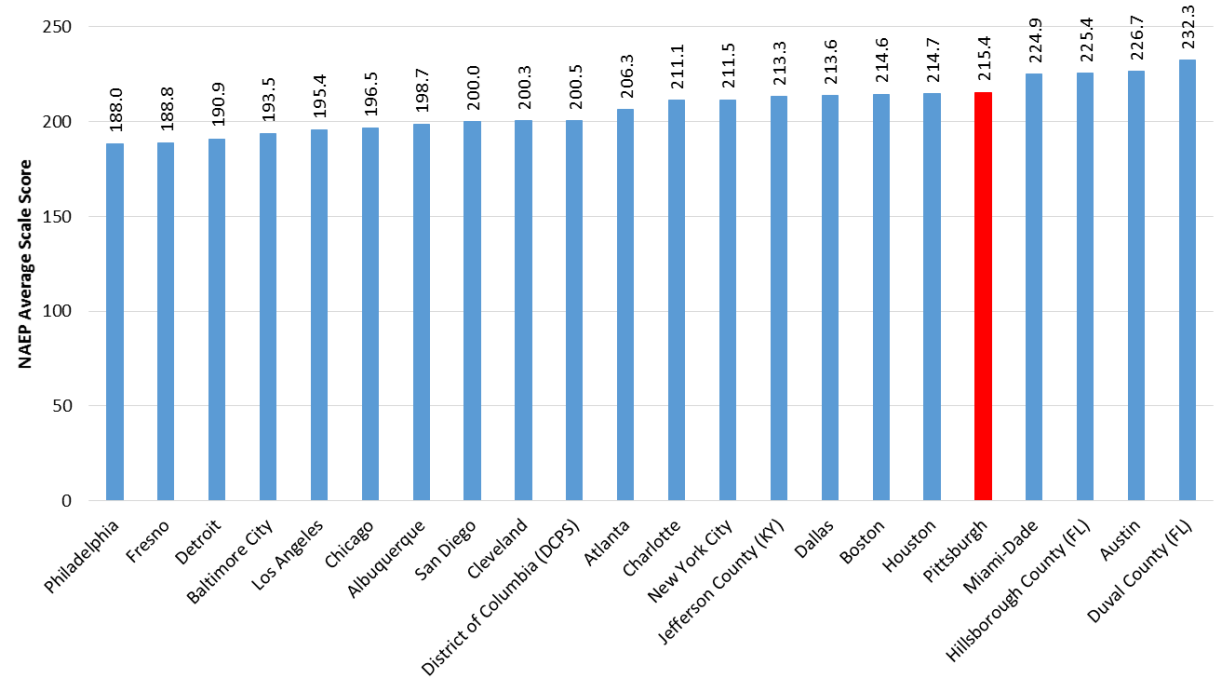
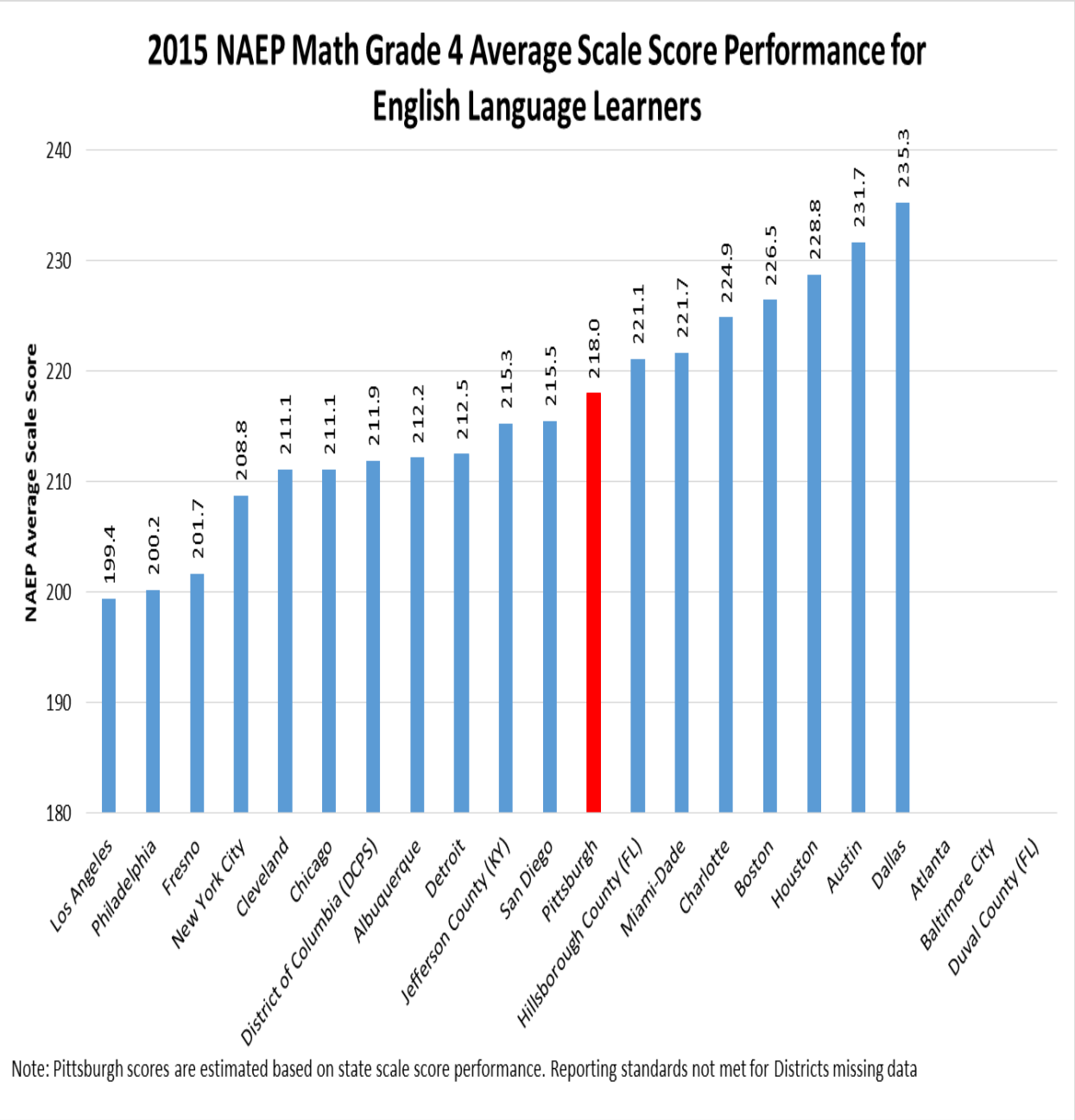


Exhibit B-17. Comparison of Pittsburgh's Fourth Graders with Disabilities in Math with Students with Disabilities in Other Major Cities



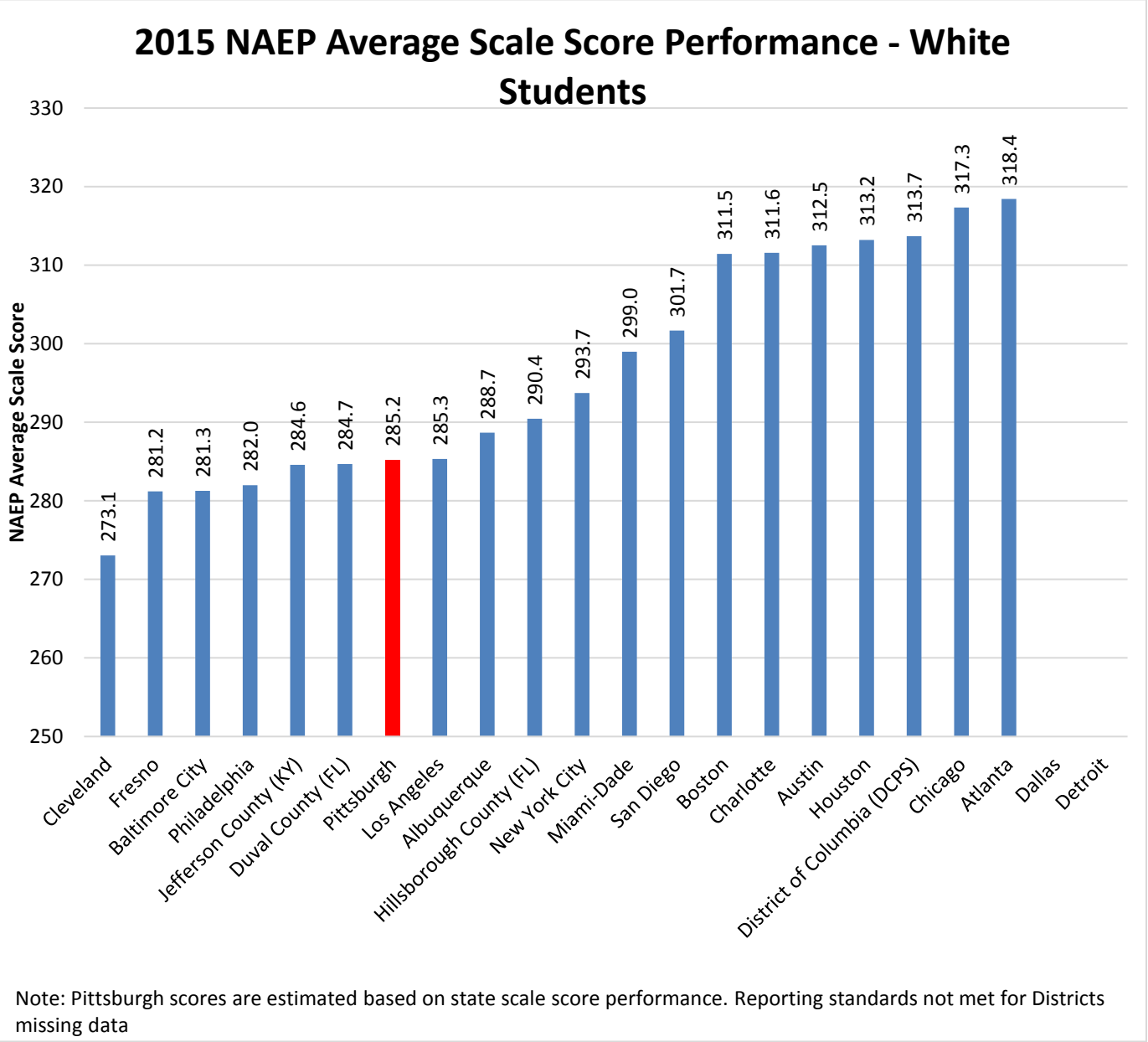
Note: Pittsburgh scores are estimated based on state scale score performance. Reporting standards not met for Districts missing data

Exhibit B-18. Comparison of Pittsburgh's ELL Fourth Graders in Math with ELLs in Other Major Cities



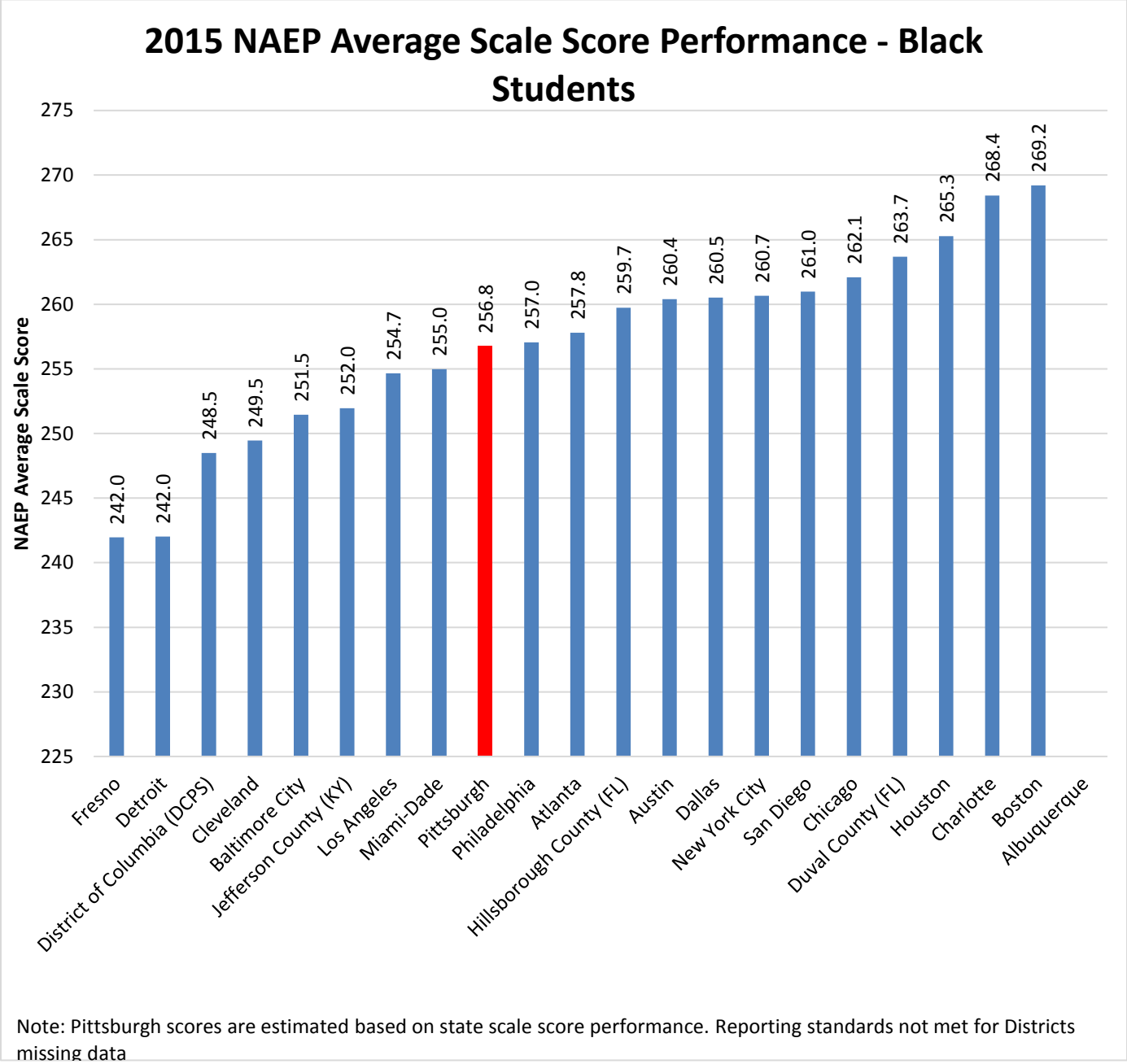
Note: Pittsburgh scores are estimated based on state scale score performance. Reporting standards not met for Districts missing data

Exhibit B-19. Comparison of Pittsburgh's White Eighth Graders in Math with White Students in Other Major Cities



