

TRACKING PROGRESS

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Abbott Indicators Technical Report

Newark

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Public education helps today's children prepare for an adulthood when they can take meaningful roles in society, compete in the labor market, and contribute as members of their communities. All of New Jersey's children and youth have a constitutional right to a "thorough and efficient" free public education. This represents our state's promise to provide an education that at least equips students with the knowledge and skills to meet the state's rigorous academic standards. Until all of New Jersey's children receive the same high-quality education, this constitutional promise is not realized.

Executive Summary

Several years ago, education stakeholders recognized that children did not receive the same education throughout the state. Urban and suburban school districts did not have the same resources to support their schools. Thanks to the efforts of education professionals, parents, and advocates, the lowest income cities and the wealthiest suburbs now have the same funding to support general education. The poorest urban school districts were required to undergo a series of reforms and improvements to ensure that the funds are used to fulfill the constitutional promise.

Who should support these reforms and ensure that the schools continue to improve? Everyone who cares about public education. Schools belong first to the community and everyone in the community has a stake in them. Parents want their children to have the best education possible. Homeowners and businesses support public education through taxes. Community members want to be sure that their collective investment is used wisely and effectively to educate the children.

We wrote this report with Newark's education stakeholders in mind. The report is a tool to help them identify and support what is working and ensure that remaining challenges are overcome. The goal of an equally sound education for all New Jersey students is reachable with their continued support and commitment.

Newark Abbott Indicators Project and Report

Newark is one of 31 urban school districts in New Jersey known as Abbott districts. As an Abbott district, Newark receives funding to equalize its per student general education budget with the most successful suburban school districts in the state. Newark's children and youth are also entitled to universal, high-quality preschool; reforms to help them meet the state's rigorous standards for academic achievement in Kindergarten through Grade 12; safe, healthy, and educationally adequate school facilities; and many other programs and services to ensure that they come to school ready to learn. Through

a series of indicators, the Newark Abbott Indicators Report presents the status of these reforms and student progress to date.

The Newark Abbott Indicators Report and three others we are releasing this year in Camden, Trenton, and Union City are products of the Abbott Indicators Project at the Education Law Center. The report is written for a wide audience: everyone with a stake in public education in Newark. The project goals are to:

1. *Inform* people in Newark about the status of school improvement efforts and student outcomes.
2. *Engage* people in Newark in exploring and discussing what is working and what still needs to be done.
3. *Develop* and put a plan into action that supports school improvement.
4. *Establish* a system of accountability practices that local education stakeholders can use in years to come.

Key findings of the Newark Abbott Indicators Report are presented below. First, we list indicators about Newark as a community and the students who are enrolled in the public schools. The remaining findings are

organized by Abbott remedy: preschool, K-12 standards-based reform (including supports for students and their families), and school facilities construction. All of the remedies work together to ensure a seamless plan for school improvement. They are presented separately because they have distinctive logics and requirements.

The indicators cover a broad range of topics about school practices and a number of student outcomes. We break down school practices into six “elements of effective schooling.”¹ Ultimately, maximizing opportunities for students to learn is the main focus of school improvement efforts. Other elements of effective schooling are needed to provide students with these opportunities. These are: *student and family supports, teacher qualifications and supports, budget, leadership, and school facilities.*

Academic progress and student well-being are the end products of all of the elements of effective schooling. We encourage readers to view student outcomes in light of how well all of the elements of effective schooling have

Executive Summary

been implemented. In the full report that follows this summary, all indicators findings are presented with accompanying tables and discussion.

Key Findings

The Community and Students

- Despite recent improvements in the city's housing stock and downtown area, Newark remains the second poorest city in the nation.²
- In 2000, more than one in four residents in Newark lived below the poverty level, compared to eight percent of the residents statewide. That same year, more than one in three children in Newark lived in families earning below the poverty level, compared to 11 percent throughout New Jersey.
- At 16 percent in 2000, the unemployment rate was about three times higher in Newark than it was statewide.
- About one in four adults living in Newark was born outside of the country.
- Nearly 70 percent of Newark's nearly 49,000 students are eligible for free- or reduced-price lunch.
- About 700 Newark students did not have a permanent home in 2003-04.

- In 2002, the violent crime rate was about three times higher in Newark than it was throughout the state.
- Newark students move a great deal more than New Jersey students on average – nearly one in three students entered or left their school at least once during the 2002-03 school year. High student mobility can disrupt educational progress and negatively affect student learning.

The Preschool Program

- By 2005-06, each Abbott district is required to serve 90 percent of its eligible population. Five years into the Abbott preschool program, Newark served about three-quarters of the city's three- and four-year-olds in its preschool program.
- The Newark Public Schools contracts with 54 private provider and Head Start programs to offer Abbott preschool in over 100 locations. The district also runs 36 preschool programs in its own school buildings.
- The information provided by the district suggests that it has used creative strategies to identify and recruit children into its preschool program. It will be a great deal more challenging and expensive for the district to bring the remaining unserved children into the program.

- The law requires schools and districts to provide children with disabilities with appropriate educational experiences that are tailored to their individual needs. For as much time as possible, this education must be provided in inclusive, rather than separate settings. Eighty-one percent of Newark’s 200 preschoolers with disabilities were educated in self-contained classrooms.
- Newark uses a variety of high-quality, research-based curricula in its preschool programs. The district plans to move toward a uniform approach across its 100-plus program locations.
- In 2004-05, nearly all of the 427 teachers in district, Head Start, and other private providers had earned at least a four-year college degree and were certified, as required under Abbott.
- In Newark, the average preschool teacher salary was \$48,912. On average preschool teachers in district-run programs earned \$13,000 more than did teachers in any other provider type. The reasons for this continued difference in salaries is unclear. When compared to teachers in other private provider programs, district teachers have similar levels of education, certification, and years of experience as lead teacher.
- At \$12,921 per preschooler in 2003-04, Newark’s preschool aid was comparable to the district’s combined per student budget for Kindergarten through Grade 12.
- A state-sponsored study found that Newark’s overall program quality was the same as the

Abbott districts on average. The strongest feature of the program, earning a score slightly above “good,” was the quality of discipline, supervision, and emotional support in the classroom.

- More data on program quality – such as the results of reliable measures like the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ECERS-R) – are needed in all Abbott districts so that we can understand the strengths, weaknesses, and challenges confronted by their preschool programs.

K-12 Education

- Abbott funding has had some immediate, clear effects on conditions in Newark schools: average class sizes are smaller (better) than the Abbott standard in all grades. In Newark, elementary school class sizes decreased from 1994-95 to 2002-03. High school class sizes rose slightly during the same period, however.
- The district’s own Whole School Reform model, Reaching for the Brass Ring, has research-based math and language arts components and ample supports for teachers. At the time of this writing, the model was not yet approved by the New Jersey Department of Education.
- Newark has 6,575 special needs students ages six to 21. Only about one in 10 of students with disabilities goes to school in a “very inclusionary” setting where they are educated with general education students for 80 percent or more of the school day.

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- Content-specific curriculum committees develop and review the district's instructional programs on a five-year cycle.
- Newark's high schools offer an array of honors and advanced placement courses comparable to what is offered in a nearby successful suburban district. Every high school in the district offers honors courses. Advanced placement courses are offered in a smaller number of schools, and are most frequently offered at the selective, magnet high schools.
- Supplemental programs in the district include collaborative agreements with local agencies to provide students with a wide range of needed health, mental health, and social services.
- Middle and high school students who are having difficulty achieving at their regular schools can attend alternative programs located throughout the city. Collectively, these programs are called Renaissance Academy.
- Some district-sponsored after-school programs have a limited number of slots for students, despite considerable need. In two schools we visited, the after-school programs had capacity for only 100 students. Students must apply and are admitted to these programs on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Breakfast and lunch is provided to Newark students and snacks for all after-school program participants. The district also provides three meals a day in the summer to any student who walks into several school locations throughout the city.
- Newark faculty attendance improved between 1994-95 and 2002-03. At 94 percent in 2002-03, the faculty attendance rate was at about the same level as it was in the other Abbott districts and throughout the state.
- In 2003-04, almost all of Newark's high school teachers and more than four out of five elementary school teachers were "highly qualified" under the federal definition.
- In 2002-03 and 2003-04, Newark was in better compliance with elementary school staffing requirements than the other Abbott districts on average.
- Newark had weaker compliance with the middle and high school requirements. About one in four Newark schools serving students in middle and high school grades had health and social service coordinators; about one in nine had dropout prevention coordinators.
- Almost all of Newark's schools had each of the following positions required under Abbott: family liaison, guidance counselor, media specialist, nurse, security officer, and technology coordinator.
- The Newark Public Schools offers its teachers ongoing and wide-ranging professional development activities both districtwide and by neighborhood.
- Property wealth is an important indicator of local capacity to support its public services including education. The wealthiest suburbs had almost four times more property wealth per student than Newark in 2003. That same year,

the state average was more than double that of Newark.

- At \$10,390 per student, Newark has had as much as the successful suburban districts to support general education since Abbott parity funding began. Newark received an additional \$3,546 per student in supplemental aid to support the second half-day of Kindergarten and other programs and services to meet the needs of students and families.
- The City of Newark compared poorly with the state on five critical indicators of child and youth well-being. Although there has been some improvement on some indicators – child abuse, teen birth, and teen death rates – these rates are still unacceptably high. As a central public institution of the urban community, schools play a critical role in ensuring the well-being of children and youth. Schools are not alone in their responsibility – parents, elected officials, and public and private agencies in the city must all play a role. As the African proverb so famously says: “It takes a whole village to raise a child.”
- None of the schools in Newark has qualified as “persistently dangerous” under federal law.
- At four percent, the district’s 2002-03 elementary school suspension rate was lower than the state average (6%) and the average of the other Abbott districts (9%), and about the same as it was since 1995-96. At 11 percent, Newark’s 2002-03 high school suspension rate was lower

than the state average (15%) and the average of the other Abbott districts (23%).

- Newark’s fourth graders have made gains in language arts literacy and math achievement test scores. Language arts literacy scores improved by 16 percent between 1999-00 and 2002-03 to a level just above the proficiency threshold. Newark’s general education scores rose most dramatically in 2000-01, as did many of the districts throughout the state. Average math scores increased by eight percent over the same period to just over the proficiency threshold.
- On average, Grade 8 and 11 scores have stayed at or below the proficiency threshold between 2000 and 2003 in both grades and tests. Abbott has yet to truly provide for students in middle and high school.
- In New Jersey, there was no official graduation data until recently. In this report, we estimated historical graduation rates using a cumulative promotion index. Our estimates suggest that Newark’s cumulative promotion index rose from 47 to 73 percent between 1994-95 and 2001-02. By the same measure, high schools across the state have graduated about 80 percent of their students and the wealthiest suburbs have graduated about 90 percent.
- Less than a third of the class of 2002-03 graduated from Newark high schools by passing the traditional Grade 11 exam, compared to about half of their peers in the other Abbott districts. Most of the remaining graduates that year had taken the alternative test, the Special Review Assessment.

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➤ Participation in college entrance exams in Newark rose from 47 percent in 1994-95 to 53 percent in 2002-03. Newark student performance on the verbal and math tests has remained below the state average between 1994-95 and 2002-03, however.

School Facilities Construction

- Newark was the first district to complete its own evaluation of 90 community preschool provider facilities. In light of the district's recent evaluation, provider building quality should be addressed during the upcoming, second-round planning process.
- The district has good, collaborative relationships with many community-based organizations and City Hall around facilities planning and development.
- The Newark Public Schools has had a difficult time acquiring sites for its school projects, because of land shortages, rising prices, competition from private real estate development, and environmental problems.
- As of September 2004, 84 percent of Newark's 64 school construction projects were in the pipeline toward completion, with two in construction and none yet complete. Across all Abbott districts, about 40 percent of the projects were in the pipeline toward completion.

➤ The district's project management firm (PMF) has reached the maximum capacity of projects allowed under the current contract. Under original rules, this would mean that the district could not proceed with new construction projects until a new contract was set up with the firm. These rules may be revised as the SCC approaches the second round of contracts for PMFs.

Endnotes

1. We thank Fred Fre-
low of the Rockefeller
Foundation for sug-
gesting this approach.

2. 2003 American
Community Survey,
U.S. Bureau of the
Census.

Next Steps for Education Stakeholders

- **Read the report.** Try to make the time to read the whole technical report: it contains a lot of useful context and information. If you cannot, read the summary report. Both are available on the Education Law Center website: www.edlawcenter.org.
- **Talk about what you learned.** Discuss what you read with your friends, family, congregation members, and work colleagues.
- **Dig deeper.** Ask why and how. If you read about something that pleases or concerns you, learn more about why and how it came to be that way. Ask about quality. The indicators may tell you that a program or practice exists but not how well it is being implemented.
- **Look at other sources of information.** The Abbott Indicators are comprehensive, but not exhaustive. Other sources of information will be needed to get a clear idea of what the schools are doing. For example, low-performing schools undergo an external review process called Collaborative Assessment and Planning for Achievement (CAPA). If your school had a CAPA review, you can read the resulting report.
- **Look for meeting announcements.** Look for events and meetings where other people in your community will be discussing this report in particular or school improvement in general. You can find out about them on local television stations and in local newspapers.
- **Take part.** Attend local meetings and engage in conversations about what you learned with your neighbors, school and district staff, and your school board members.
- **Push for solutions.** Remember the goal is to support school improvement. It is not enough to identify strengths and weaknesses. Once you talk about the findings with your neighbors, decide what needs to be done and help make sure that it happens.
- **Stay involved.** School improvement is a multi-year investment. It will take your continued commitment.

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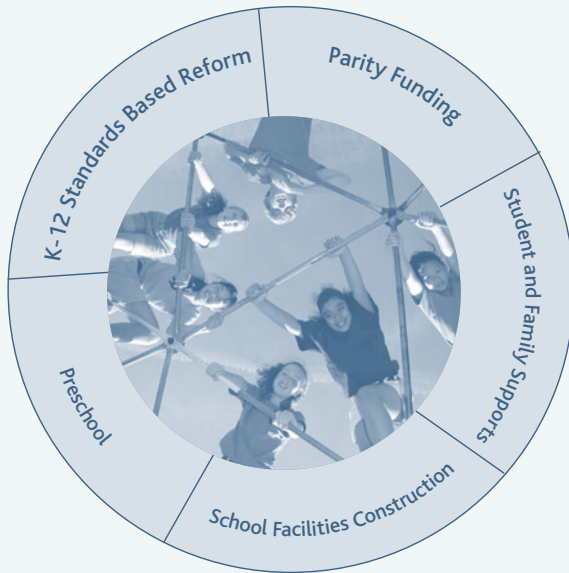
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Unlike anywhere else in the nation, in New Jersey, the poorest urban school districts and the wealthiest suburbs have the same funding to support a general public education. Young people in our state's urban districts are also entitled to a broad range of remedies.

Introduction

FIGURE | A

Abbott v. Burke: New Jersey's Framework for Urban School Improvement



These include:

- Universal, high-quality preschool;
- Reforms to help them meet the state's rigorous standards for academic achievement in Kindergarten through Grade 12;
- Safe, healthy, and educationally adequate school facilities; and
- An array of programs and services to help students come to school ready to learn and succeed in school.

Urban school districts did not always receive the same resources as their peers, and could not afford to support the programs and services needed to help students thrive in school. These benefits were won as a result of the efforts of advocates, parents, educational professionals, and the urban schoolchildren, represented by lawyers in a series of lawsuits before the New Jersey Supreme Court, collectively known as *Abbott v. Burke*, or simply "Abbott." The main goal of the resulting reforms is to ensure a high-quality education for urban public school students and to close the achievement gap between them and their suburban peers.

The Abbott reforms began in earnest in 1997 when the state equalized school funding

between the wealthiest suburbs and poorest cities. Local planning for state-financed school facilities construction started in 1998. In 1999, Abbott elementary schools started implementing Whole School Reform. In that year, districts could apply to the state for funding to support supplemental programs, and high-quality preschool became available. All of the reforms envisioned in Abbott are now underway across the state.³

The Abbott Indicators Project

Under Abbott, there are means available to improve New Jersey's urban schools. The challenge now is to ensure that the children get the education to which they are entitled. The Education Law Center started the Abbott Indicators Project with this concern in mind. To ensure that all students achieve at high levels, and that money is spent with their educational needs as the top priority, it is essential to develop a way for policy makers, parents, community members and the public at large to gauge the progress of reform. The

specific goals and action steps of the Abbott Indicators Project are as follows:

Goal 1: Inform stakeholders about the status of school improvement efforts and student outcomes. We need a way to know what the schools are doing well and where more progress needs to be made. The indicators in this report are similar to the dials and lights on the dashboard of a car. They help readers understand what is working and what might need closer attention.