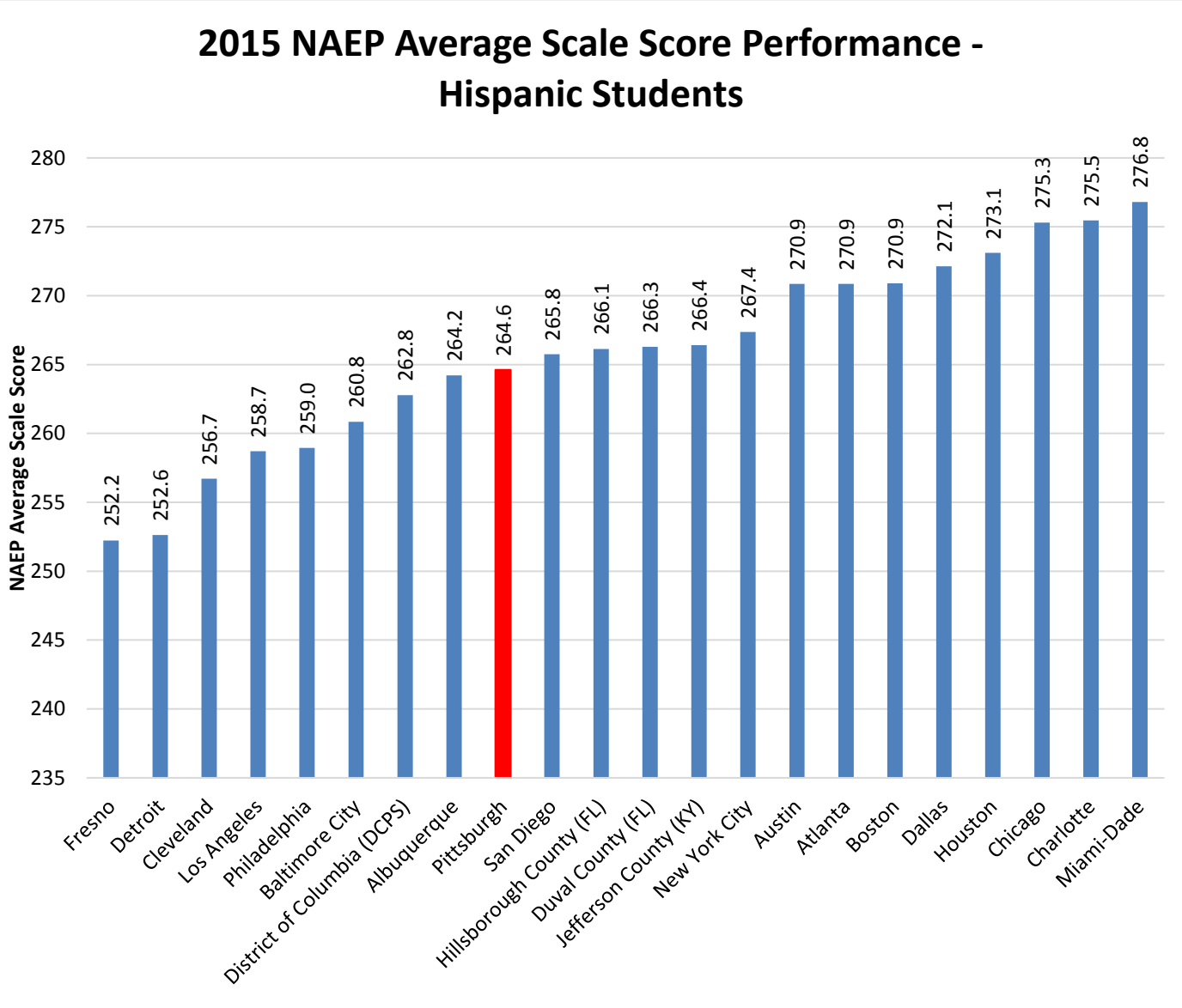
Note: Pittsburgh scores are estimated based on state scale score performance. Reporting standards not met for Districts missing data

Exhibit B-20. Comparison of Pittsburgh's African American Eighth Graders in Math with African American Students in Other Major Cities



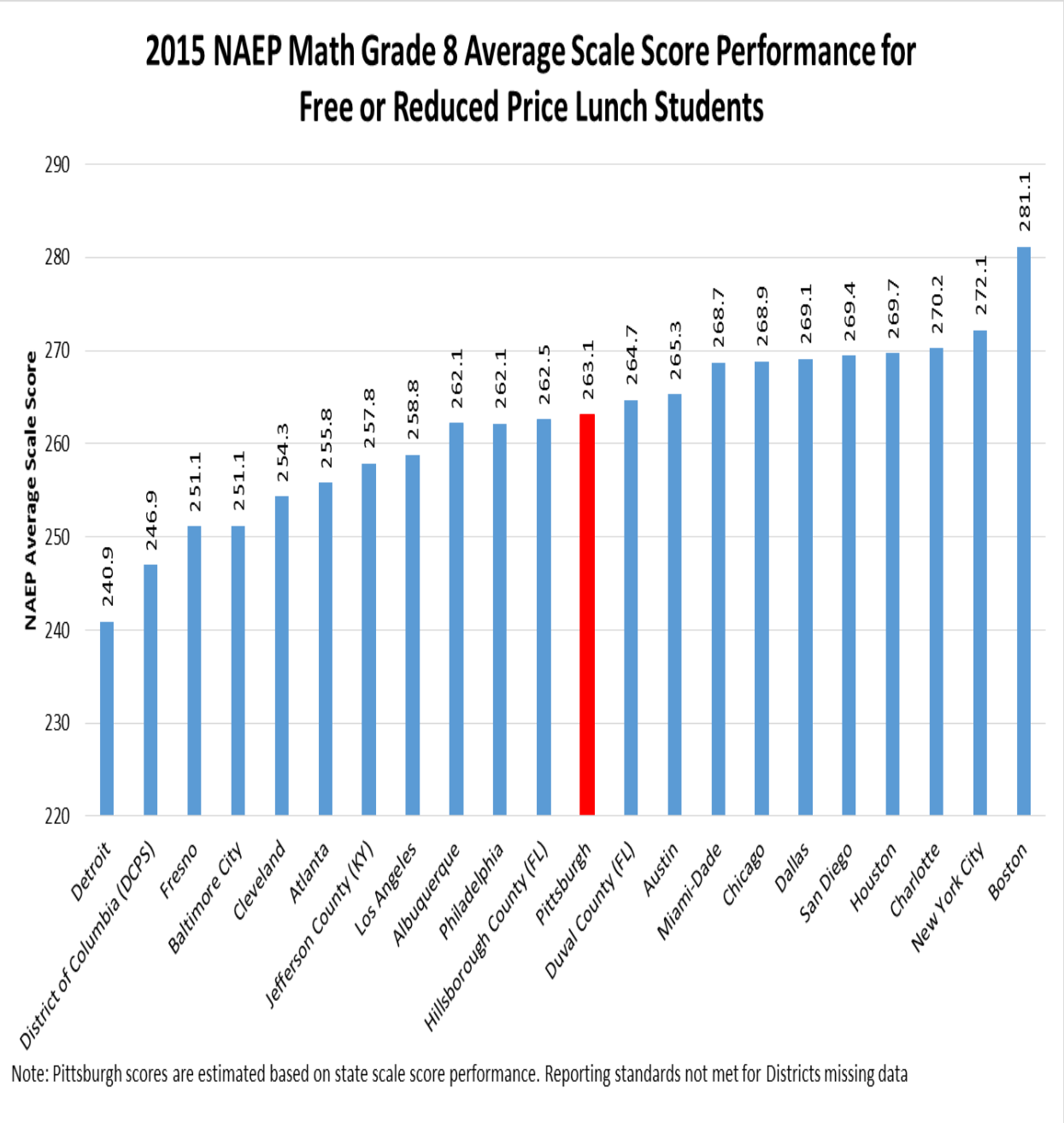
Note: Pittsburgh scores are estimated based on state scale score performance. Reporting standards not met for Districts missing data

Exhibit B-21. Comparison of Pittsburgh's Hispanic Eighth Graders in Math with Hispanic Students in Other Major Cities



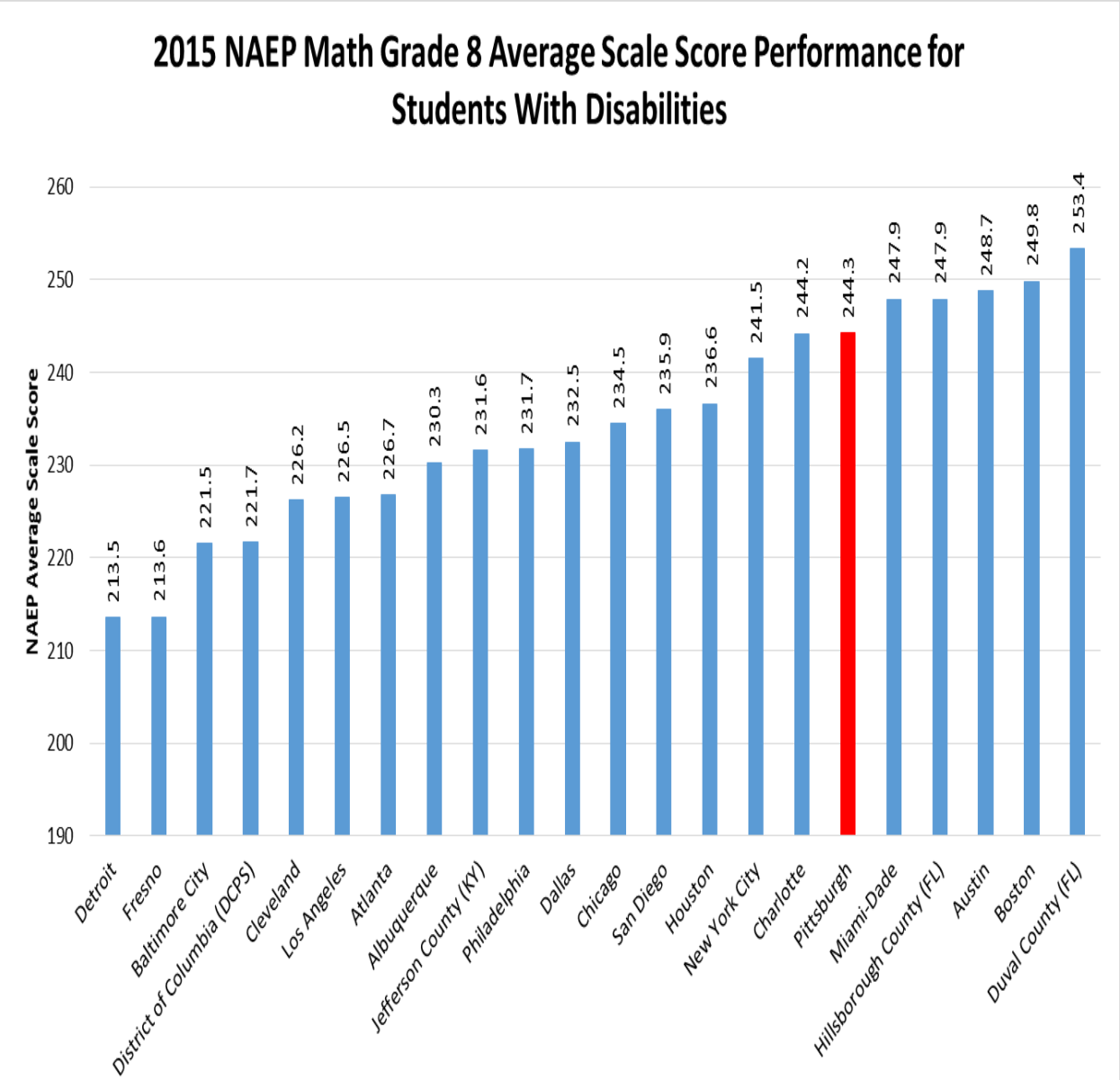
Note: Pittsburgh scores are estimated based on state scale score performance. Reporting standards not met for Districts missing data

Exhibit B-22. Comparison of Pittsburgh's Eighth Graders Eligible for a Free or Reduced Price Lunch in Math with Poor Students in Other Major Cities



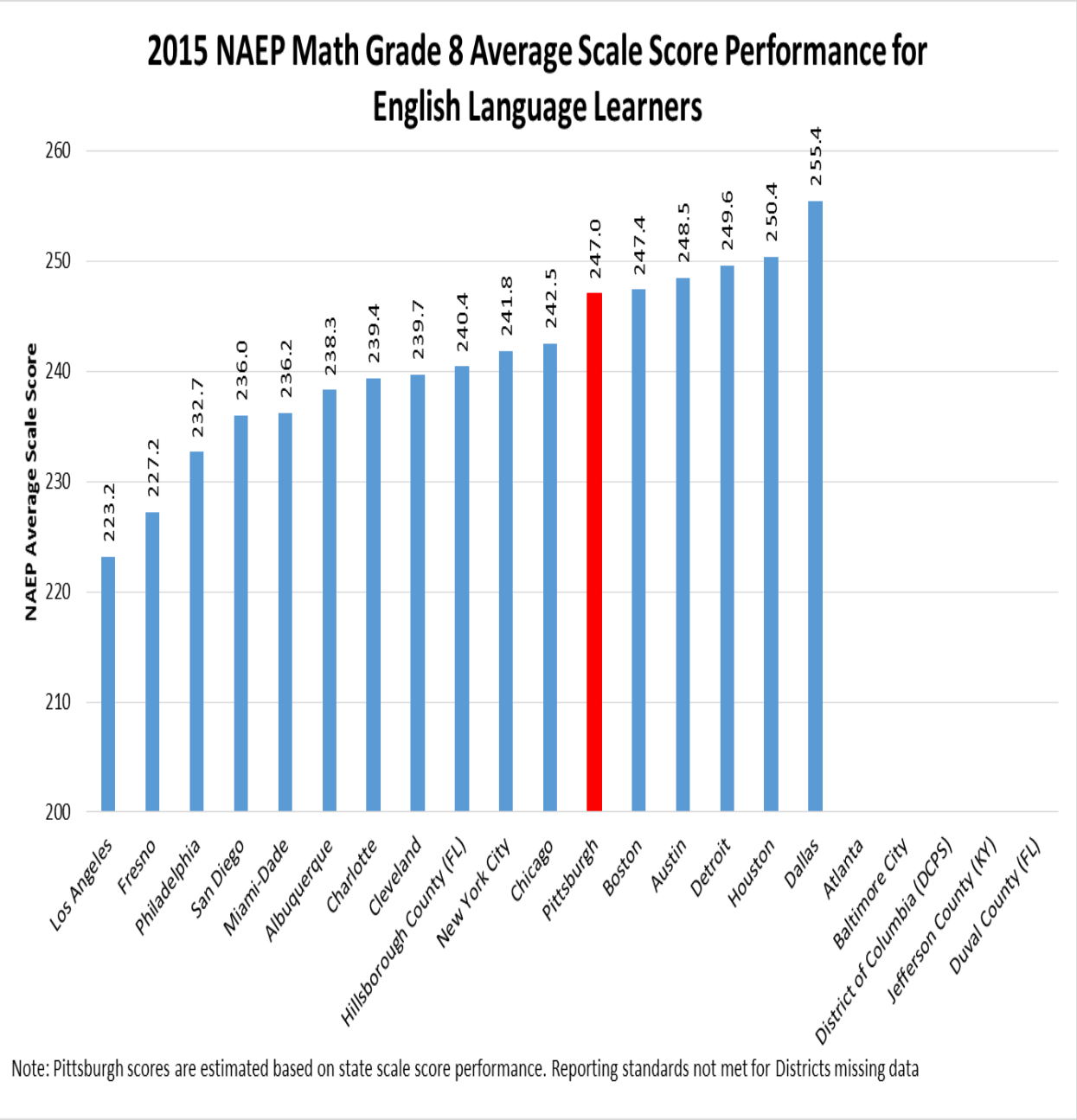
Note: Pittsburgh scores are estimated based on state scale score performance. Reporting standards not met for Districts missing data

Exhibit B-23. Comparison of Pittsburgh's Eighth Graders with Disabilities in Math with Students with Disabilities in Other Major Cities



Note: Pittsburgh scores are estimated based on state scale score performance. Reporting standards not met for Districts missing data

Exhibit B-24. Comparison of Pittsburgh's ELL Eighth Graders in Math with ELLs in Other Major Cities



Note: Pittsburgh scores are estimated based on state scale score performance. Reporting standards not met for Districts missing data