- The Education Law Center identified questions that stakeholders have about schools and developed a set of indicators to address their questions.
- We gathered and analyzed indicator information and summarized it in this and three other Abbott Indicators Reports – one each in Camden, Trenton, and Union City.
- District staff and school-community stakeholders were invited to participate in a review of the draft report. We incorporated their input wherever possible. Reviewers were invited to submit additional comments and recommendations. Any comments they submitted appear in an Appendix to this report.
- We are issuing two versions of the Abbott Indicators Reports. This technical report contains the findings from all indicators analyses with additional contextual information and appen-

dices. A shorter summary version contains a briefer introduction to the report and the key findings on a subset of indicators.

Goal 2: Engage stakeholders in exploring and discussing what is working and what still needs to be done. Like dashboard lights, the indicators provide some but not all of the answers. School and community stakeholders need to ask more questions and engage in conversations about what the schools are doing to support student learning.

- The Education Law Center will work with community members in each of the four cities to hold meetings to discuss issues raised in the report and ask more questions.
- We will help to establish a climate in which school and community stakeholders can talk together constructively and do a closer inspection where needed.
- The discussions will focus on what the schools are doing well so that they can be encouraged to continue the good work. They will also examine areas where the schools could do better.

Goal 3: Develop and put strategies into action to address report findings. Knowledge is only helpful if we use it to take the steps needed to support school improvement.

To ensure that all students achieve at high levels, it is essential to develop a way for stakeholders to gauge the progress of reform.

Introduction

- The Education Law Center will support district and community partners as they prioritize among the findings to identify strengths that will need to be supported and areas of concern that can be addressed.
- We will then assist them in working together to select and adopt effective strategies to address strengths and weaknesses.
- A timeline will be set when stakeholders can get together to review the progress made.

Goal 4: Establish a system of accountability practices that local education stakeholders can use in years to come. These actions need to continue on a regular basis to elevate the dialogue about schools and ensure student learning. The final goal of the Abbott Indicators Project is to help school districts and their communities put these practices into action in the years to come.

- Education Law Center will work with district and community stakeholders to plan ways to continue information gathering, school-community conversations, strategic planning, and follow-through.

The Report

The purpose of this report is to inform everyone who cares about public education in Newark about what the schools are doing to support student learning and student progress to date. The report is intended for a wide audience to serve as an information, advocacy, and planning tool.

In this report, we focus on how the district implements the elements of effective schooling within the context of New Jersey's Abbott reforms, the federal No Child Left Behind Act, and the state's academic standards. Public education is not a completely local matter, however. The New Jersey Department of Education has specific responsibilities under the law and plays a critical role in how the law gets translated into action. The state has varied its implementation and enforcement of urban school reform in New Jersey – as administrations have replaced one another and even within administrations. Throughout this report, we note specific instances where changes have affected district practices.

These shifting winds have surely affected New Jersey's Abbott districts. But state-level changes have not affected Abbott districts in the same way. School districts have different community characteristics, local political contexts of their own, and strengths and weaknesses. Most importantly, districts make different programmatic choices, and have different student outcomes. In this report, we highlight the unique local circumstances and choices. School-community conversations that follow will focus primarily on these local issues.

Organization of the Report

This report is organized into five sections. In this introduction we present a brief overview of *Abbott v. Burke*, the Abbott Indicators Project, and the general approach of the report. Section 1 includes a profile of the community served by the school district and of the students attending the schools. Sections 2 through 4 are organized by Abbott remedy: preschool, K-12 education (including standards-based reform and additional supports for students and families), and school facili-

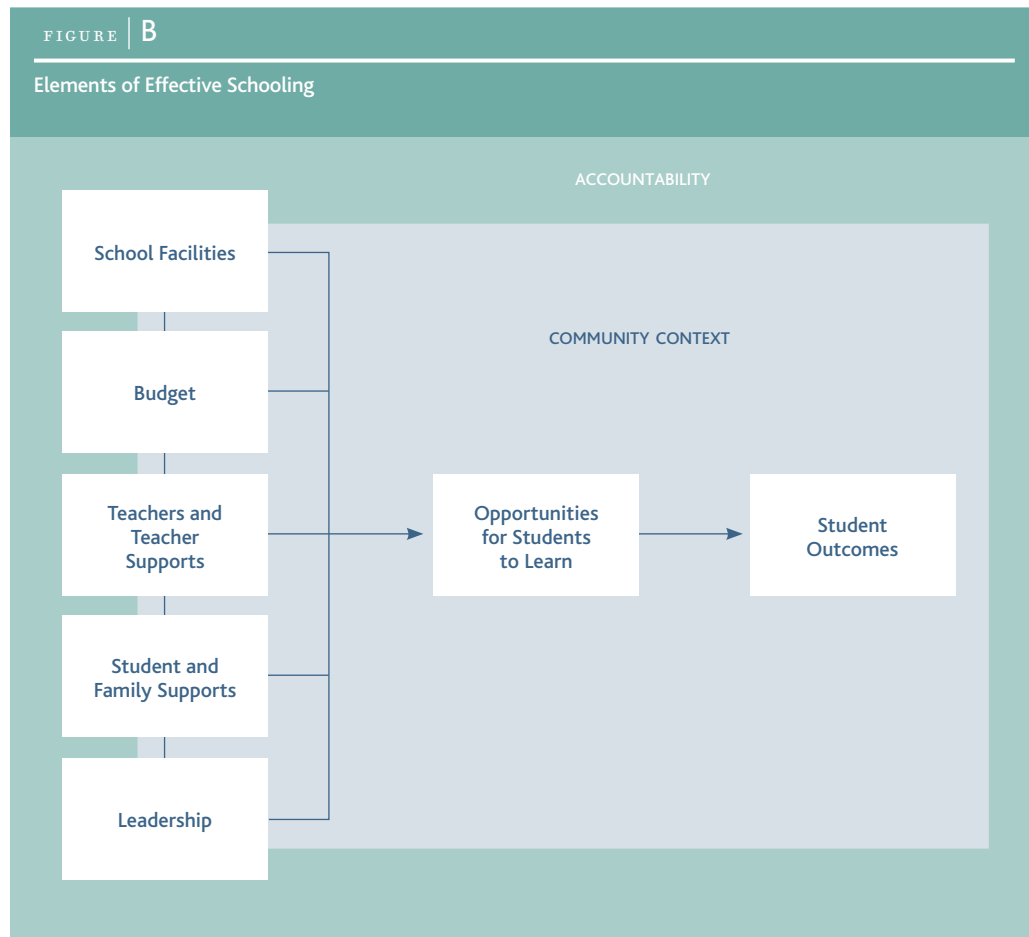
ties construction. All of the remedies work together to ensure a seamless plan for school improvement; we present them separately because each has its own distinctive logic and legal framework.

In Sections 2 (The Preschool Program) and 3 (K-12 Education), we present the indicators within a framework of the elements of effective schooling.⁴ The core elements of effective schooling are:

- **Student and Family Supports:** To ensure that all students come to school ready to learn and are equipped to succeed in school, additional supports must be available to meet the unique needs of students and their families;
- **Teacher Qualifications and Supports:** Teachers need to be well-prepared and supported;
- **Budget:** The district must have enough revenue to support a high-quality education;
- **School Facilities Construction:** School facilities must be healthy, safe, and educationally adequate; and
- **Leadership:** School and district leadership should be informed, inclusive, and effective.

All of these interlocking features must be in place and functioning well to ensure that there are:

Introduction



➤ **Opportunities for Students to Learn:** Opportunities for learning should be effective, developmentally appropriate, aligned to state standards, varied, and enriched.

These elements – and the indicators selected to measure them – are the gauge by which we can assess a school district’s progress to date. The elements of effective schooling are also conditions and characteristics that we can change for the better.