APPENDIX C. COMPARING PITTSBURGH WITH OTHER CITIES ON VARIOUS ACADEMIC INDICATORS

Exhibit C-1 Size of Pre-K Class Compared with Kindergarten Class

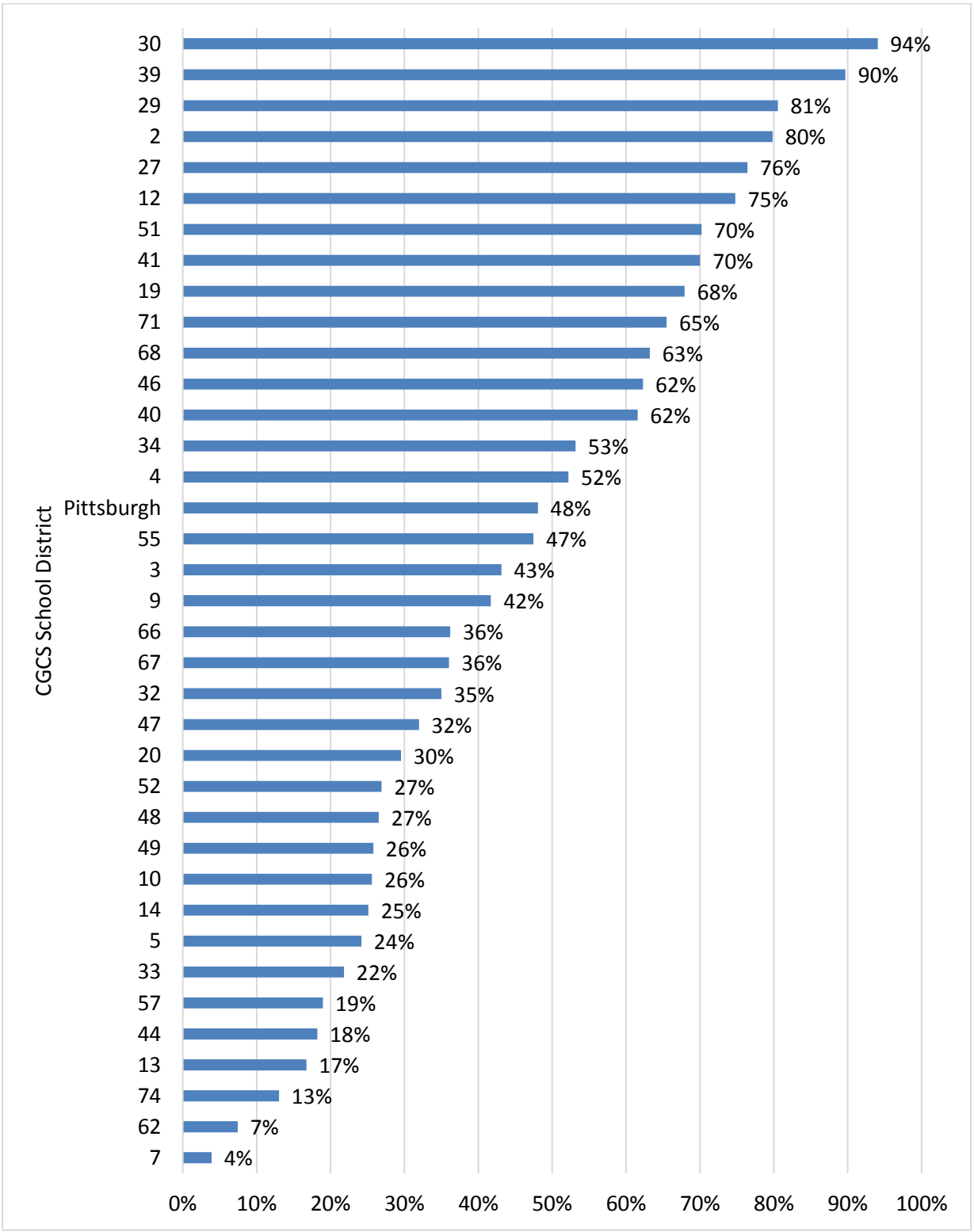


Exhibit C-2. Absenteeism Rates for All Third Grade Students by the Total Days Absent for the School Year

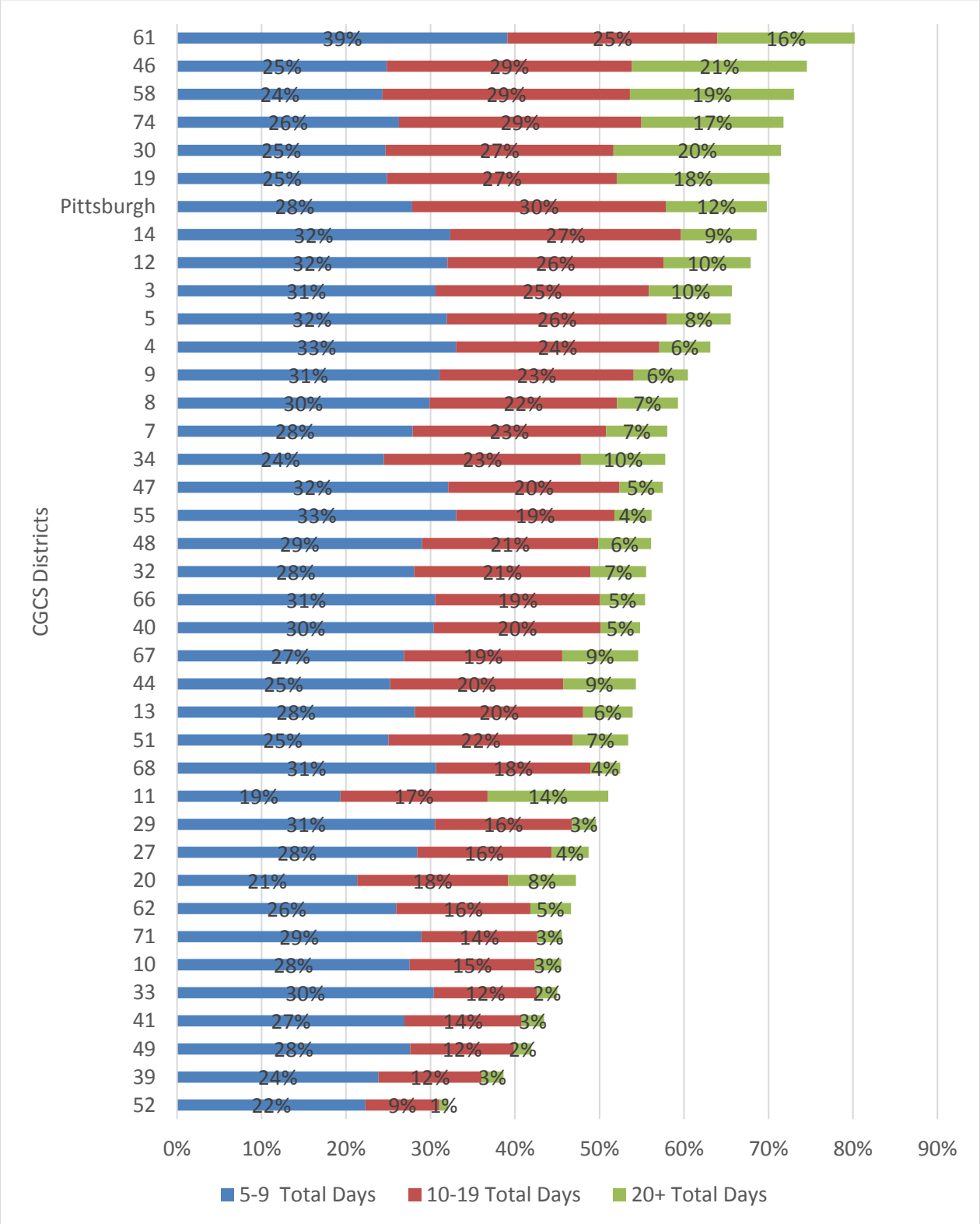


Exhibit C-3. Absenteeism Rates for All Sixth Grade Students by the Total Days Absent for the School Year

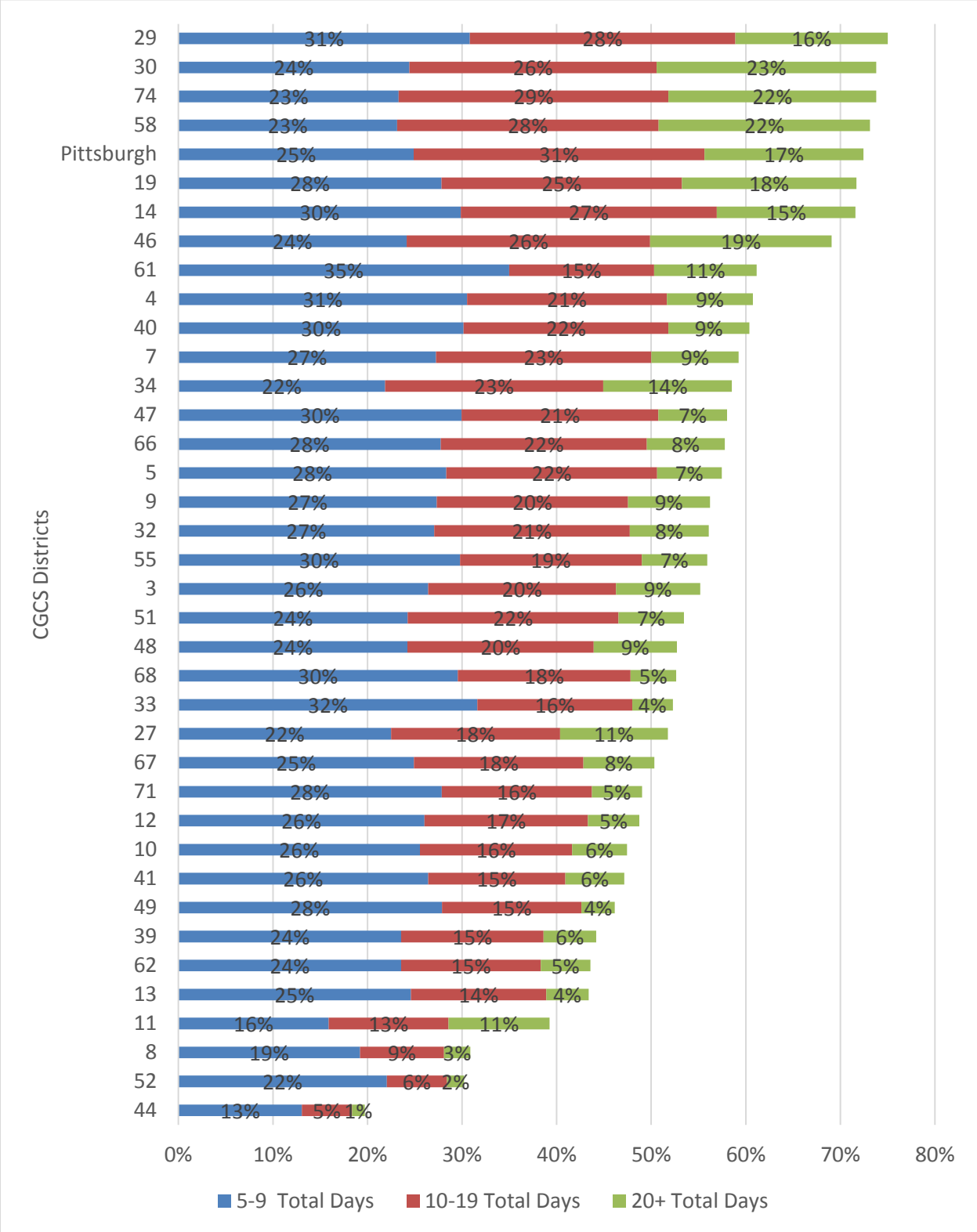


Exhibit C-4. Absenteeism Rates for All Ninth Grade Students by the Total Days Absent for the School Year