At the end of Sections 2 and 3, we present a range of student outcomes. As Figure B suggests, student well-being and academic success are the end products of all of the elements of effective schooling. We urge readers to view the student outcomes in light of what is presented about the full range of school district practices.

Section 4, School Facilities Construction, contains information about the district’s first-round long-range facilities plans, planning process, and progress to date on state-supported projects.

The Indicators

Indicators Project staff and colleagues at the Education Law Center worked with a committee of education experts to select a wish list of indicators. We selected indicators that would help to answer a range of questions that stakeholders have about the elements of effective schooling. Presented in this report are all of the indicators we were able to collect that were of sufficiently high quality and enabled comparisons with other districts, over time, or both.

The indicators are comprehensive but by no means exhaustive. We have included all of the information we collected that was reliable and valid. We could not answer all of the questions that education stakeholders have about schooling, however. We recognize and regret that some readers will find some of their most pressing questions unanswered. A complete list of the Abbott indicators appears in an Appendix to this report.

As the indicators are introduced throughout this report, we present:

- Any *requirements or standards* under Abbott, or other state or federal law;
- A brief description of its importance to educational effectiveness;
- Where applicable, any current debates about its role or importance; and finally
- Indicators findings.

Reading the Tables and Charts

All indicators findings are summarized in the text of this report. Many are also presented in tables or charts. Most tables and charts show trends over time, comparisons between district groupings, or both.

Time trends. Trends over time are clearly labeled in the charts and explained in the text. The length of the trend varies from indicator to indicator depending on the available data. We always included all of the years for which we had reliable data. In all cases, the latest year of data that we report is the last year of data we have. For example, 2002-03 is the most recent year for achievement test results. Statewide 2003-04 results became available weeks before this report was completed, but there was not enough time to include them.

Introduction

Student well-being and academic success are the end products of all the elements of effective schooling.

We invited the districts and community reviewers to submit letters with their updated results. That letter appears in an Appendix to this report. We encourage readers to read the letter(s) and compare all of the data in this report with new information that becomes available.

District groupings. Unless otherwise noted, we compare indicator results for the district – Camden, Newark, Trenton, Union City, in their respective reports – with results for all other Abbott districts, the wealthiest suburban districts, and the state.

For these reports, the Abbott districts include the 30 school districts that have received the court-ordered remedies since 1997-98 (see Appendix). A 31st district, Salem, became an Abbott district in Spring 2003-04, but is not included among the Abbott districts.

Differences in resources, educational quality, and student performance between Abbott districts and the wealthiest New Jersey suburbs were central to the *Abbott v.*

Burke lawsuits and rulings, so we compare Newark and other Abbott districts to these school districts on several indicators. In New Jersey, school districts are rated by the New Jersey Department of Education into eight “district factor groups” (DFGs), ranging from A to J. The wealthiest towns are classified as I and J districts; most Abbott districts are classified as DFG A or B. DFGs are based on Census information about the following characteristics of each school district: 1) adult educational attainment level, 2) adult occupation, 3) population density, 4) income, 5) unemployment, and 6) poverty. Throughout this report, we refer to these school districts interchangeably as the “wealthiest suburbs,” “most successful suburban districts,” and the “I and J” districts.

After the pilot district, the other Abbotts, and the wealthiest suburbs, the final comparison made in this report is to statewide averages. All public school districts – except vocational, educational services and jointure commissions, and charter schools – are included in statewide averages.

Due to space considerations, most indicator findings are reported at the district or district grouping level. In recognition that readers may be interested in a single school or how conditions vary from school to school, we have collected, analyzed, and prepared a number of school-level tables and charts when appropriate information was available. The Education Law Center will make these available to school boards, district and school staff, and other groups representing community stakeholders.

Data definitions. The tables and charts in this report present summary statistics for each district grouping described above. The method we used to summarize the findings is generally indicated in the tables and charts. Detailed data sources and definitions of terms are included in an Appendix to this report.

Data collection and analysis. A summary of data collection and analysis methods is contained in an Appendix to this report.

Summaries

Key findings are summarized in the Executive Summary and at the end of report sections. Sections 2 and 3 contain text and table summaries – Section 4 includes a text summary only. Summary tables include the subset of indicators that have measurable standards or requirements under Abbott or other state or federal law. Summary tables list these requirements along with the status of the district on each.

Endnotes

3. More information about Abbott v. Burke is available at www.edlawcenter.org.

4. We thank Fred Frelow of the Rockefeller Foundation for suggesting this approach.

Research shows that living in concentrated poverty negatively affects the well-being and academic performance of children and youth. If our schools are to help all students meet the state's academic standards and grow up to take meaningful roles in their communities, these effects will need to be countered in New Jersey's poorest cities. In this section, we present indicators of community distress that inform the elements of effective schooling in Newark.



1

The Community and Students

FIGURE | 1.1

Conditions of Living and Learning in Newark

Municipal Characteristics	Newark	New Jersey
Population	273,546	8,414,350
Female Head of Household Families With Children 17 and Under	47%	18%
Highest Educational Attainment of Adults 25 and Over		
Less Than High School Diploma	42%	18%
Diploma or GED	30%	29%
Some College	18%	23%
Bachelor's Degree	6%	19%
Graduate or Professional Degree	3%	11%
Labor Force Participation	53%	64%
Unemployment Rate	16.1%	5.8%
Median Household Income	\$26,913	\$55,146
Population Below Poverty Level	28%	8%
Population 17 and Under Below Poverty Level	36%	11%
Foreign-born	24%	18%
Rent-income Ratio	27%	26%
Renter-occupied Housing	76%	34%
Vacant Housing	9%	7%
Violent Crime Rate (Per 1,000)	12.1	3.8

SOURCE | Uniform Crime Report, 2002; 2000 US Census

Newark, located in Essex County, is the largest city in the state with a land area of about 24 square miles and a population of about 275,000. Residents of Newark (and of New Jersey in general) are familiar with the many gaps that exist between their city and the state's overall economic well-being. Despite recent improvements in the city's housing stock and downtown area, Newark remains the second poorest city in the nation.⁵ More than one in four adults and one in three children lived below the poverty level in Newark. Fewer adults are in the labor force and unemployment is almost three times higher than in the state as a whole. Not surprisingly, household income is less than half of the state median. About one in four residents living in Newark was born outside of the United States.

Although many single mothers are economically successful, the percentage of female-headed family households remains a strong indicator of community poverty. Figure 1.1 shows that almost half of Newark's families are led by single mothers compared to 18 percent statewide. Two out of five

Newark adults have not earned a high school diploma. As parents, high school dropouts may be less trusting of schools and have fewer of their own academic skills to support their children's learning. Finally, exposure to violence can have negative effects on child and youth mental health. It also increases their risk of being victims of violent crime. At 12.1 per thousand, the violent crime rate in Newark is three times higher than it is throughout the state on average.

The students who attend the public schools reflect the families who live in Newark. Their unique characteristics must inform the educational content, the staff needed to teach and support teaching, the space and facilities in which teaching and learning occur, and the leadership that guides the whole educational process. Programs that meet the needs of Newark's children and youth – such as bilingual programs and nutrition programs – also entail different budget needs.

There were almost 49,000 young people attending Newark's schools in 2003-04 (Figure 1.2). Nearly 70 percent of Newark's enrollment was eligible for free- or reduced-price lunch under the National School Lunch Program. In that same year, about 700 children in Newark (1.6%) did not have a permanent home. In 2003-04, the district identified seven percent of its enrollment as having recently immigrated to the United States; nine percent had limited English language proficiency. One in ten Newark students had special educational needs. As in many of New Jersey's poorest cities, most of Newark's students are children of color: 59 percent are Black and 31 percent are Latino/a.

Families move between neighborhoods and into and out of cities, so some amount of student mobility is unavoidable. Students who move between districts or schools often have to "catch up" with their classmates and teachers must spend time to bring them up to date. When many children move into and out of a district, it can disrupt educational progress and affect test scores and other indicators of

Programs that meet the needs of Newark's children and youth—such as bilingual and nutrition programs—also entail different budget needs.