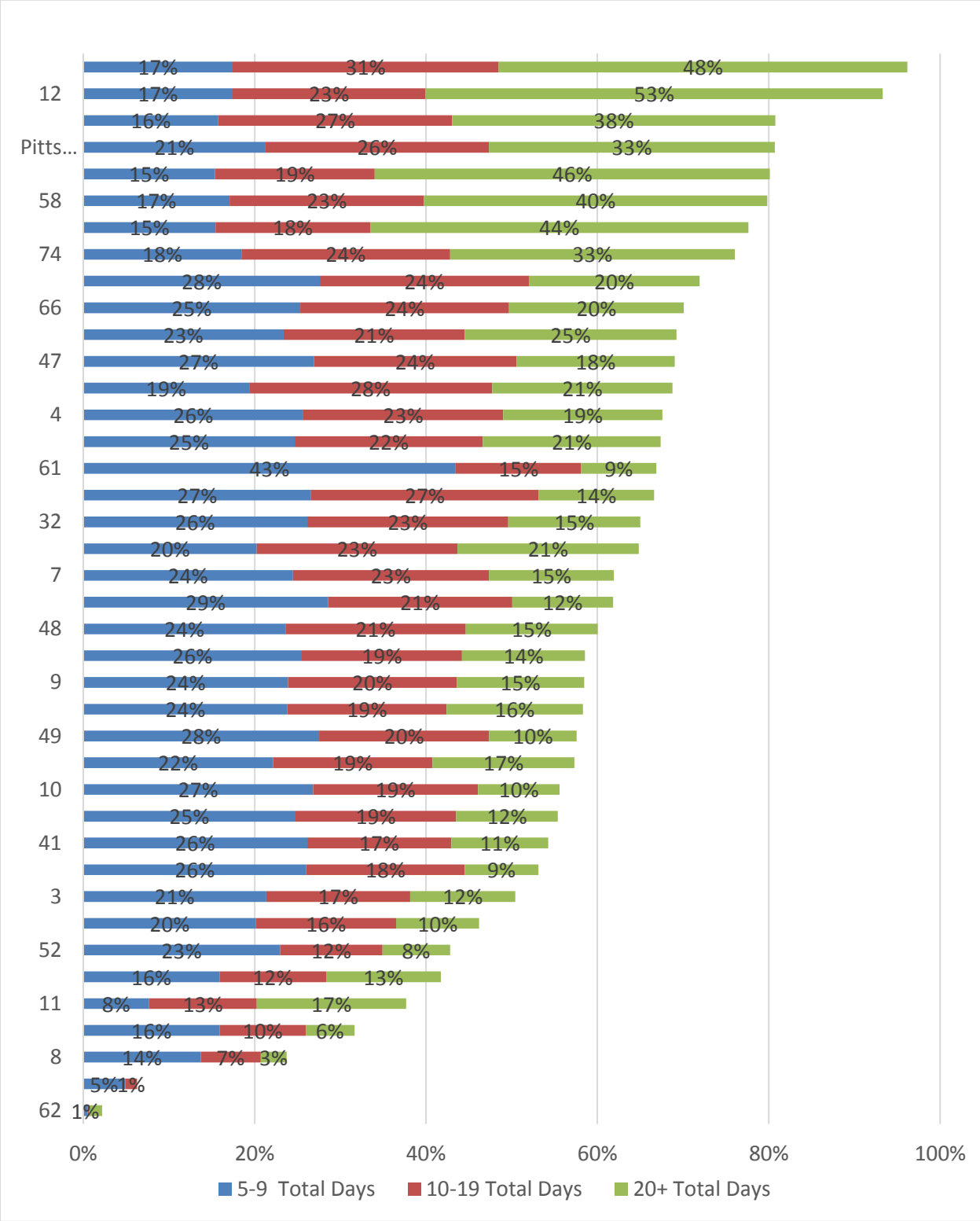


Exhibit C-5. Algebra I Completion Rate by Grade Completed

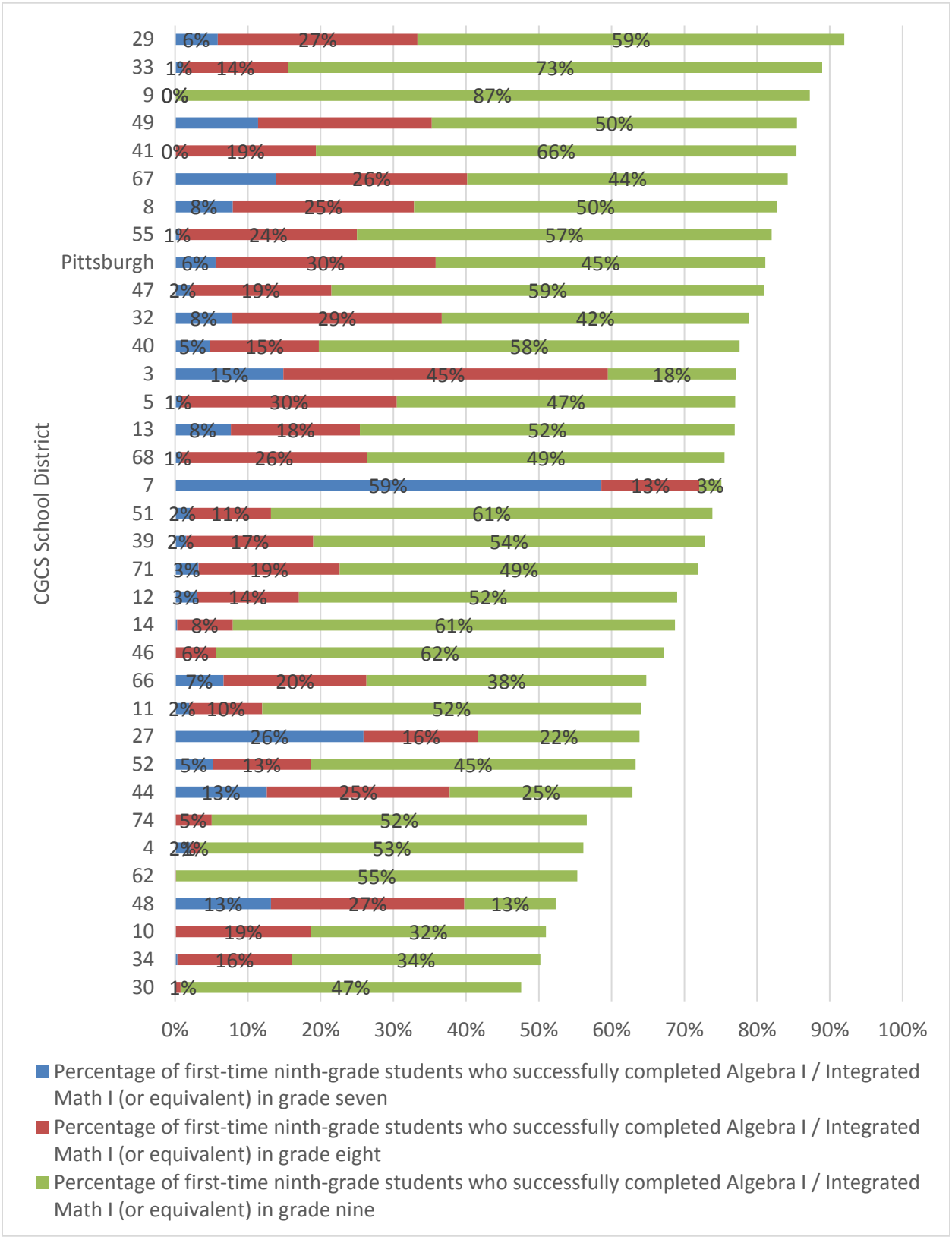


Exhibit C-6. Percent of Ninth Graders who Failed One or More Core Courses

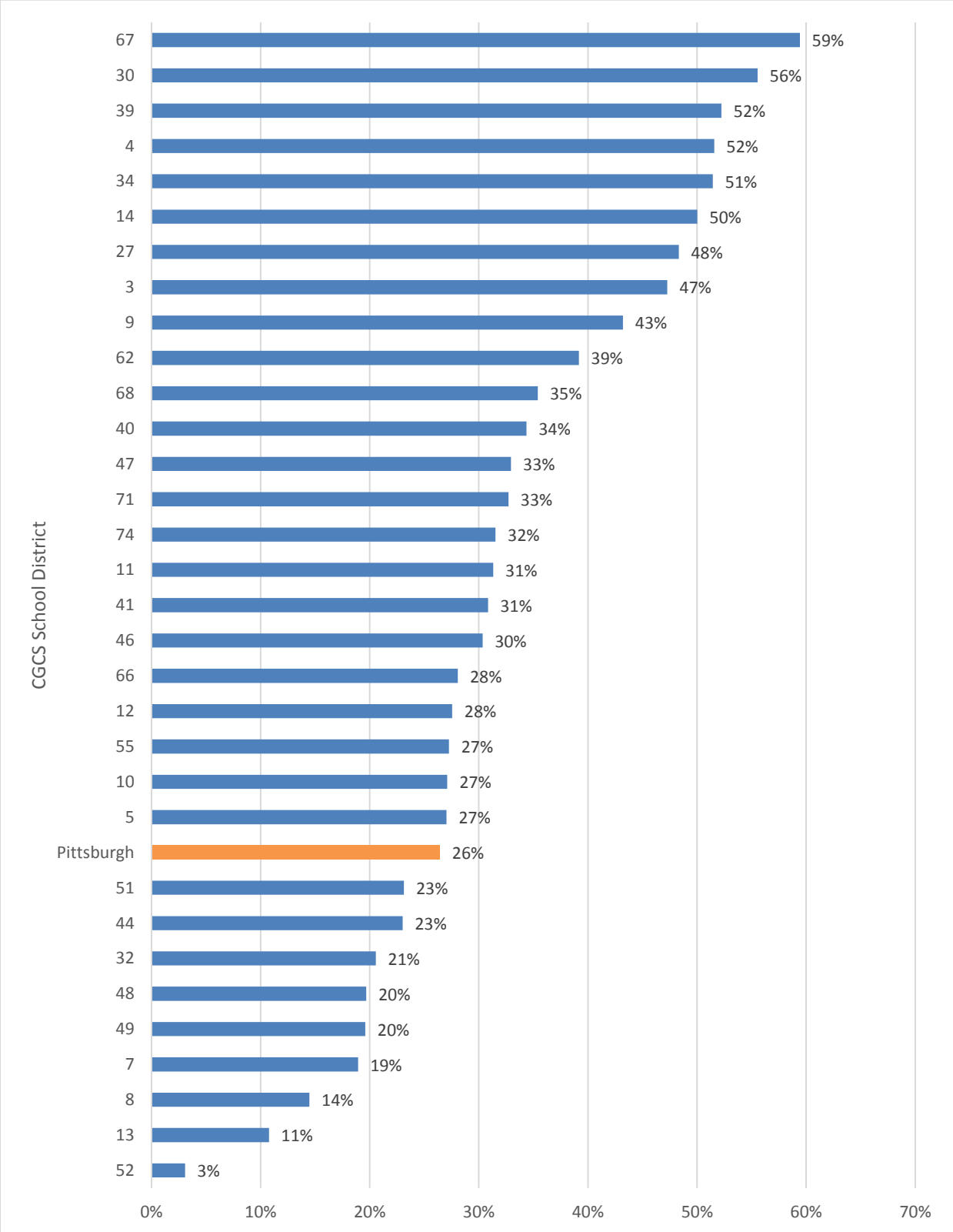


Exhibit C-7. Percentage of Students Suspended by Number of Days Suspended, 2014-15

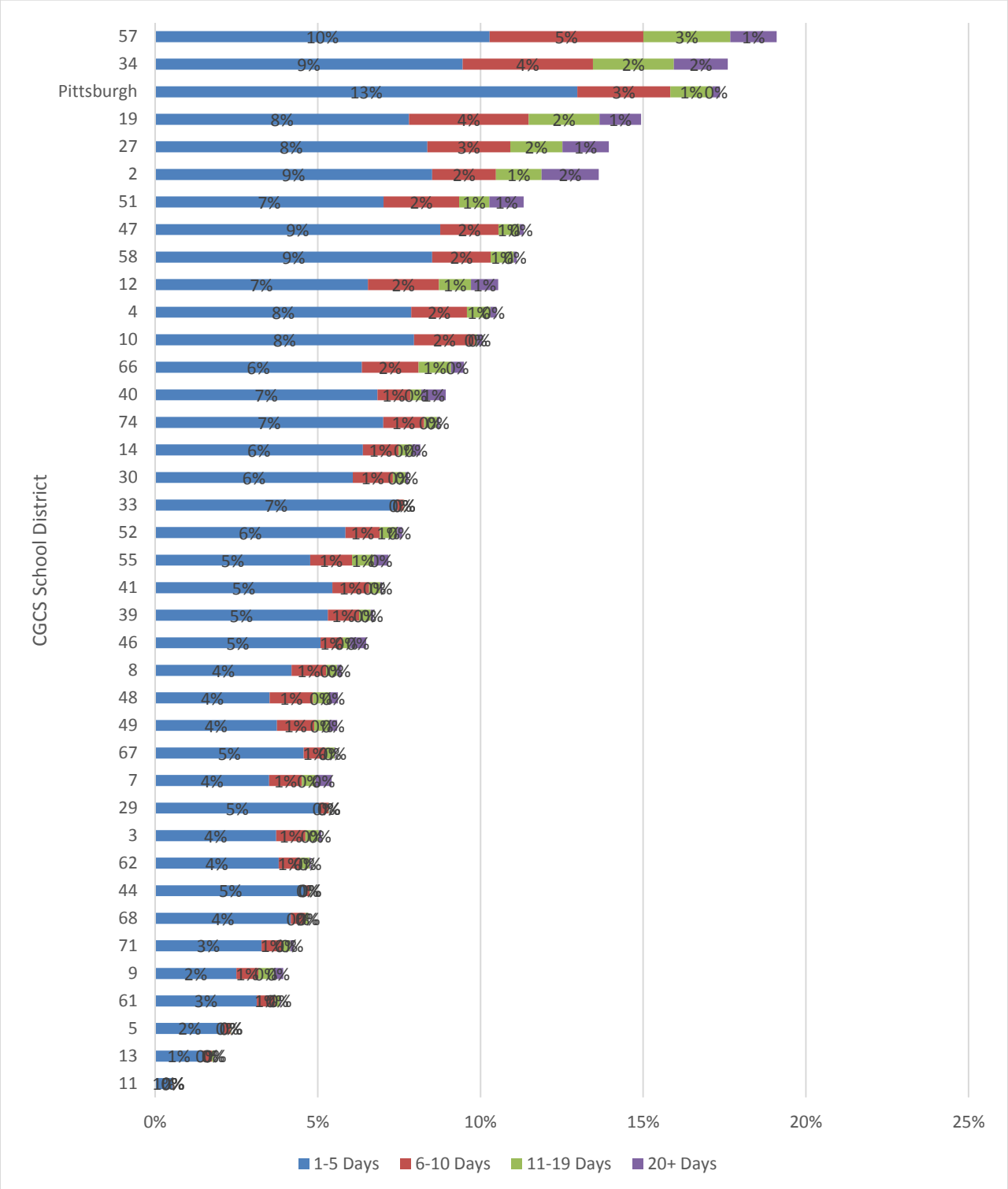


Exhibit C-8. Instructional Days Missed Due to Suspensions per 100 Students, 2014-15

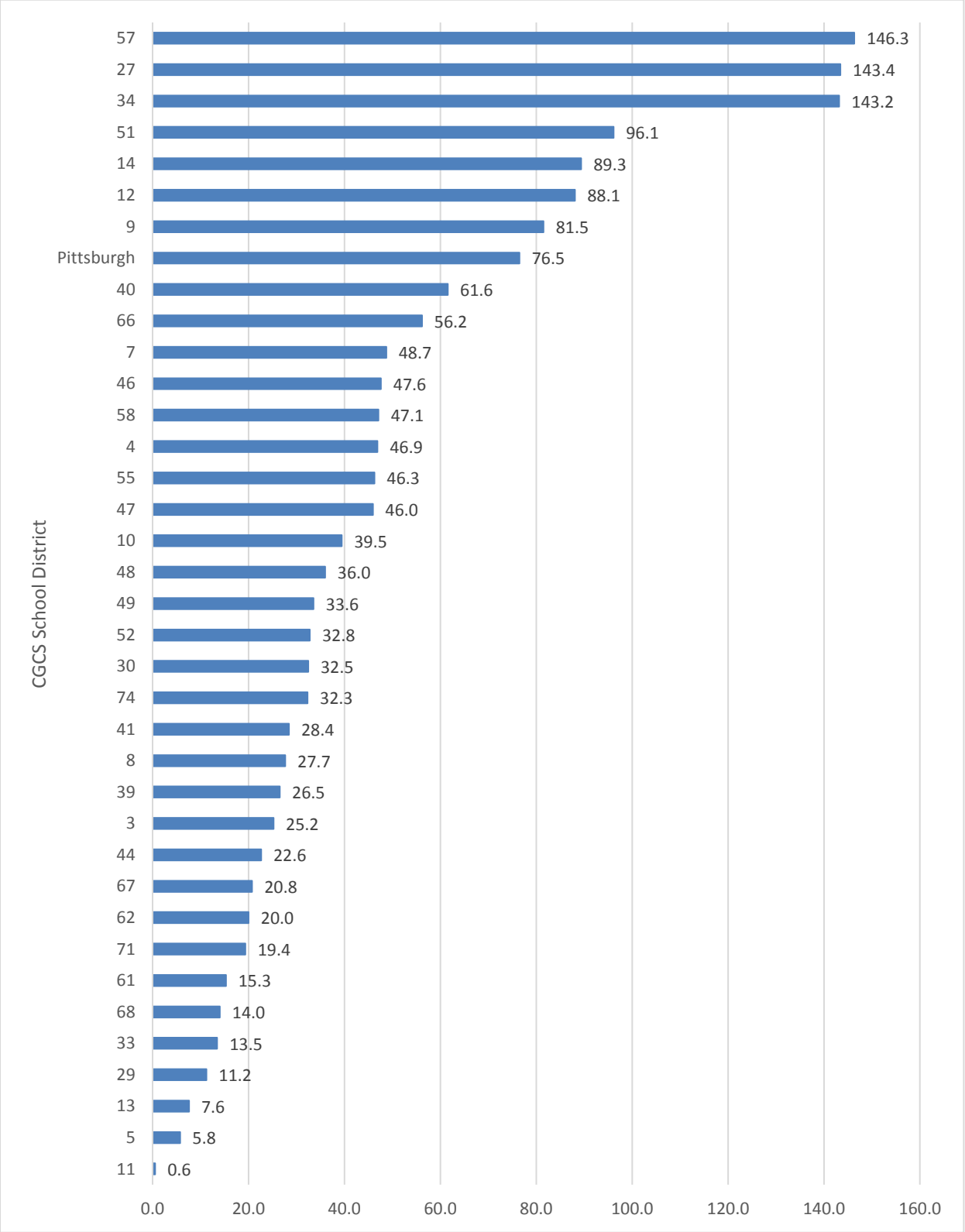


Exhibit C-9. Percentage of Students in Grades 9 through 12 who Took One or More AP Courses

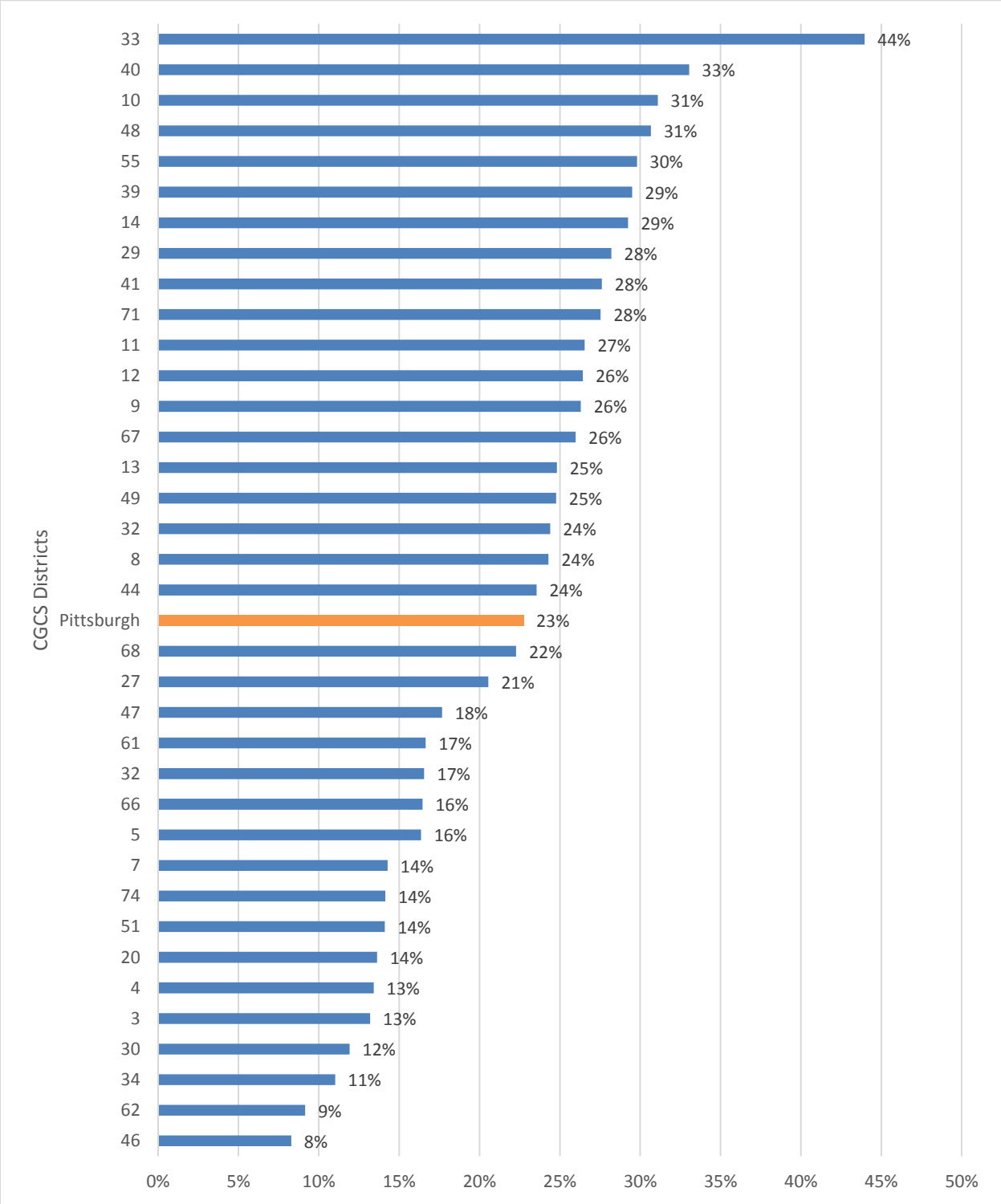


Exhibit C-10. Percent of Students who Graduated after Being in Grades Nine through 12 for Four Years