1

The Community And The Students

FIGURE | 1.2

Characteristics of Students in Newark

	Newark	All Other Abbott Districts	I and J Districts	New Jersey
Total Enrollment	48,751			
Eligible for Free-/Reduced-price Lunch	69.7%	68.3%	3.3%	26.2%
Race/Ethnicity				
Black	59.4%	38.6%	4.4%	17.1%
Latino/a	31.3%	44.2%	3.6%	17.1%
White	8.3%	13.7%	80.3%	58.5%
Asian	0.8%	3.2%	11.5%	7.1%
Native American	0.1%	0.3%	0.1%	0.2%
Limited English Proficiency (LEP)	8.8%	12.1%	1.5%	4.8%
Students with Disabilities (IEP)	10.3%	13.0%	12.0%	13.1%
Immigrant	7.0%	–	–	–
Homeless	1.6%	–	–	–
Student Mobility Rate	29.7%	21.6%	5.2%	12.2%

SOURCE | Fall Survey, 2003-04; School Report Card, 2002-03; and Newark Public Schools, 2003-04

student learning. In Newark, student mobility is high: 12,700 students (30%) moved into or out of their school during 2002-03. We believe that actual student mobility may be even higher, because districts may not count an individual student leaving and returning to the same school several times throughout the year as multiple incidents.

Endnotes

5. 2003 American Community Survey, U.S. Bureau of the Census.

The New Jersey Supreme Court's Abbott preschool mandate was based on research showing that intensive, high-quality preschool programs can help children perform better in school and participate more productively in the life of their communities as adults. Abbott preschool began in 1999-2000; by 2005-06, all Abbott districts are required to serve 90 percent of the eligible population.

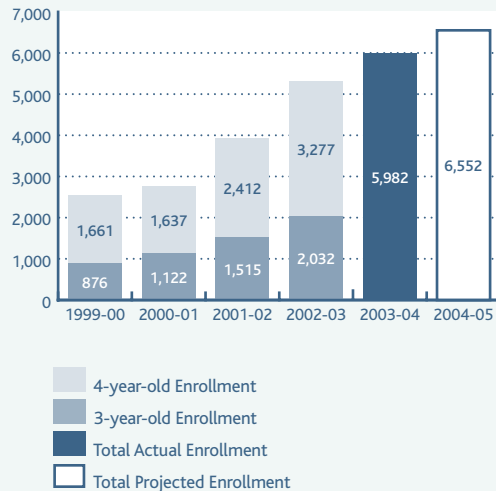
2

2

The Preschool Program

FIGURE 2.1

Preschool Enrollment: Newark, 1999–00 to 2004–05



SOURCE | New Jersey Department of Education: Office of Early Childhood Programs, 2003; New Jersey Department of Education: Office of School Funding, 1999-2004

Abbott Overview

The major features of the Abbott preschool mandate are:

- Six-hour school day, 180 days a year;
- Provisions for full-day, full-year wraparound child care services;⁶
- Certified teacher and an assistant for each class;
- Maximum class size of 15 students;
- Adequate facilities;
- Transportation, health and other related services, as needed;
- Developmentally appropriate curriculum that meets the state's Early Childhood Education Program Expectations Standards of Quality and is linked with New Jersey's Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS);
- Adequate state funding for all programs; and
- All three- and four-year-old children residing in the school district are eligible, with enrollment on demand.⁷

Opportunities for Students to Learn**Program Enrollment**

To meet Abbott requirements, each district must serve at least 90 percent of its eligible preschool population by 2005–06. Figures 2.1

and 2.2 show the progress made by the Newark Public Schools toward serving the community's three- and four-year-olds. Newark preschools served about 6,000 children in 2003–04, or 72 percent of the estimated number of three- and four-year-olds living in the city. Newark is expected to serve 76 percent of the eligible population in 2004–05. The two major obstacles to universal enrollment are: 1) finding and informing hard-to-reach parents of three- and four-year-olds; and 2) identifying and upgrading space and facilities. Newark's outreach efforts are discussed below; preschool facilities issues are discussed in Section 4 of this report.

Program Setting

Abbott districts can operate their own preschool programs or enter into contracts with community childcare and Head Start programs. There are two types of Head Start programs: Enhanced Head Start, the program under which existing Head Start seats are upgraded to meet Abbott standards; and Expanded Head Start, the program serving

children previously not enrolled in the Federal Head Start program.

Since 1999-00, the Newark preschool program has placed many more children in community-run programs (Figure 2.3). More than five out of six (85%) children enrolled in preschool were placed in community programs in 2002-03. To serve so many children, the Newark Public Schools contracted with four Head Start programs in 39 locations and 50 other private provider programs in 67 locations in 2004-05. The district also runs 36 preschool programs in its own school buildings.

Recruitment and Outreach

If districts are to reach the Abbott goal of 90 percent enrollment, they need to identify unserved families and obstacles to enrollment and then conduct intensive outreach and recruitment efforts. Some promising methods for reaching parents of three- and four-year-olds include: door-to-door visits; distributing informational brochures in places that families with young children frequent, such

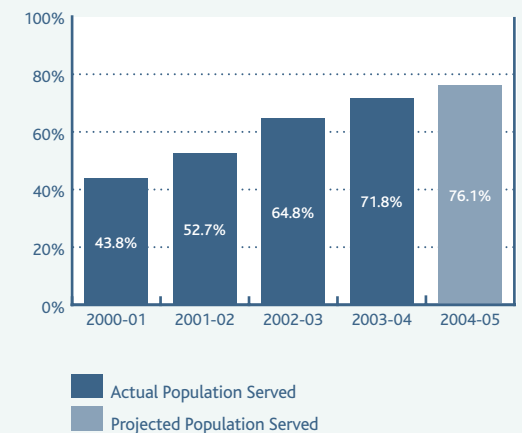
as churches, neighborhood centers, and pediatricians; placing public service announcements on local television, newspapers, and public transportation; and hanging banners on the preschool buildings. It is important that outreach materials and communications be clear and culturally sensitive.

The Newark Public Schools use many strategies to enroll children in their preschool program. The Newark Abbott preschool program has been advertised on cable television, in foreign language newspapers (some provided for free), and on bus and subway billboards. The district distributes flyers at churches, doctors' offices, hospitals, supermarkets, and ethnic festivals; and works with the City Welfare Office to recruit harder-to-reach populations. Mass mailings are done in four languages: English, Spanish, Portuguese, and Haitian Creole. One City Council member also advertises the preschool program in his constituent newsletter.

The district has accomplished a great deal enrolling so many children in the five years since the Abbott preschool program began.

FIGURE | 2.2

Preschool Population Served: Newark, 2000-01 to 2004-05



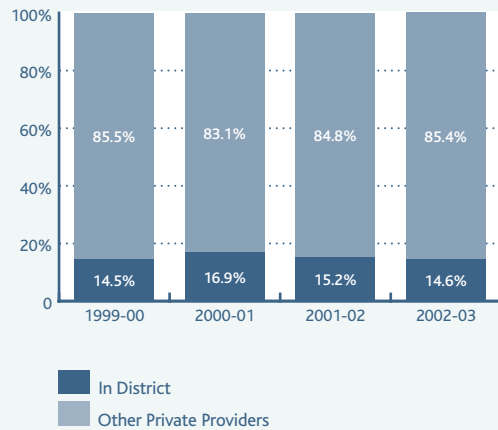
SOURCE | New Jersey Department of Education: Office of Early Childhood Programs, 2003; New Jersey Department of Education: Office of School Funding, 1999-2004

2

The Preschool Program

FIGURE 2.3

Preschool Enrollment by Provider Type:
Newark, 1999-00 to 2002-03



SOURCE | New Jersey Department of Education: Office of Early Childhood Programs, 2003; New Jersey Department of Education: Office of School Funding, 1999-2003

Despite its efforts, about one in four eligible children in Newark are not enrolled in the district's program according to the New Jersey Department of Education's estimates.⁸ Neighborhoods with the greatest number of three- and four-year olds may not have the capacity to serve all of their eligible children, while those with fewer youngsters have slots that go unused. Parents are likely to be reluctant about sending their children far from home to programs that do have space. In the past two years, the district has moved program slots among providers and even closed some programs altogether. The district has also turned away providers wanting to set up new preschool programs.