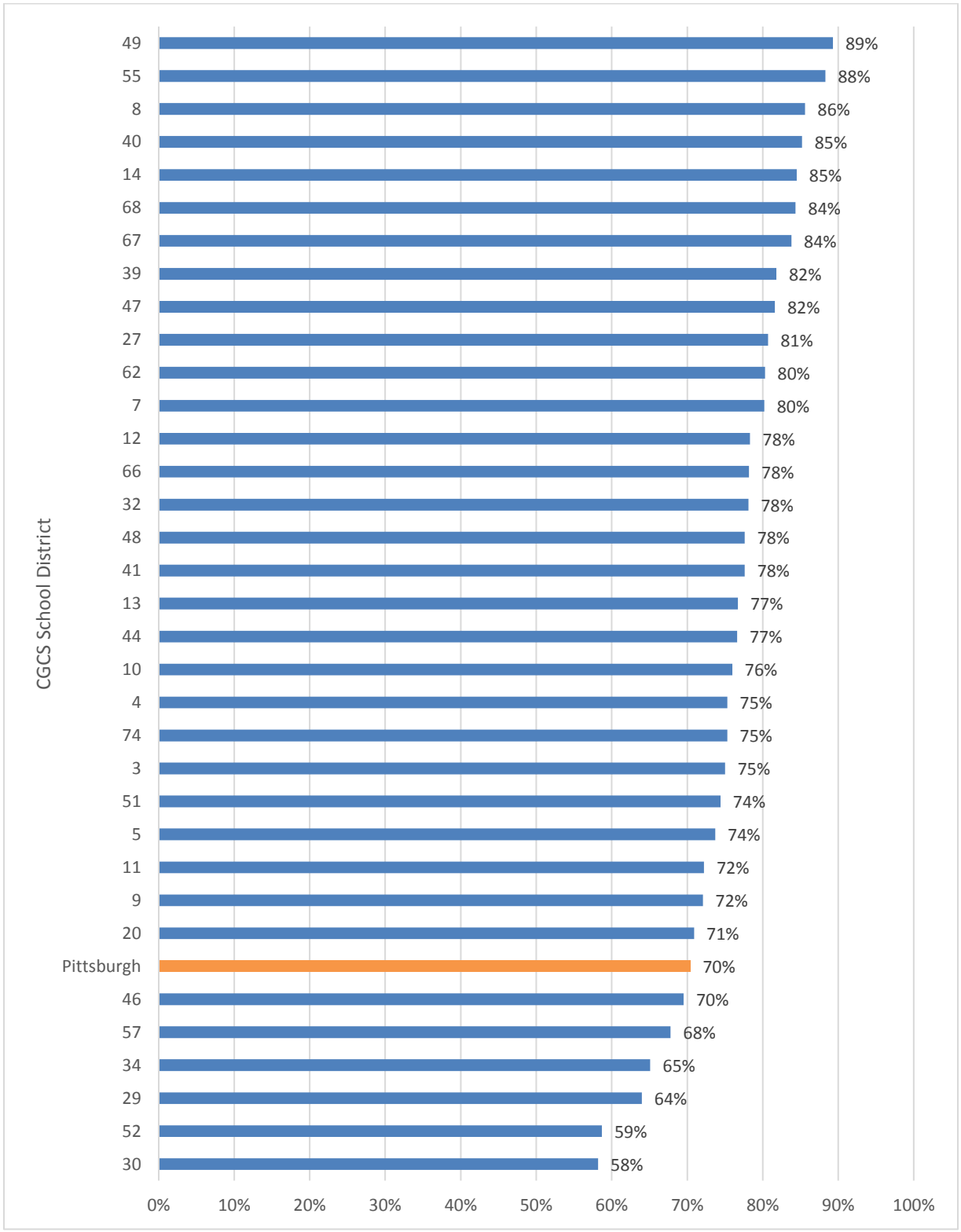
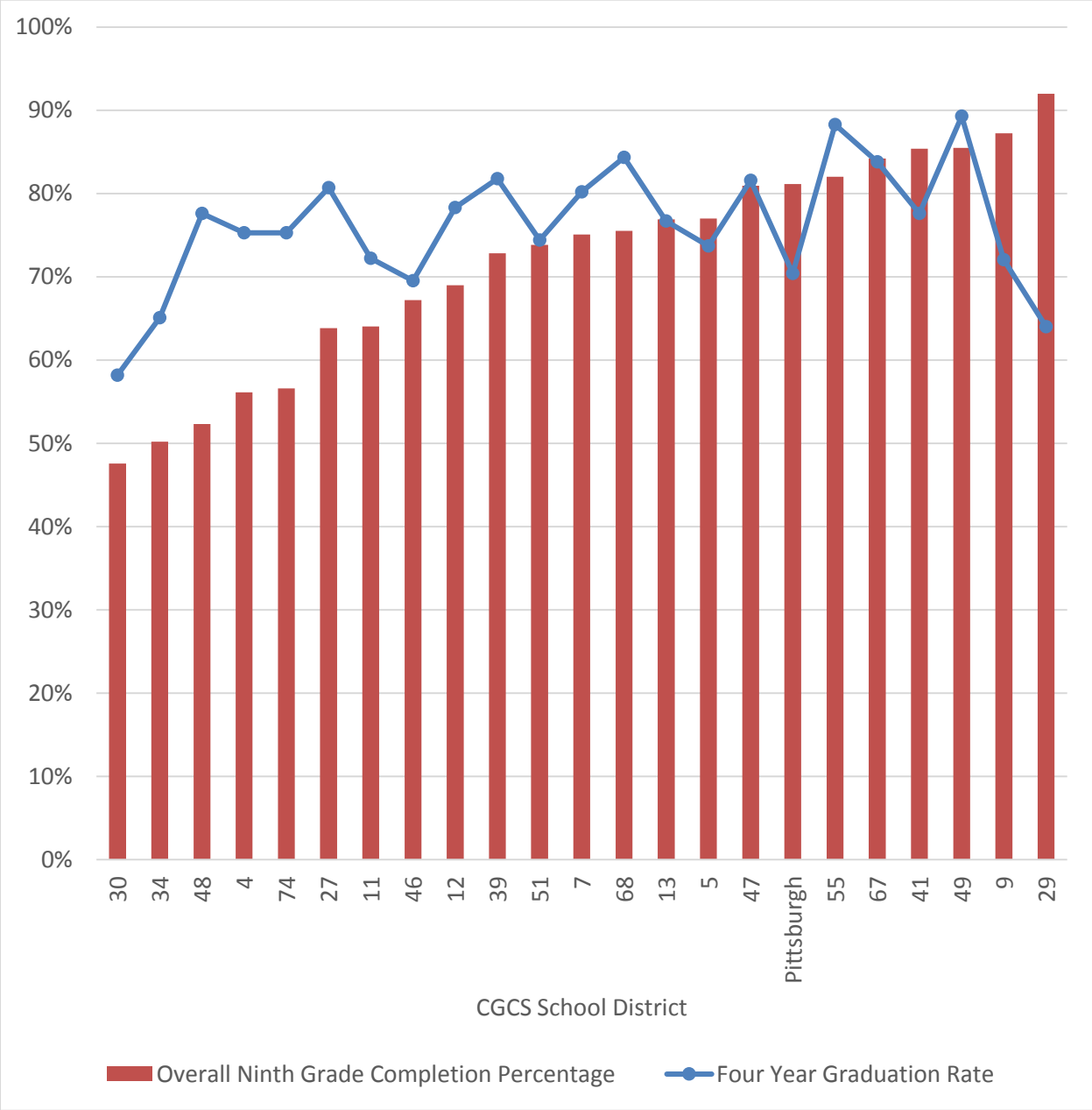


Exhibit C-11. Overall Ninth Grade Algebra Completion Rate by Four Year Graduation Rate



APPENDIX D. BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF MEMBERS OF THE STRATEGIC SUPPORT TEAMS

Organizational Team

Robert Carlson

Robert Carlson is Director of Management Services for the Council of the Great City Schools. In that capacity, he provides Strategic Support Teams and manages operational reviews for superintendents and senior managers; convenes annual meetings of Chief Financial Officers, Chief Operating Officers, Transportation Directors, and Chief Information Officers and Technology Directors; fields hundreds of requests for management information; and has developed and maintains a Web-based management library. Prior to joining the Council, Dr. Carlson was an executive assistant in the Office of the Superintendent of the District of Columbia Public Schools. He holds doctoral and master's degrees in administration from The Catholic University of America; a B.A. degree in political science from Ohio Wesleyan University; and has done advanced graduate work in political science at Syracuse University and the State Universities of New York.

Tom Ryan

Tom Ryan retired as the chief information officer for the Albuquerque Public Schools after serving over 31 years, on both the instructional and operational sides of the district. As the CIO, Dr. Ryan oversaw the successful implementation of a new enterprise resource planning system (finance, HR, and payroll), a new student information system, and a learning management content system. He has lead the Capital Election Team successfully passing two GO elections and Mill Levy election for more than $642,000,000. Dr. Ryan holds a Ph.D. in curriculum and instruction, with an emphasis in learning technologies from New Mexico State University. He is a member of several boards including the Consortium for School Networking, the NM Technology Council Board, and the NM Council of Technology in Education (past chair). He is a member of the International Society for Technology in Education. Dr. Ryan has served as adjunct faculty at the University of New Mexico, designing and teaching courses online. He works with several national committees such as the International Association for K-12 Learning Online (iNACOL), and the Council of Great City Schools and is a senior fellow for the Center of Digital Learning. He is a founding member of IDEAL-NM Advisory Board, which is the state K-20 and higher education online learning system. Dr. Ryan is the recipient of a Milken Educator Award. He has received several awards for technology innovation and has presented at several conferences across the country.

Jose Dotres

Jose Dotres is the Chief Human Capital Officer for Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS), the fourth largest school district in the nation. Mr. Dotres is charged with overseeing approximately 50,000 employees and five labor unions. His career spans over 24 years in various capacities with M-DCPS, to include Principal, District Administrative Director of Leadership Development, Regional Administrative Director of Curriculum and Superintendent of the North Region Area, where he was responsible for 82 public schools across 12 municipalities. He was also Assistant Superintendent of Human Capital Management for Professional Development and

was tasked with strengthening the leadership capacity of principals and enhancing the teacher evaluation system. Subsequently, he served as Chief Academic Officer for Broward County Public Schools. He returned to M-DCPS to serve as Chief of Staff for the Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Alberto M. Carvalho. Mr. Dotres holds an educational specialist degree in Educational Leadership from the University of Miami, a master's degree in ESOL from Barry University, and a bachelor's degree in Public Administration from Florida International University.

Chris Farkas

Chris Farkas is the Chief Operating Officer for the Hillsborough County Public Schools. Hillsborough County is currently the eighth largest school district with over 212,000 students enrolled. He is responsible for growth management and planning, planning and construction, transportation, building code inspectors, and maintenance operations. Hillsborough County has 27 high schools, 45 middle schools, 150 elementary schools, 56 charter schools, and 25 alternative sites. A former classroom teacher, Assistant Principal, High School Principal, and Principal Supervisor he currently also serves on the Hillsborough County Planning Commission and serves as a liaison with both the NAACP and MacDill Air Force Base (Central Command). He holds an education degree from the University of Alabama as well as a master's degree from National Louis University.

Robin Hall

Dr. Robin Hall is the Director of Language Arts and Literacy for the Council of the Great City Schools. She keeps members informed about research on systems and successful strategies for improving student achievement. Dr. Hall also provides support for development and dissemination of information and tools to implement the Common Core State Standards. She has served in various capacities for Atlanta Public Schools, including Executive Director of K-8 schools, Principal, K-12 Language Arts Coordinator, Instructional Liaison Specialist, Language Arts Department Chairperson and high school language arts teacher constituting over twenty-five years of educational experience. Dr. Hall has also served on the Council of Great City Schools support teams in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and professional development. In 2006, Dr. Hall was nominated to the National Assessment Governing Board by Secretary Margaret Spellings. Among the board responsibilities are selecting the content of the NAEP test, selecting the subjects to be tested, identifying learning objectives for each grade tested, identifying appropriate achievement goals and ensuring that all items selected for use in the assessment are free from racial, cultural, gender and regional biases. She received her B.A. Degree in English from Vassar College and received her M.A. and D.A.H. Degrees from Clark Atlanta University. Dr. Hall is married with two daughters, a granddaughter and grandson.

Frederick Schmitt

Frederick Schmitt retired as the Chief Financial Officer of the Norfolk Public Schools (NPS) in 2008 after serving 11 years. NPS educates 35,000 children with an annual operating budget of $330 million and 6,000 full and part time employees. NPS won the Broad Foundation Prize for Urban Education in 2005. Prior to joining public education, Mr. Schmitt had a long and successful career in finance, management, and operations, including serving as a consultant with American Management Systems, Inc., and as the Chief Executive Officer (Commanding Officer) of the U.S.

Coast Guard National Finance Center in Virginia. A graduate of the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, he received his MBA degree from The George Washington University. He has been recognized for Outstanding Leadership in Urban Education by the Council of Great City Schools, and he co-chaired a major national effort with the Council to examine the effectiveness of business operations in large urban districts. Mr. Schmitt has served on a number of District Technical Assist Visits as a team member for the Council of Great City Schools. Mr. Schmitt continues to work as a consultant for various K-12 districts in the area of business operations.

Instructional Team

Michael Casserly

Michael Casserly has served as Executive Director of the Council of the Great City Schools since January 1992. Casserly also served as the organization's Director of Legislation and Research for 15 years before assuming his current position. As head of the urban school group, Casserly unified big city schools nationwide around a vision of reform and improvement; led the nation's largest urban school districts to volunteer for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP); guided the organization to be the first national education-membership group to call for the Common Core Standards; initiated an aggressive technical assistance program to improve urban education; directed the development of public education's first performance management system; and led the first national study of common practices among the nation's fastest improving urban school districts. He is currently spearheading efforts to boost academic performance in the nation's big city schools; strengthen management and operations; and improve the public's image of urban education. An article in USA Today some years ago called him a "Crusader for Urban Schools." He is a U.S. Army veteran, and holds a Ph.D. from the University of Maryland and B.A. from Villanova University.