When the Abbott program began, early childhood education specialists and advocates believed that districts could recruit all eligible three- and four-year-olds if they used methods similar to what Newark has used. Yet, as a community reviewer noted, many parents still are not aware of the program, and the hours of operation in many programs may not suit the needs of others. District and community

reviewers noted that reaching the remaining families with preschool-age children will require that the district formally identify: 1) how many parents choose not to send their children to preschool; 2) how many parents choose to send their children to private school or family day care; and 3) the barriers keeping parents from enrolling their children. This effort is likely to be more difficult and expensive than the district's strategies to date. An assessment is also warranted to determine whether the distribution of program slots throughout the city is responsive to actual program need.

Programs for Children with Disabilities

Federal and state laws guide the education of individuals with disabilities.⁹ The law requires that children with disabilities be educated in the "least restrictive environment." This means that, to the maximum extent possible, students are educated in the school they would have attended if they did not have a disability, and participate in academic, non-academic, and extracurricular activities with

students who do not have disabilities. The general education classroom is the preferred placement for children with disabilities; however, school districts must also offer a range of alternative services for students who cannot be educated in the regular classroom for part or all of the day. The law also states that children with disabilities should only be placed in separate classes or schools, or removed from the general education classroom when the nature or severity of the disability prevents them from being educated in the general education classroom, even with the use of supplemental aids and services.

Children suspected of having a disability can be identified prior to enrolling in preschool. The district's Child Study Team, made up of the school psychologist, social worker, and learning disabilities teacher-consultant conduct an initial evaluation to determine a child's eligibility for special education and related services. Evaluation results shape the Individualized Education Program (IEP) that specifies the child's needs for special educa-

tion and related services, and determines the setting where the child will be educated.

Service provision. District staff report that the Newark Public Schools, Office of Special Education helps students with disabilities and their families transition into preschool. The district offers parents and children opportunities to visit early childhood programs and meet with program staff. An IEP is developed for each child with disabilities before he or she begins preschool; district staff follow up to ensure compliance with IEPs. Parents of special education students in all grade levels can attend monthly Special Education Parents' Advisory Committee (SEPA) evening meetings where district early childhood and special education staff, Child Study Team members, and external speakers conduct presentations. Within each of the district's five School Leadership Teams (SLT),¹⁰ daytime parent meetings are also held about 10 times per year to discuss relevant issues such as transition and related services.

2

The Preschool Program

FIGURE | 2.4

Educational Environment of Preschoolers with Disabilities:
Newark, 2003–04 (N=200)

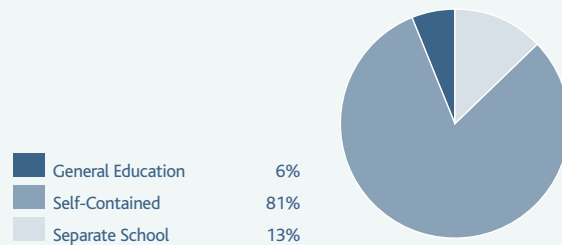
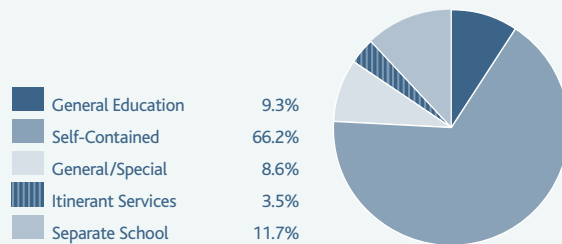


FIGURE | 2.5

Educational Environment of Preschoolers with Disabilities:
All Other Abbott Districts, 2003–04



*Home and residential placements, less than one percent.

SOURCE | New Jersey Department of Education: Office of Early Childhood Programs, 2003; New Jersey Department of Education, Office of Special Education, 1999–2003

Educational environment. The law requires schools and districts to provide children with disabilities with appropriate educational experiences and quality services that are tailored to their individual needs. While the law does not specify a target percentage of children who should be in general education classrooms, it does state that children with disabilities must be educated in inclusive, rather than separate settings for as much time as possible.

According to a report released by the New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities, the state of New Jersey lags behind the nation in the percentage of preschoolers with disabilities educated in inclusionary settings. In 2002, about one in five (22%) New Jersey preschoolers with disabilities was placed in general education classrooms, compared to 35 percent nationwide. In light of the state norm, we might expect to see similar educational placements in Newark and the other Abbott districts.¹¹

Figures 2.4 and 2.5 below show the percentage of preschool children with disabilities in various educational environments – in Newark and all other Abbott districts, respectively. In 2003–04, 82 percent of Newark’s 200 preschoolers with disabilities were in self-contained (special education) classrooms compared to two thirds of similar students in the other 29 Abbott districts. Six percent were in inclusion programs compared to nine percent in the other Abbott districts. Thirteen percent of Newark’s preschoolers with disabilities were taught in “separate” schools outside of the school district.

Program Content

New Jersey Department of Education’s *Early Childhood Education Program Expectations: Standards of Quality* set standards for learning outcomes and outlines how teachers should conduct specific activities. Since they were released in 2002–03, the *Expectations* have become the benchmark for determining how effectively the classroom curriculum is being implemented.

Curriculum. Specialists in early childhood education debate if it is better to have a single curriculum across a district or if providers should be allowed to select their own curricula. On one hand, a single curriculum ensures that students in a district with high student mobility like Newark will receive the same program no matter where they move. Professional development is also easier to provide with a uniform curriculum. On the other hand, uniformity is not as important as using research-based, developmentally appropriate programs that provide enough teacher support to ensure quality instruction. Program and teacher buy-in are also important to ensure good implementation. Below, we describe the approach taken by district, Head Start, and other provider programs in Newark.

In the years before Abbott when the district operated a small preschool program, it used the High/Scope model. High/Scope emphasizes learning through play and the quality of children's interactions with adults and other children. Now, the district encour-

ages district-run programs to use a version of High/Scope that better meets the state's Expectations and curriculum standards set by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. District early childhood staff told us that — although some district programs and many private provider programs select their own curricula — they try to ensure that these curricula are compatible with High/Scope. District staff named examples of other curricula used, including two that are highly respected in the field of Early Childhood education such as Curiosity Corner and Bank Street.¹²

Curriculum adoption and review. The current version of High/Scope was adopted in 1998. Newark has a curriculum review committee made up of district early childhood department staff, content area teachers, special education teachers, school administrators, private providers, and other community members. In 2004-05, the committee began looking for a new preschool curriculum. The selected curriculum will be adopted district-wide to ensure uniformity between programs

The law requires schools to provide children with disabilities with educational experiences and services that are tailored to their needs.

2

The Preschool Program

Mount Vernon Elementary School's
Preschool Program

In 2003-04, this district-run preschool used the Bank Street Model. Mt. Vernon staff liked how Bank Street stressed learning-by-doing and small-group work. They spoke highly of the training and technical assistance Bank Street provided. They decided to supplement Bank Street's reading instruction with a program called the Children's Literacy Initiative, designed specifically for preschoolers from low-income families.

and a seamless transition for preschoolers from program to program and as they transition into Kindergarten.

Preschool programs look at how well they use their curricula in two ways. High/Scope programs use an instrument called the Program Quality Assessment (PQA) to assess adult-child interactions, the learning environment, daily routine, and curriculum planning. The Newark Public Schools also took part in a statewide study using the Early Childhood Education Rating Scale (ECERS-R), discussed in more detail in the Program Quality section below. District staff reviewed the results with the classroom teachers who took part in the study.

The transition into Kindergarten.

The transition from preschool to Kindergarten can be stressful for young children as they leave a familiar, comfortable setting for one that is new and different. Successful transition is most likely to happen when children have been prepared ahead of time, parents have been involved in the process, and preschool and Kindergarten teachers

communicate on a regular basis. Below, we compare best practices in preschool-Kindergarten transition with transition practices in Newark.

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) provides preschool programs with four recommendations to guide transition efforts: 1) ensure program continuity; 2) maintain ongoing communication and cooperation among staff in sending and receiving programs; 3) prepare children for transition; and 4) involve parents in transition planning.