Robin Hall

Dr. Robin Hall is the Director of Language Arts and Literacy for the Council of the Great City Schools.. She keeps members informed about research on systems and successful strategies for improving student achievement. Dr. Hall also provides support for development and dissemination of information and tools to implement the Common Core State Standards. She has served in various capacities for Atlanta Public Schools, including Executive Director of K-8 schools, Principal, K-12 Language Arts Coordinator, Instructional Liaison Specialist, Language Arts Department Chairperson and high school language arts teacher constituting over twenty-five years of educational experience. Dr. Hall has also served on the Council of Great City Schools support teams in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and professional development. In 2006, Dr. Hall was nominated to the National Assessment Governing Board by Secretary Margaret Spellings. Among the board responsibilities are selecting the content of the NAEP test, selecting the subjects to be tested, identifying learning objectives for each grade tested, identifying appropriate achievement goals and ensuring that all items selected for use in the assessment are free from racial, cultural, gender and regional biases. She received her B.A. Degree in English from Vassar College and received her M.A. and D.A.H. Degrees from Clark Atlanta University. Dr. Hall is married with two daughters, a granddaughter and grandson.

Denise Walston

Denise M. Walston is the Director of Mathematics for the Council of the Great City Schools. Her work focuses on supporting member districts in their implementation of college-and career-readiness standards, assisting with the development of resources and tools to support implementation, and providing ongoing support for the improvement of student achievement. Ms. Walston retired from Norfolk Public Schools as the Senior Coordinator of K-12 Mathematics. Her responsibilities included the development of a K-12 mathematics curriculum; providing job-embedded professional development; leveraging resources to provide quality professional development for teachers, teacher leaders, and administrators. During her tenure, Norfolk Public Schools embarked on an Algebra For ALL initiative which resulted in more than 50% of students completing algebra by the end of grade eight while simultaneously improving student achievement and closing achievement gaps in mathematics. She is an active member of several statewide committees that assisted in the development of Virginias' statewide mathematics specialist program. She has served as an adjunct instructor for The University of Virginia and Old Dominion University. She has served in several leadership positions in mathematics education, including 1st Vice-President of the National Council for Mathematics Supervision, past president of the Virginia Council for Mathematics Supervision, Southeast Regional Director of the Benjamin Banneker Society, and a board member for the Virginia Mathematics and Science Coalition. Additionally, she is also past president of the Beta chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma, a professional honorary society of women educators. Ms. Walston received her B.A. degree from The University of North Carolina at Greensboro in mathematics and history, her M.Ed. in mathematics education from Old Dominion University, and has completed additional study at the Woodrow Wilson Institute at Princeton University and the College of William and Mary.

Julie Wright Halbert, Esq.

Julie Halbert has been legislative counsel for the Council of the Great City Schools for almost 19 years. In that capacity, she has served as a national education legal and policy specialist, with emphasis on special education. She worked extensively on the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 1997 and 2004. Ms. Halbert is responsible for drafting numerous technical provisions to the IDEA and providing technical assistance to Congress and the U. S. Department of Education. In 1997 and, again, in 2005, she testified before the U.S. Department of Education on its proposed regulations on IDEA 2004. Ms. Halbert has directed each of the Council's special education review teams, including special education reviews in the District of Columbia, Guilford County (NC), Richmond, St. Louis, Charleston, New York City, Rochester, Boston, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. Halbert was also the counsel of record for the Council of the Great City Schools' *amicus* briefs in the Supreme Court of the United States in (a) B*oard of Education of the City School District of the City of New York v. Tom F., On Behalf of Gilbert F., A Minor Child* (2007); (b) Jacob *Winkelman, a Minor By and Through His Parents and Legal Guardians, Jeff and Sander Winkelman, et al., v. Parma City School District* (2007*)*; (c) *Brian Schaffer v. Jerry Weast, Superintendent of Montgomery County Public Schools, et al.*, (2005); (d) *Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District* and *Meredith v. Jefferson County Board of Education* (2007) and *Forest Grove School District v. T.A*, (2009). Ms. Halbert graduated with honors from the University of Maryland and the University of Miami School of Law. She is admitted to practice in the Federal Bar, the U.S. Supreme Court Bar, and the Florida and Pennsylvania Bars.

Gabriela Uro

Gabriela Uro is the director for English language learner policy and research and formerly was the manager for intergovernmental relations for the Council of the Great City Schools. As part of the legislative team, she works on legislative matters relevant to ELLs, both with Congress and with the Administration. She also works with the Council's Research and the Strategic Support Teams on projects pertaining to ELL issues. Prior to joining the Council, Ms. Uro served as the policy advisor to the Assistant Secretary of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Director of the Office of Bilingual Education (now English Acquisition) in the U.S. Department of Education. She brought 13 years of education policy and budget experience to the U.S. Department of Education and was part of the Department's team for the 1994 Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Reauthorization and the subsequent implementation teams for Title VII, Title I and the Regional Assistance Centers. Ms. Uro received an MPA from Columbia University with a specialization in education policy and a BA from the University of California, Irvine (*magna cum laude*, Phi Beta Kappa).

Ray Hart

Raymond Hart is currently the Director of Research for the Council of the Great City Schools. Dr. Hart has more than 20 years of experience in research and evaluation. His work has spanned policy areas such as post-secondary success and college readiness, school improvement, teacher effectiveness, early childhood education, and adult and workforce literacy. He recently lead the Analytic Technical Support Task for the Regional Educational Laboratory – Mid Atlantic. He served as the Executive Director of Research, Planning and Accountability for the Atlanta Public School District, and as an Assistant Professor of Research, Measurement, and Statistics at Georgia State University. His career began in 1989 as a program director for African American, Hispanic, and Native American students in Engineering and Science. Dr. Hart holds a Ph.D. in Evaluation and Measurement from Kent State University, a M.Ed. with a focus on Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Research from Cleveland State University, and a Bachelor's Degree in Industrial and Systems Engineering from the Georgia Institute of Technology.

Amanda Corcoran

Amanda Corcoran joined the Council of the Great City Schools in October of 2006. In her role as special projects manager, she has handled the Council's Senior Urban Education Research Fellowship program and contributed to numerous Council research reports investigating urban student achievement trends, the use of student data to improve outcomes, policies and practices impacting English language learner achievement, the characteristics of urban school systems that have made progress on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), strategies for hiring and retaining high quality teachers, and the shifting role of principal supervisors in supporting and advancing school-based instructional leadership. She also works closely with the Council's academics department to produce resources designed to assist district leaders and staff in implementing college- and career-readiness standards, and serves as staff liaison to the organization's executive committee and board of directors. Ms. Corcoran earned a bachelor of arts from Tufts University and a master's degree in public policy from Georgetown University, where she worked as a graduate research assistant for the Center for Public and Nonprofit Leadership.

Prior to joining the Council she also worked in development for the International Baccalaureate Organization and in public relations as an account executive at Ruder Finn and RF Binder.

Finance and Business Services Team

David W. Koch

David Koch is the former Chief Administrative Officer for the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). The LAUSD is the nation's second largest public school system, with more than 700,000 students in grades K-12, an annual budget of more than $9 billion, and more than 80,000 full- and part-time employees. Mr. Koch's responsibilities encompassed virtually all non-instructional operations of the district, including finance, facilities, information technology, and all of the business functions. Mr. Koch also served the LAUSD as business manager, executive director of information services, and deputy controller. Mr. Koch was also business manager for the Kansas City, Missouri Public School District and was with Arthur Young and Company prior to entering public service. He is a graduate of the University of Missouri and a Certified Public Accountant in the states of California, Missouri, and Kansas. Currently a resident of Long Beach, California, Mr. Koch provides consulting services to public sector clients and companies doing business with public sector agencies.

Michael Eugene

Michael Eugene has served as the Chief Operations Officer for Orange County Public Schools since 2009, where he leads seven departments including transportation, school police and safety, child nutrition, information technology, procurement, environmental services and building code compliance. Previously, he served as the Business Manager for the Los Angeles Unified School District, and Chief Operating Officer for the Cleveland Metropolitan School District. Michael was selected by Orlando Business Journal in 2013 as the Chief Operating Officer of the Year in the public sector. In 2014, the OCPS Operations Division won the prestigious Governor's Sterling Award, the highest honor for management quality in the State of Florida. Michael is regularly invited to lecture at Harvard University on the use of strategic data in management to improve quality, efficiency and customer service. Mr. Eugene also serves in a voluntary capacity as co-director of the Council of the Great City Schools' "Managing for Results" KPI Program. Before joining public education, Mr. Eugene was a management consultant in the private and not-for-profit sectors specializing in performance measurement, benchmarking, and public budgeting. Mr. Eugene holds a master's degree in public administration.

Chris Farkas

Chris Farkas is the Chief Operating Officer for the Hillsborough County Public Schools. Hillsborough County is currently the eighth largest school district with over 212,000 students enrolled. He is responsible for growth management and planning, planning and construction, transportation, building code inspectors, and maintenance operations. Hillsborough County has 27 high schools, 45 middle schools, 150 elementary schools, 56 charter schools, and 25 alternative sites. A former classroom teacher, Assistant Principal, High School Principal, and Principal Supervisor he currently also serves on the Hillsborough County Planning Commission and serves as a liaison with both the NAACP and MacDill Air Force Base (Central Command). He holds an

education degree from the University of Alabama as well as a master's degree from National Louis University.

Judith Marte

Judith Marte is the Chief Financial Officer of Miami Dade Public Schools, the fourth largest school system in the nation. She was held numerous positions in Miami over the last 13 years including Chief Budget Officer and Deputy CFO. Prior to relocating with her family to Miami, Ms. Marte was the Executive Director, Business Services for the Lawrence Public Schools in Massachusetts where she was responsible for all Finance functions, technology, food services, student transportation, custodial services, facilities development and school safety. Ms. Marte began her career at a large CPA firm in Boston where she worked in auditing and consulting services. She received her MBA from University of New Hampshire and her Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (Accounting) from Merrimack College. Ms. Marte completed, with Achievement, the first Council of Great City School Executive Education Program in 2012 and now acts as a mentor to incoming participants

Michael Bobby

Michael Bobby was the Chief Operations and Finance Officer for the Charleston County Public Schools in South Carolina, a district of 50,000 students and the second largest school system in South Carolina. Mr. Bobby held that position for nearly eight years and was responsible for all operations including Human Resources, Information Technology, and Capital Projects. Charleston's over-all budget exceeds $750,000,000. It includes a capital program that will exceed one billion dollars of construction and improvements districtwide. While in Charleston, Mr. Bobby was instrumental in the passage and extension of a one penny local option sales tax passed by two to one margin, which will complete the re-construction of the county's educational infra-structure. Prior to Charleston, he was the Chief Finance and Operations officer for Richland County School District in Columbia South Carolina for two years. Before arriving in South Carolina, his career was in Ohio public schools where he began a thirty year career teaching mathematics and coaching. His role shifted to an administrative leader in 1985. He since has held positions of Business Manager, Quality Assurance Manager, Assistant to the Superintendent, and Assistant Superintendent for Business Operations serving nearly twenty years in the South-Western City School District (the fifth largest district in Ohio) .

Donald Kennedy

Donald Kennedy is the Chief Financial Officer for Baltimore City Public Schools, an urban school district serving approximately 85,000 students. He has worked extensively in urban school districts throughout the county, having served during his career as CFO for Boston Public Schools, Chief Operations Officer for the Bridgeport, Connecticut School District, Chief Financial and Operations Officer for Seattle Public Schools, and Chief Financial and Administrative Officer for Charleston County School District in South Carolina. In these roles Mr. Kennedy has had leadership responsibility for school districts' business functions of Finance, Human Resources, Procurement, Information Technology, Capital Building Program, Facility Services, School Support Services, Planning and Enrollment, and other business functions. Mr. Kennedy also serves as a volunteer peer review consultant for the Council of the Great City Schools. In this role he, along with senior

managers from urban school districts from across the country, conduct operational, financial, and organizational reviews of the nation's urban school districts and recommends strategies to assist the districts' leadership achieve greater efficiencies and effectiveness. Mr. Kennedy has a B.S. degree in Accounting from Newberry College in Newberry, SC, an M.A. in Organizational Design from Seattle University, and a Certified Public Accountant certificate from the state of Alabama. Prior to entering public service Mr. Kennedy worked for the Boeing Company and Science Applications International Corporation in various financial management positions and also served as a commissioned officer in the U.S. Air Force.

Oleg Gorokhovsky

Oleg Gorokhovsky is the Director of Budget for the Broward County Public Schools. For eight years prior to his assignment to the Budget Office in March of 2013, Mr. Gorokhovsky held the Director of Accounting & Financial Reporting position with the District. Mr. Gorokhovsky has more than 24 years of experience in accounting, reporting, budget, and finance in the non-profit, housing and urban development, city government, and private industries as well as school district. Mr. Gorokhovsky received a Master's Degree in Accounting from Florida International University. He is a Certified Public Accountant in Florida. Mr. Gorokhovsky is also a member of the Association of School Business Officials International and the Government Financial Officers Association. Mr. Gorokhovsky is currently participating in the Council of Great City School Urban Executive Program.

Research Team

Ray Hart

Raymond Hart is currently the Director of Research for the Council of the Great City Schools. Dr. Hart has more than 20 years of experience in research and evaluation. His work has spanned policy areas such as post-secondary success and college readiness, school improvement, teacher effectiveness, early childhood education, and adult and workforce literacy. He recently lead the Analytic Technical Support Task for the Regional Educational Laboratory – Mid Atlantic. He served as the Executive Director of Research, Planning and Accountability for the Atlanta Public School District, and as an Assistant Professor of Research, Measurement, and Statistics at Georgia State University. His career began in 1989 as a program director for African American, Hispanic, and Native American students in Engineering and Science. Dr. Hart holds a Ph.D. in Evaluation and Measurement from Kent State University, a M.Ed. with a focus on Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Research from Cleveland State University, and a Bachelor's Degree in Industrial and Systems Engineering from the Georgia Institute of Technology.

Carla Stevens

Carla Stevens is the Assistant Superintendent for Research and Accountability for the Houston Independent School District. Her responsibilities include the oversight of the Department of Research and Accountability, project director of the district's multiple federal Teacher Incentive Fund grants, and associate director for the Houston Education Research Consortium with Rice University's Kinder Institute. Ms. Stevens has worked in HISD since 1991 in various roles within the district's research department, and as assistant superintendent since 2007. Ms. Stevens' areas

of expertise include state and federal accountability systems, student assessment, program evaluation, teacher performance pay models, and student performance within teacher appraisal systems. Ms. Stevens was also appointed in August 2008 by the Texas Commissioner of Education to the Joint Advisory Board of the Texas Education Research Centers

Eric Moore

Eric Moore has recently been appointed the Chief of Accountability, Innovation and Research at Minneapolis Public Schools. This new appointment will provide leadership for the full scope of the Research, Evaluation, Accountability and Assessment Department (REAA), as well as the district's efforts around equity, integration, and innovation. Prior to this appointment, Eric provided four years of leadership to MPS as the Executive Director of REAA (2013-2017) leading efforts in youth evaluation, SEL measurement, 9th grade on-track systems, data visualization, and community partner evaluation. Prior to his current position in the district, he served as a Senior Research Associate at Rainbow Research Inc., a non-profit evaluation firm specializing in evaluation capacity building as well as the Director of Student Services and Diversity in the Anoka-Hennepin school district from 2001-2008. He has over 15 years of mixed method evaluation experience in K-12 education, juvenile justice, out of school time programming, and organizational development. He is a former Woodrow Wilson fellow recipient at the University of Texas, Austin (1993) and a recent graduate of the Strategic Data Project at the Center for Education Policy Research, Harvard University (2015-2017). He holds a BA in English Education at Langston University, a MA in Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota and has completed preliminary examinations towards his PhD in Evaluation Studies at the University of Minnesota. Over the past decade he has presented at conferences such as Learning Forward (NSDC), the American Evaluation Association, the American Educational Research Association and the Council of Great City Schools on topics such as race and student achievement, racial identity and data interpretation, youth evaluation practices, and measuring racial attitudes and non-cognitive student abilities for K-12 populations. He is passionate about using program evaluation as a way to address racial and economic inequalities.