Abbott districts are required to include in their three-year operational plans a plan for transition of children from the preschool program to Kindergarten. The Newark Public Schools, in collaboration with the Newark Preschool Council, Head Start, and the Early Childhood Coalition of Newark developed a guide, called "Continuity for Success" to assist preschool programs throughout the city in strengthening transition activities for four-year-olds. The guide outlines six key components of transition including the four

elements recommended by NAEYC, plus the transfer of records in a suitable fashion and the evaluation of transition activities to improve service delivery. For each of these components, the guide lists recommended transition activities; identifies the responsible individuals, the timeframe in which it should be conducted, and the documentation and resources that are needed.

In order to facilitate communication between sending community provider programs and receiving elementary schools, the district has assigned these providers to a local School Leadership Team (SLT). At least four times per year, community providers meet with SLT administrators to exchange information, discuss educational expectations and concerns, and plan transition activities.

By the account of Newark district staff, preschoolers' transitions to Kindergarten vary across the district. Preschool teachers in district-run programs are encouraged to visit Kindergarten classrooms in their own and other schools. In turn, Kindergarten teachers meet with preschool teachers who work in

their buildings. In some schools, the School Leadership Council (SLC) meets to address preschoolers' transitions. Some preschool programs develop student-specific portfolios that include scores on developmental screens, copies of student progress reports, and the results of a home language survey.¹³ Preschool teachers cannot be sure which school a child will actually attend in Kindergarten, so they give portfolios to parents and caregivers. The child's caregiver can then bring the portfolio to the new school. In community-run programs, family workers link parents with elementary schools to ease the transition to Kindergarten.

Student and Family Supports

Health services. District and provider staff complete a health history questionnaire on each child enrolled in a Newark preschool program. Any child without the required screenings and immunizations is referred to a free clinic to have them done within 30 days.

Children enrolled in district-run programs receive physical examinations on-site;

2

The Preschool Program

those in community provider programs receive physical assessments, as needed, conducted by the nurse assigned to that site. The following health and social services are available to all preschoolers on-site: vision and hearing screening; speech and language evaluations and therapy; and occupational and physical therapy (children with more severe disabilities are usually referred to specialists outside of the district). District staff report that there is a shortage of staff available to meet the significant need, however. In 2003-04, the district received a grant for preschoolers in both district-run and community provider programs to receive free dental care at Beth Israel Hospital. School nurses conduct general dental assessments and make referrals as needed. Mental health services are provided on- and off-site, depending on the nature and severity of the child's needs. School nurses provide ongoing training to over 1,200 preschool staff on CPR. Nurses conduct workshops for teachers and parents on first aid, asthma, child abuse, and lead poisoning, based on need. Individual train-

ing for parents is also provided when medical issues are identified.

The district has four Preschool Intervention and Referral Teams made up of school psychologists, learning disabilities teacher-consultants, school social workers, and speech and language therapists. The purpose of this team is to provide general education teachers with assistance in dealing with student needs and to reduce the number of referrals made to the Child Study Team for special education.

Transportation. There are preschool programs located throughout the City of Newark, so most children do not have to travel far to attend preschool. The district provides transportation for children attending programs that are more than two miles from their homes if their parents have no way to bring them. This typically happens when programs that are more conveniently located are already full. As is required under the law, children with disabilities may also be eligible for transportation, depending on the type

of disability, as are children of parents with disabilities.

Program Quality

The New Jersey Department of Education formed the Early Learning Improvement Consortium (ELIC), a group of university-based preschool specialists, to conduct ongoing research on preschool program quality. In 2002-03, the state funded ELIC to assess 310 Abbott preschool classrooms throughout New Jersey.

The Newark preschool program took part in the ELIC study. We present the findings from ELIC's observation of 45 (10%) of Newark's preschool classrooms – despite the limited sample size – because it is the only information about program quality available. Eight of these classrooms are in district programs; 37 are in Head Start or other private provider programs. ELIC rated these classrooms on the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS-R). Average ECERS-R ratings and score ranges are shown below for Newark and all Abbott districts (Figure 2.6).

On average, Newark preschool classrooms were rated 4.0, the same rating earned by all of the Abbott districts combined. Newark's ratings ranged from a low of 1.9 (below minimal) to 5.2 (above good). Looking at the separate subscale scores for Newark and all Abbotts, preschool classrooms scored highest on the interactions and parents and staff scales. The interactions scale measures the quality of discipline, supervision, and warmth and emotional support in the classroom environment. The parents and staff scale measures the quality of communication with parents, and the space and conditions for adults including staff. Newark also scored higher on the personal care routine rating that includes: meals, naptime, toileting and safety, and health practices.

Figure 2.6 also shows areas where the 45 observed classrooms needed improvement, including activities (3.2), program structure (3.6), and space and furnishings (3.8). The low activities rating suggests that these Newark preschool programs did not have adequate toys, art materials, puzzles, and handheld

All public preschool programs in New Jersey are required to undergo self-evaluation.

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The Preschool Program

FIGURE | 2.6

Preschool Classroom Environment (ECERS-R) Ratings: Newark and All Abbott Districts, 2002-03

Rating and Quality

- 1 = Inadequate
- 3 = Minimal
- 5 = Good
- 7 = Excellent

	NEWARK		ALL ABBOTT DISTRICTS	
	Average	Range	Average	Range
Number of classrooms observed	45		310	
Space and Furnishings	3.8	2.1—5.6	3.8	1.4—6.6
Personal Care	4.2	1.5—7.0	3.7	1.0—7.0
Language & Reasoning	4.1	1.5—6.3	4.3	1.0—7.0
Activities	3.2	1.9—4.6	3.4	1.2—7.0
Interactions	5.2	1.0—7.0	4.9	1.0—7.0
Program Structure	3.6	1.0—6.7	4.0	1.0—7.0
Parents and Staff	4.5	2.2—6.3	4.4	1.0—6.8
Overall ECERS-R Score	4.0	1.9—5.2	4.0	1.6—6.3

SOURCE | Early Learning Improvement Consortium, Spring 2003

learning materials. The program structure rating shows that the observed classrooms did not have a schedule that provides a balance of structure and flexibility. In particular, children did not have enough free playtime, one-on-one interaction with teachers and opportunities to be part of small groups or play independently. The relatively low space and furnishings rating indicates that the sampled Newark preschool classrooms needed “cozy areas” with items such as a carpet, bean bags, pillows and blankets for students to rest. ELIC also observed that most classrooms did not have enough equipment and outdoor space for students to engage in motor activities. Our community reviewers noted that all private providers had to meet requirements set out by the New Jersey Department of Human Services prior to becoming part of the Abbott preschool program, with its more demanding space and facilities requirements.

All New Jersey districts with a public preschool program are required to undergo self-evaluation, using a guide called the Self-Assessment Validation System (SAVS) developed

by the Office of Early Childhood Education at the New Jersey Department of Education. Districts used it for the first time in 2003-04. The results are intended for use in planning the district's programs. The program quality assessment is an important section of the SAVS. Although the state encourages districts to use tools like the ECERS-R, it is not required.

ELIC staff we spoke with said that they have been working with district master teachers on the use of the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS), along with the Supports for Early Literacy Assessment (SELA) and the Preschool Classroom Mathematics Inventory (PCMI) to assess instructional quality.¹⁴ They also said that more program quality data would become available in 2005. We think that the best way to understand the strengths, weaknesses, and challenges confronted by Abbott preschool programs is to have a consistent and reliable method of measuring program quality that is used regularly in all public preschool programs, including the Abbott districts.

Preschool Teacher Qualifications and Supports

As expected, a large majority of Newark's preschool teachers work in Head Start or other private provider programs. In 2004-05, there are 427 preschool teachers in Newark: 22 percent work in Head Start; 19 percent in Newark Public Schools' buildings; and 59 percent in other private provider programs.

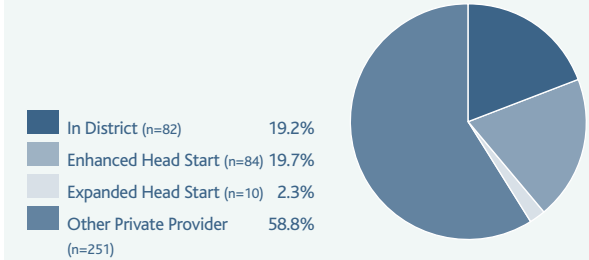
Educational Attainment of Preschool Teachers

All Abbott preschool teachers are required to have a bachelor's degree. This standard applied immediately to teachers in district-run programs. Teachers in community programs who needed fewer than 30 credits were eligible for an extension until September 2006.¹⁵ Head Start teachers have four years from the date when their program first contracted with the Abbott district to complete these requirements.