Barbara Mattei-Smith

Barbara Mattei-Smith is the Director of Performance and Accountability for Cincinnati Public Schools (CPS) and has more than 20 years of experience in education policy, research, and evaluation. Prior to joining CPS, she worked in the Office of Ohio Governor John Kasich, the Ohio Department of Education, and the Ohio Legislative Budget Office developing policies in school finance, school improvement, comparative analysis, and school accountability. Prior to entering state service, Ms. Mattei-Smith worked for Square D Corporation where she developed analytical tools to evaluate inventory use and sales forecasting. She has also worked as a lecturer or an adjunct instructor for Northern Kentucky University, Wright State University, and Cleveland State University instructing courses in economics, statistics and quantitative analysis. Ms. Mattei-Smith holds a bachelor's degree in accounting from Gannon University and a master's degree in economics from the University of Pittsburgh.

Carrie Giovannone-Jordan

Dr. Carrie L. Giovannone-Jordan has worked with the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) for the past decade holding various positions in the agency. In the first five years of her tenure with the agency, Dr. Giovannone-Jordan was the Director of the NAEP assessment for the state of Arizona, responsible for reporting NAEP results to various stakeholders and playing a role in the recruitment of Arizona schools. Her second position with the agency was as the Deputy Associate Superintendent of Research and Evaluation (R&E). She was the 'working' manager of R&E from July 2011 through August 2015 during which time the focus was on accountability, research and program evaluation. Her expertise is in program evaluation where she worked on a team that conducted a number of evaluations for state programs. Her research over the years has been primarily focused on under-served populations within Arizona. Dr. Giovannone-Jordan's current role with the agency is as Chief of Regulatory Compliance. She is a consultant on program evaluations with outside organizations, is a faculty associate with Arizona State University, and on occasion is a guest reviewer for the Journal of American Indian Education. Prior to working at the ADE, Dr. Giovannone-Jordan worked for Kent State University (KSU), Kent, Ohio from June 2002 through April 2006 in their Bureau of Research Training and Services and the Faculty Professional Development Center. She developed an extensive knowledge base on program evaluations utilizing mixed methods covering various areas of education within K-12 and higher education. While working at KSU, Dr. Giovannone-Jordan received her Master's Degree and Doctorate in Evaluation and Measurement from the KSU College and Graduate School of Education, Health, and Human Services. She also holds a Bachelor's degree in Fine and Professional Arts from Youngstown State University, Youngstown, Ohio.

Ashley Ison

Ashley L. Ison joined the Council as a Research and ELL Policy Specialist in 2016. Within this role, Ashley works with both the Research and English Language Learners departments performing data collection and analysis, as well as producing research reports and district resources. Prior to joining the Council, Ashley was a research intern at Coffey Consulting, LLC supporting the research department in building reports on higher education issues. Ashley also interned at New America where she contributed to research on teacher preparation programs and regularly published articles on the organization's education policy blog, EdCentral. Ashley is currently earning a master's in education policy studies from the George Washington University and holds a bachelor's degree in African American Studies from Yale University. Before attending graduate school, Ashley taught at a public charter school in New Haven, CT.

Renata Uzzell Lyons

Renata Uzzell joined the Council of Great City Schools as research manager in January 2009. As a research manager for the Council, Renata performs a variety of research tasks including collecting and analyzing data on urban school districts and helping to develop regular Council reports, surveys, and other publications. Prior to joining the staff, Ms. Uzzell was the data and research analyst for the Alliance for Excellent Education and The Aspen Institute's Commission on No Child Left Behind. As the research and data analyst for these organizations, she coordinated and managed data collection and analysis and produced several white papers relating to No Child Left Behind. Uzzell graduated from George Washington University with a master's degree in

education policy studies. She also earned a Bachelor of Science degree in mathematics and secondary education from North Carolina A&T State University. In addition to her policy related experience, Uzzell spent three years teaching high school mathematics in Prince George's County Public Schools in Maryland. She has also worked for the Government Accountability Office, former U.S. Congresswoman Eva Clayton (NC), and with the DC Teaching Fellows Program

APPENDIX E. INDIVIDUALS INTERVIEWED

Organizational Team

- Anthony Hamlet, Superintendent
- Ron Joseph, Chief Operating Officer
- Scott Gutowski, Chief Information Officer
- Jody Spolar, Chief Human Resources Officer
- Pam Capretta, Executive Director, Finance and Facilities
- Donna Micheaux, Deputy Superintendent
- Darlene Corris, Curriculum Supervisor
- Tom Meeder, Chief, Plant Operations
- Curtistine Walker, Director, Food Services
- George Brown, Chief, School Safety and Security
- Ted Vasser, Director, Pupil Transportation
- Mark Stuckey, Director, End-User Support
- Dave Moore, Director, Infrastructure and IT Services
- Lorraine Marnet, Director, Enterprise Applications
- Eddy Jones, Director, Human Capital Information Systems
- Alexis Howard, Manager, Human Capital
- Tara Tucci, Director, Performance Management Systems
- Nancy Kusko, Director, Benefits Administration
- Alyssa Ford Heywood, Coordinator, Employee Growth and Evaluation Systems
- Lynn Casselberry, Director, Compensation
- Vidya Patil, Director, Facilities Maintenance and Plant Operations
- John Soplinski, Manager, Accounts Payable
- Laura Cosharek, Manager, Financial Services
- Alison Huguley, Assistant Superintendent, K-5, K-8 Schools
- David May-Stein, Assistant Superintendent, 6-8 and Center Schools
- Wayne Walters, Assistant Superintendent, 6-12 Schools
- Melissa Friez, Assistant Superintendent, 9-12 Schools

Instructional Team

- Regina Holley, School Board President, District 2
- Sylvia Wilson, School Board 1st Vice-President, District 1
- Terry Kennedy, School Board 2nd Vice-President, District 5
- Moira Kaleida, School Board, District 6
- Anthony Hamlet, Superintendent
- Errika Fearbry Jones, Executive Director, Internal & External Affairs
- Donna Micheaux, Former Deputy Superintendent
- Allison McCarthy, Former Executive Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
- Naomi York-Abdullah, K-5 ELA Curriculum Coordinator

- Ann Fillmore, 9-12 Literacy Curriculum Coordinator
- Patty Falk, K to/MTSS-RTI Coordinator
- William Scott Breeden, 9-12 Math Curriculum Coordinator
- Robert Shields, 6-8 Mathematics Curriculum Coordinator
- Patricia A. Lee, K-5 Mathematics Coordinator
- Carol Barone Martin, Executive Director, Early Childhood Education
- Nicole Banks, Early Literacy Specialist
- Patsy Ann Manganaro, Early Literacy Specialist
- Nicole Banks, Early Literacy Specialist (Pittsburgh SpringHill)
- Kara LaPorte, Early Literacy Specialist (Pittsburgh Langley)
- Marla Pelkofer, Early Literacy Specialist, Central Office Coordinator
- Zuri M. Bryant, Literacy Specialist
- Edward Littlehale, Principal, Mifflin PreK-8
- Karen Arnold, Principal, Fulton PreK-5
- Paula M. Heinzman, Principal, Schiller 6-8
- Angel Washington, Principal, Carrick High School
- Michael Perella, Principal, Concord PreK-5
- Laura Dadey, Principal, Sunnyside PreK-8
- Lisa Gallagher, Principal, Woolslair PreK-5
- Chris Horne, Principal, Milliones 6-12
- Kimberly Safran, Principal, Brashear 9-12
- LouAnn Zwieryznski, Principal, Westinghouse 6-12
- Kashif Henderson, K-12 Coordinator for Gifted and Talented
- Amy Filipowski, Executive Director of Program for Students with Exceptionalities (PSE)
- Nina Espositi-Visgitis, President, Pittsburgh Federation of Teachers
- Tamiya Larkin, Title Program Coordinator
- Jonathan Coverl, ESL Director
- Anne Marie Harr, Special Education Litigation
- Jocelyn Kramer, Lead Attorney
- Allynce Pinchback, Director of Professional Director (by phone)
- Alyssa Ford-Heywood, Coordinator, Employee Growth/Evaluation Systems
- Alison Huguley, Assistant Superintendent
- David May-Stein, Assistant Superintendent
- Wayne Walter, Assistant Superintendent
- Kevin Bivens, Assistant Superintendent (by phone)
- Melissa Friez, Assistant Superintendent
- David Breingan, Executive Director, Lawrenceville United
- Rick Flanagan, Youth Development Director, Bloomfield Garfield Corporation
- Launcelot Brown, Chair, Education Foundations and Leadership, Duquesne University
- Michael Self, Sr., Academic Dean, Community College of Allegheny County
- Paulette Foster, Co-chair, Local Task Force—Right to Education
- Pamela Harbin, Staff Organizer, Education Rights Network
- Stan Thompson, Education Program Director, The Heinz Endowments

- Kirk Holbrook, Chief of Staff, State Representative Jake Wheatley's Office
- Marge McMackin, Board of Directors, Hill District Education Council
- Heather Cunningham, Faculty, Pitt Center for Urban Education
- James Fogarty, A+ Schools
- Aweys Mwaliya, Somali Bantu Community Association
- Maria Searcy, Equity Advisory Panel
- Shannon Gilliam, Homewood Children's Village
- Ryan Scott, Pittsburgh Urban League
- Jennifer Coligan, Teacher, Miller
- Kim Daelhousen, ESL Teacher, Brashear
- Terry Monroe, Teacher, Brashear
- Christopher Warden, Teacher, Sunnyside
- Regina Kim, Teacher, Sunnyside
- Michael Harris, Program for Students with Exceptionalities, Fulton
- Theresa Hawkins, Teacher – ELA (2nd Grade), Fulton
- Allison McLean, Teacher – 4th Grade Mathematics/ITL2, Arsenal K-5
- Tamela Brown, Parent (12th & 5th graders), Pittsburgh Obama and Pittsburgh Sunnyside
- Alyssa Kull, Parent (3rd grade & K), Pittsburgh Sunnyside
- Tracey Roberson, Parent Engagement Specialist, African Academy
- Shallegra Moye, Parent (10th grade & 3rd grade), Pittsburgh Brashear and Manchester Academic Charter
- Allyson Delnore, Parent (4th grade & 1st grade), Pittsburgh Fulton
- Bonita Allen, Parent of two PPS graduates, Pennsylvania PTA (9 PPS Schools are PTA's)

Operational and Finance Team

- Dr. Anthony Hamlet, Superintendent
- Erika Fearbry Jones, Executive Director, Internal and External Affairs
- Scott Gutowski, Chief Information Officer
- Pamela Capretta, Ex. Director, Finance & Facilities Mgmt.
- Jody Spolar, Chief Human Resources Officer, Retired
- Ronald Joseph, Chief Operations Officer
- Thomas Meeder, Chief Plant Operations
- John Soplinski, Manager, Accounts Payable
- Vidyadhar Patil, Dir., Facilities Maintenance & Plant Operations
- Roberta Strauss, Associate Director, Budget Development, Management & Operations
- Lynne Casselberry, Director, Compensation
- Linda Simcic, Supervisor, Payroll
- Nora Jays, Project Dir., Medicaid Reimbursement
- Regina Wagner, Senior Accountant, Medicaid
- Melanie Wittman, Risk Management and Workers Compensation
- Nancy Kusko, Director, Benefits Administration
- Theodore Vasser, Director, Pupil Transportation,
- DaMon Macklin, Supervisor, Special Ed. Transportation

- Robert Wood, Coordinator Transportation
- Curtistine Walker, Director, Food Services
- Peter Estes, Food Service Account Manager
- Peter Fatalino, Coordinator, Food Service Center
- Edward Reinhardt, General Foreman
- Zachary Margerum, Coordinator, Maintenance
- Ryan Neely, Project Mgr., Budget & Development
- Tracey Gilliard, Supervisor, Budget Development
- Daniel Simmers, Supervisor, Financial Reporting
- Linda Abrams, Charter Coordinator, Budget Dev.
- Deborah Willig, Project Manager, Operations
- Leon Webb, Manager, Purchasing Support
- Maria Moio, Supervisor, Plant Operations
- Mark Boyd, Supervisor, Plant Operations
- Kevin Bivins, Assistant Superintendent, K5/k-8
- Dr. Allison, Assistant Superintendent, K5/K-8
- David May-Stein, Assistant Superintendent, K6-8 & Center Schools
- Dr. Wayne Walters, Assistant Superintendent, 6-12
- Melissa Friez, Assistant Superintendent, 9-12
- Dr. Dara Ware Allen, Student Support Services
- Building Principals
  - Ruthie Rea
  - Sally Rifugiato
  - Dr. Monica Lamar
  - Michael Perella
  - Molly O'Malley Argueta
  - Sharon Fisher
  - Rod Necciai
  - Ed Littlehale
  - Darrel Prioleau
  - Paula Heinzman
  - Dr. MiChele Holly
  - Melissa Pearlman
  - Dennis Chakey
  - Shawn McNeil
  - Dr. Shemeca Crenshaw
  - Angel Washington

Research Team

- Dr. Anthony Hamlet, Superintendent
- Errika Fearbry Jones, Executive Director, Office of the Superintendent
- Debbie Friss, Director of Research

- Lisa Augustin, Director of Assessment
- Kara Bane, Data and Research Team
- Veronica Amundson, Data and Research Team
- Dr. Regina Holley, President; District 2
- Sylvia Wilson First Vice-President; District 1
- Terry Kennedy, Second Vice President; District 5
- Scott Gutowski, Chief Information Officer
- Leah Lipner, Faison PreK-5
- Danielle Opacic, Brookline K-8
- Kate Daher, CAPA 6-12
- Diane Mudry, Carrick 9-12
- Rob Mitchell, Classical 6-8
- Cindy Werner, Westinghouse 6-12
- Tracey Theobald, Liberty K-5
- Cara Remmick, Conroy (Special Ed Center)
- Tamiya Larkin, Federal Programs
- Dr. Donna Micheaux, Former Deputy Superintendent
- Anthony Periello, Assessment Team
- Tina Still, Assessment Team
- Scott Manns, Assessment Team
- Tara Tucci, Director, Performance Management Systems
- Tiffany Buchanan, Student Data Systems Support
- Toni Raymond, Student Data Systems Support
- Ronelle Perry, Student Data Systems Support
- Geri Ennis, Student Data Systems Support
- James Fogarty, A+ Schools
- Steve Deflitch, EFA Parent
- Maria Searcy, Equity Advisory Panel
- Margaret McMackin, Hill District Education Council
- Dr. Shannah Gilliam, Homewood Children's Village
- Ivonne Smith-Tapia, Latino Center
- Pam Harbin, LTF RTE Council
- Aweys Mwaliya, Somali Bantu Community Association
- Esther Bush, Urban League
- Cynthia James, Youth Places
- Stan Thompson, Heinz Endowments
- Michael Self, Community College of Allegheny
- Heather Cunningham, University of Pittsburgh
- Yael Silk, Pittsburgh Promise
- Naomi York, Coordinator, K-5 Literacy
- Ann Fillmore, Coordinator, 9-12 Literacy
- Patricia Lee, Coordinator, K-5 Math
- Robert Shields, Coordinator, 6-8 Math

- Scott Breeden, Coordinator, 9-12 Math
- Darlene Corris, Curriculum Supervisor, Science K-12
- Michael Dreger, Curriculum Supervisor, Social Studies
- Kashif Henderson, Coordinator, K-12 Gifted & Talented
- Yolanda Pinizzotto, Coordinator, English as a Second Language
- Aubrey Ploesch, Music Teacher
- Kevin Bivins, Assistant Superintendent
- Alison Huguley, Assistant Superintendent
- David May-Stein, Assistant Superintendent
- Ruthie Rea, Principal
- Sally Rifugiato, Principal
- Monica Lamar, Principal
- Michael Perella, Principal
- Molly O'Malley Argueta, Principal
- Sharon Fisher, Principal
- Darrel Prioleau, Principal
- Paula Heinzman, Principal
- Melissa Pearlman, Principal
- Angel Washington, Principal
- David Lott, Principal

APPENDIX F. MATERIALS REVIEWED

- A+ Schools: Pittsburgh's Community Alliance for Public Education letter to Dr. Anthony Hamlet, November 2, 2016
- 2015 Final Budget January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015
- 2016 Final Budget January 1, 2016 – December 31, 20161
- Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, For the Fiscal Year ended December 31, 2014
- 2016 -2017 Site-Based Budget
- Superintendent Direct Reports, Organization Chart (#1)
- Chief Academic Office, Organization Chart (#5)
- Program for Students with Exceptionalities, Organization Chart (#14)
- Whole Child, Whole Community: Building a Bridge to the Pittsburgh Promise, Executive Summary, December 2013
- Whole Child, Whole Community: Building a Bridge to the Pittsburgh Promise, December 2013
- Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment, Organization Chart—includes ESL (#6)
- K-12 Common Core (Literacy) Curriculum Coordinator 2016-17, Priorities and Benchmarks
- Professional Learning & Growth Plan, Program for Students with Exceptionalities (PSE)
- Assessment PD/Training Offerings, 2016-17
- Professional Learning & Growth Guide, 6-12 Literacy
- Professional Learning & Growth Guide, English Language Arts (ELA) K-5
- Professional Learning & Growth Guide, ESL
- Professional Learning & Growth Guide, 6-12 Mathematics
- Professional Learning & Growth Guide, K-5 Mathematics
- Professional Learning & Growth Guide, K-12 Science
- Professional learning & Growth Guide, K-12 Social Studies
- District Management Council. "Aligning Resources to Priorities and Developing A-ROI Capacity," October 15, 2015
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- Evaluation Brief on the Promise Readiness Corps
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- 2015-16 End of Year Network Stocktake Survey
- District PD Participant Feedback Form
- Leadership Week 2016-Survey Final
- March LLI Feedback Form
- Grade 7 ELA Road Maps
- English Scope and Sequence 16-17, Final Draft
- ELA English 1 Standards Alignment Index
- ELA English 1, Keystone Assessment Anchor & Eligible Content Alignment Index (Literature)
- 3rd Grade, CCSS Standards Index Alignment (Final)
- 3rd Grade 2016-2017 ELA Year at a Glance: Pacing Guide, Scope and Sequence, Roadmaps, Performance Tasks with Rubrics, Supplemental Book List
- Algebra 2 Roadmap 2016-2017
- G3 Curriculum map 2016-2017
- Geometry Roadmap 2016-2017
- Grade 7 Math Roadmap 16-17 (Final)
- K-5 ELA Framework July 22, 2016
- Algebra I Curriculum Roadmap 2016-2017
- English Language Arts, Grade 3 Comprehension: Short Answer Performance Assessment #1, Student Materials
- English Language Arts, Grade 3 Comprehension: Short Answer Performance Assessment #2, Student Materials
- English Language Arts, Grade 3 Comprehension: Short Answer Performance Assessment #3, Student Materials
- G3 U4 Geometry Unit Assessment
- G3 U1 Unit Assessment
- G3 U2 Unit Assessment
- G3 U6 Multiplication 2 Unit Assessment
- Grade 3 Unit 1 Reading Unit Assessment (RUA) Final
- Grade 3 Unit 2 Reading Unit Assessment (RUA) Final
- Grade 3 Unit 4 Reading Unit Assessment (RUA) Rev
- Grade 3 Unit 6 Reading Unit Assessment (RUA) Final
- 2016-2017 Instruction Framework in K-5 English Language Arts
- 2016 Best of Keystone Results, Grade 11—African American Students
- 2016 Best of Keystone Results, Grade 11—All Students
- 2016 Best of Keystone Results, Grade 11—White Students
- 2016 PSSA Accountability—All Schools, All Students: Grade 3-8 Results
- Assessment Student List (EdInsight)
- Individual Student Report (EdInsight)

- Keystone Tracking (EdInsight)
- Keystone Tracking Student Details (1) (EdInsight)
- PSSA 2015-2016 District Analysis (EdInsight)
- PSSA + PASA Results 2016—All Students
- PSSA + PASA ELA Results 2016—All Students, Grades 3-8
- PSSA Student Details (EdInsight)
- RUA Grade 3 Single Year Test Analysis (EdInsight)
- Magnet Application 2016-17 for Current Students in Pittsburgh Public Schools
- Magnet Application 2016-17 for New Students to Pittsburgh Public Schools
- PPS Magnet Options and Offerings Guide
- PPS AP Courses Offered in School Year 2016-17
- Human Resources in PPS: A Superintendent's Reference Tool Kit
- Annual Rating Form for Principals and School Administrators: Your Summative Evaluation
- Year-End Evaluation for Classroom Teachers Checkpoint--June 15, 2016
- Self-Assessment and Performance Priorities Template for Central Office Staff
- Email to Cabinet: Information about Central Office Annual Ratings and Distribution, July 29, 2016
- 2015-16 Commissioned Staff Evaluation and Compensation Process Overview
- Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2013-14 List of Meaningful Interventions for Title I Priority/Focus Schools
- Pittsburgh SD: List of Priority and Focus Schools
- SIG Transformation Requirements
- 2016-2017 School Year K-5 Math Pilots
- List of Schools 6-12 Offering Reading Programs Other than District Adoptions
- Improving Student Achievement in Pittsburgh Public Schools, External review of Curriculum and Instructional Programs, Executive Summary of Findings and Recommendations, June 2015
- Improving Student Achievement in Pittsburgh Public Schools, A Review of Curriculum and Instructional Programs: Findings and Recommendations
- School Board Agendas--http://www.pps.k12.pa.us/domain/19
- AMAO Reports, 2012-2013 & 2013-2014
- Title III Expenditures 2013-14 School Year
- Title III Expenditures 2014-15 School Year
- Title III Expenditures 2015-16 School Year
- 2015-16 Official Enrollment by Grade Level
- 2015-16 Official Enrollment by Race
- 2015-16 Official Enrollment by Grade Level, Race and IEP
- 2015-16 Official Enrollment by IEP Status and ED Status
- 2015-16 ELL Students by Grade
- 2015-16 ELL Students by Grade and IEP
- PSE Data 9-16-2016

- PSE Data—Initial Evaluations 2015-2016
- High School Graduation Rates, All Students, 2011 through 2015
- 2015-16 Unique Students Suspended by Length of Suspension
- 2016 Accountability Data File memo and Layout
- 2012 Accountability File
- 2013 Accountability File
- 2014 Accountability File
- 2015 Accountability File
- 2016 Accountability File
- IEP Enrollment by ED Setting
- EI Educational Settings 2
- Personnel Counts
- Five Year Trends: Average ACT Scores
- Pittsburgh Schools ACT Composite 5 Year Trends—by School
- SAT Trend Report (High School)
- Dual Enrollment Course Data
- 2015-16 Students Enrolled in an AP Course—by Race and School
- AP Exam District Summary by Student Demographics (2016)
- AP Exam School Summary by Student Demographics (2016)
- 2015-16 Official Enrollment—Gifted Students by ELL
- 2015-16 Official Enrollment—Gifted Students by Gender
- 2015-16 Official Enrollment—Gifted Students by Race
- 2015-16 Official Enrollment—Gifted Students
- 2015-16 ELL Students by School, Race, Language and IEP
- Disability by Grade
- Pre-K Curriculum Materials 2016-17
- Growing Our Own School Support Model, 2016-2017
- 9-12 ESL Decision Tree
- ESL Elementary Decision Tree
- English as a Second Language Program (ESL) Handbook
- Multi-Tiered System of Supports Handbook 2016-2017, Academics and Behavior
- PSE Progress Monitoring
- Collaboration: PSE and School Teams Working Together to Support Students with Disabilities
- MTSS Implementation V10
- Parent PD Flyer 2016-2017—Version 2
- PSE Debrief and 90 Day Plan
- Program for Students with Exceptionalities Milestones 2016-2017

APPENDIX G. HISTORY OF STRATEGIC SUPPORT TEAMS

History of Strategic Support Teams of the Council of the Great City Schools

The following is a history of the Strategic Support Teams provided by the Council of the Great City Schools to its member urban school districts over the last 18 years.

City	Area	Year
Albuquerque		
	Facilities and Roofing	2003
	Human Resources	2003
	Information Technology	2003
	Special Education	2005
	Legal Services	2005
	Safety and Security	2007
	Research	2013
	Human Resources	2016
Anchorage		
	Finance	2004
	Communications	2008
	Math Instruction	2010
	Food Services	2011
	Organizational Structure	2012
	Facilities Operations	2015
	Special Education	2015
	Human Resources	2016
Atlanta		
	Facilities	2009
	Transportation	2010
Austin		
	Special Education	2010
Baltimore		
	Information Technology	2011
Birmingham		
	Organizational Structure	2007
	Operations	2008
	Facilities	2010
	Human Resources	2014
	Financial Operations	2015
Boston		
	Special Education	2009
	Curriculum & Instruction	2014
	Food Service	2014
	Facilities	2016
Bridgeport		
	Transportation	2012

Broward County (FL)		
	Information Technology	2000
	Food Services	2009
	Transportation	2009
	Information Technology	2012
Buffalo		
	Superintendent Support	2000
	Organizational Structure	2000
	Curriculum and Instruction	2000
	Personnel	2000
	Facilities and Operations	2000
	Communications	2000
	Finance	2000
	Finance II	2003
	Bilingual Education	2009
	Special Education	2014
Caddo Parish (LA)		
	Facilities	2004
Charleston		
	Special Education	2005
	Transportation	2014
Charlotte- Mecklenburg		
	Human Resources	2007
	Organizational Structure	2012
	Transportation	2013
Cincinnati		
	Curriculum and Instruction	2004
	Curriculum and Instruction	2009
	Special Education	2013
Chicago		
	Warehouse Operations	2010
	Special Education I	2011
	Special Education II	2012
	Bilingual Education	2014
Christina (DE)		
	Curriculum and Instruction	2007
Cleveland		
	Student Assignments	1999, 2000
	Transportation	2000
	Safety and Security	2000
	Facilities Financing	2000
	Facilities Operations	2000
	Transportation	2004
	Curriculum and Instruction	2005
	Safety and Security	2007

	Safety and Security	2008
	Theme Schools	2009
Columbus		
	Superintendent Support	2001
	Human Resources	2001
	Facilities Financing	2002
	Finance and Treasury	2003
	Budget	2003
	Curriculum and Instruction	2005
	Information Technology	2007
	Food Services	2007
	Transportation	2009
Dallas		
	Procurement	2007
	Staffing Levels	2009
Dayton		
	Superintendent Support	2001
	Curriculum and Instruction	2001
	Finance	2001
	Communications	2002
	Curriculum and Instruction	2005
	Budget	2005
	Curriculum and Instruction	2008
Denver		
	Superintendent Support	2001
	Personnel	2001
	Curriculum and Instruction	2005
	Bilingual Education	2006
	Curriculum and Instruction	2008
	Common Core Implementation	2014
Des Moines		
	Budget and Finance	2003
	Staffing Levels	2012
	Human Resources	2012
	Special Education	2015
	Bilingual Education	2015
Detroit		
	Curriculum and Instruction	2002
	Assessment	2002
	Communications	2002
	Curriculum and Assessment	2003
	Communications	2003
	Textbook Procurement	2004
	Food Services	2007
	Curriculum and Instruction	2008

	Facilities	2008
	Finance and Budget	2008
	Information Technology	2008
	Stimulus planning	2009
	Human Resources	2009
Fresno		
	Curriculum and Instruction	2012
Guilford County		
	Bilingual Education	2002
	Information Technology	2003
	Special Education	2003
	Facilities	2004
	Human Resources	2007
Hillsborough County		
	Transportation	2005
	Procurement	2005
	Special Education	2012
	Transportation	2015
Houston		
	Facilities Operations	2010
	Capitol Program	2010
	Information Technology	2011
	Procurement	2011
Indianapolis		
	Transportation	2007
	Information Technology	2010
	Finance and Budget	2013
Jackson (MS)		
	Bond Referendum	2006
	Communications	2009
Jacksonville		
	Organization and Management	2002
	Operations	2002
	Human Resources	2002
	Finance	2002
	Information Technology	2002
	Finance	2006
	Facilities operations	2015
	Budget and finance	2015
Kansas City		
	Human Resources	2005
	Information Technology	2005
	Finance	2005
	Operations	2005
	Purchasing	2006

	Curriculum and Instruction	2006
	Program Implementation	2007
	Stimulus Planning	2009
	Human Resources	2016
	Transportation	2016
	Finance	2016
	Facilities	2016
	Curriculum and Instruction	2016
Little Rock		
	Curriculum and Instruction	2010
Los Angeles		
	Budget and Finance	2002
	Organizational Structure	2005
	Finance	2005
	Information Technology	2005
	Human Resources	2005
	Business Services	2005
Louisville		
	Management Information	2005
	Staffing study	2009
Memphis		
	Information Technology	2007
	Special Education	2015
	Food Services	2016
	Procurement	2016
Miami-Dade County		
	Construction Management	2003
	Food Services	2009
	Transportation	2009
	Maintenance & Operations	2009
	Capital Projects	2009
	Information Technology	2013
Milwaukee		
	Research and Testing	1999
	Safety and Security	2000
	School Board Support	1999
	Curriculum and Instruction	2006
	Alternative Education	2007
	Human Resources	2009
	Human Resources	2013
	Information Technology	2013
Minneapolis		
	Curriculum and Instruction	2004
	Finance	2004
	Federal Programs	2004

	Transportation	2016
	Organizational Structure	2016
Nashville		
	Food Service	2010
	Bilingual Education	2014
	Curriculum and Instruction	2016
Newark		
	Curriculum and Instruction	2007
	Food Service	2008
New Orleans		
	Personnel	2001
	Transportation	2002
	Information Technology	2003
	Hurricane Damage Assessment	2005
	Curriculum and Instruction	2006
New York City		
	Special Education	2008
Norfolk		
	Testing and Assessment	2003
	Curriculum and Instruction	2012
Omaha		
	Buildings and Grounds Operations	2015
	Transportation	2016
Orange County		
	Information Technology	2010
Palm Beach County		
	Transportation	2015
Philadelphia		
	Curriculum and Instruction	2003
	Federal Programs	2003
	Food Service	2003
	Facilities	2003
	Transportation	2003
	Human Resources	2004
	Budget	2008
	Human Resource	2009
	Special Education	2009
	Transportation	2014
Pittsburgh		
	Curriculum and Instruction	2005
	Technology	2006
	Finance	2006
	Special Education	2009
	Organizational Structure	2016
	Business Services and Finance	2016

	Curriculum and Instruction	2016
	Discipline Policy	2016
	Research	2016
Portland		
	Finance and Budget	2010
	Procurement	2010
	Operations	2010
Prince George's County		
	Transportation	2012
Providence		
	Business Operations	2001
	MIS and Technology	2001
	Personnel	2001
	Human Resources	2007
	Special Education	2011
	Bilingual Education	2011
Reno		
	Facilities Management	2013
	Food Services	2013
	Purchasing	2013
	School Police	2013
	Transportation	2013
	Information Technology	2013
Richmond		
	Transportation	2003
	Curriculum and Instruction	2003
	Federal Programs	2003
	Special Education	2003
	Human Resources	2014
Rochester		
	Finance and Technology	2003
	Transportation	2004
	Food Services	2004
	Special Education	2008
Sacramento		
	Special Education	2016
San Diego		
	Finance	2006
	Food Service	2006
	Transportation	2007
	Procurement	2007
San Francisco		
	Technology	2001
St. Louis		
	Special Education	2003

	Curriculum and Instruction	2004
	Federal Programs	2004
	Textbook Procurement	2004
	Human Resources	2005
St. Paul		
	Special Education	2011
	Transportation	2011
Seattle		
	Human Resources	2008
	Budget and Finance	2008
	Information Technology	2008
	Bilingual Education	2008
	Transportation	2008
	Capital Projects	2008
	Maintenance and Operations	2008
	Procurement	2008
	Food Services	2008
	Capital Projects	2013
Toledo		
	Curriculum and Instruction	2005
Washington, D.C.		
	Finance and Procurement	1998
	Personnel	1998
	Communications	1998
	Transportation	1998
	Facilities Management	1998
	Special Education	1998
	Legal and General Counsel	1998
	MIS and Technology	1998
	Curriculum and Instruction	2003
	Budget and Finance	2005
	Transportation	2005
	Curriculum and Instruction	2007
	Common Core Implementation	2011
Wichita		
	Transportation	2009