Postsecondary training can equip teachers with the knowledge and skills they need to be effective in the classroom. We present information about the educational attainment of Abbott preschool teachers as an indicator

FIGURE | 2.7

Preschool Teachers by Provider Type: Newark, 2004-05



SOURCE | Newark Public Schools, 2004-05

2

The Preschool Program

of teacher preparedness and because Abbott requires all preschool teachers to have undergraduate degrees. We present the findings by provider type so that we can see how well teachers in different settings have progressed toward meeting the degree requirement.

Nearly all of Newark's preschool teachers had earned at least a four-year college degree by 2004-05. Figure 2.8 shows that Newark's preschool teachers in every setting have either met or are well on their way to meeting this state requirement by September 2006.

Preschool Teacher Certification

In addition to earning a bachelor's degree, Abbott preschool teachers must also be certified.¹⁶ The New Jersey Department of Education considers the preschool through Grade 3 certification (P-3) to be the standard for all new teachers entering Abbott preschool programs. One route teachers can use to earn the P-3 is to first obtain a provisional "certificate of eligibility" (CE) or a certificate of eligibility with advanced standing (CEAS). While teaching in a preschool program, teachers then

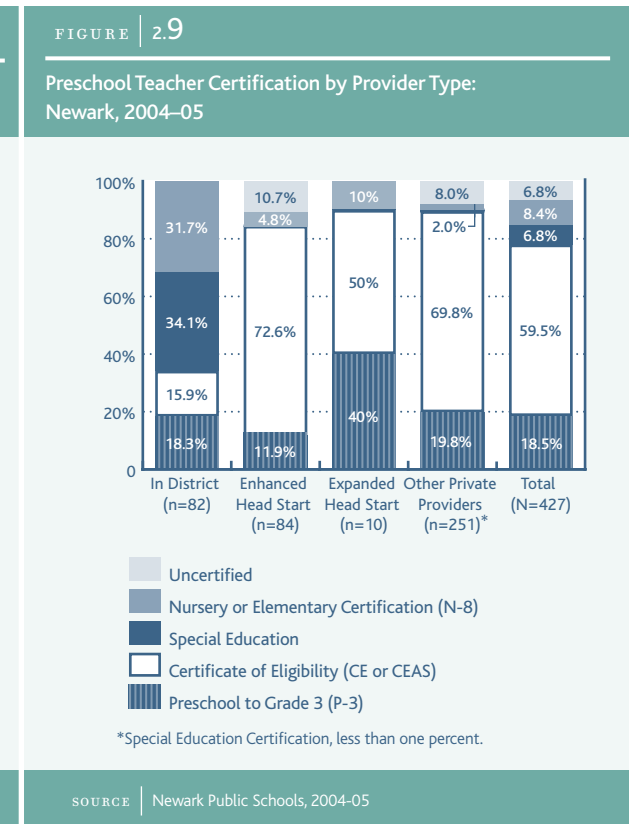
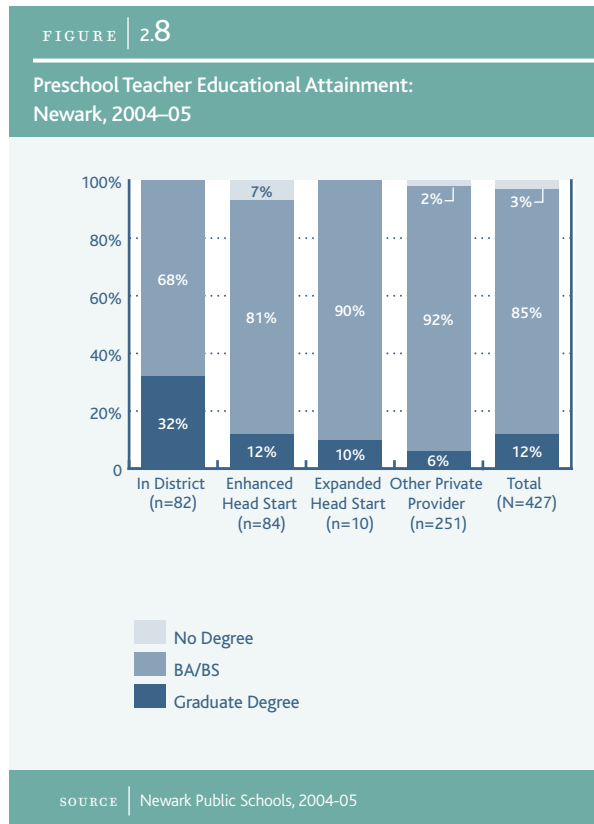
complete a series of mentoring and evaluation sessions. CE candidates must also take part in early childhood instructional training. Teachers with a standard certificate to teach students in nursery school through Grade 8 (N-8) and at least two years of full-time teaching experience in an early childhood setting also fulfill the certification requirement under a "grandfather clause" in the regulations. Teachers with special education certification may only teach self-contained early childhood classrooms or serve as a second teacher in an inclusion classroom. Teachers with N-8 and special education certificates are not required to obtain the specialized education and training in early childhood education that the P-3 certification process provides.

Figure 2.9 shows the status of the Newark preschool program in 2004-05 on the road toward 100-percent teacher certification. Overall, 78 percent of teachers have provisional (regular or advanced standing) or preschool to Grade 3 (P-3) certification; eight percent have N-8 certification; and seven percent are special education certified (all

special education teachers currently teach in self-contained classrooms). All 10 Expanded Head Start teachers also have at least provisional certification: nine have either CE or P-3, and one has N-8. All of the 82 preschool teachers working in district-run programs also have at least provisional certification: 34 percent have provisional certification or P-3, 32 percent have N-8, and 34 percent are special education certified. Among the 84 Enhanced Head Start teachers, 85 percent have provisional certification or P-3, and 5 percent have N-8. Most of the 251 teachers working in other private provider programs are at least provisionally certified: 20 percent have P-3, 70 percent have certificates of eligibility (regular or advanced standing), and two percent have N-8

Preschool Teacher Experience

Figure 2.10 shows how long teachers in Newark’s preschool program have served as lead preschool teachers. As of October 2004, Newark preschool teachers had four years of experience on average. Teachers in both dis-

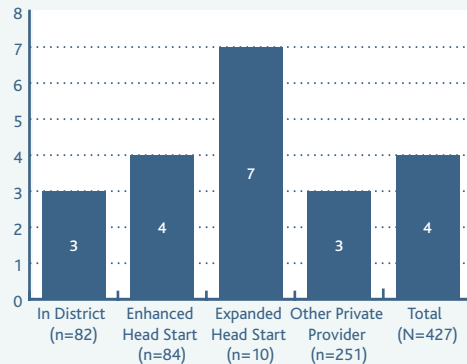


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The Preschool Program

FIGURE | 2.10

Preschool Teacher Average Years as a Lead Teacher by Provider Type: Newark, 2004–05



SOURCE | Newark Public Schools, 2004-05

district-run and other private provider programs had three years as lead preschool teachers. Teachers in Enhanced Head Start programs had about four years of similar experience; and Expanded Head Start teachers had seven years.

Preschool Teacher Salary

All other things being equal, school districts that pay teachers well are more likely to attract a broader pool of applicants for teaching positions. Improving preschool teacher pay may also help to improve preschool program quality by reducing teacher turnover and boosting teacher morale. The New Jersey Supreme Court recognized this in 2002 when it ordered the New Jersey Department of Education to provide additional funding to help Head Start and other private provider programs raise their teacher salaries to levels equal to those of teachers in district-run programs. Here, we present the average preschool teacher salary in Newark by provider type to compare the salaries paid in these settings. There should be no systematic difference by provider type

because all providers should have access to applicant pools of equivalent size and quality and because Abbott preschool teachers do equivalent work regardless of setting.

Teachers in district-run programs earned higher salaries than those in Head Start and other private provider programs (\$58,000 compared to \$45,400). The reasons for this continued salary difference are unclear. When compared to teachers in community provider programs, teachers in district-run programs have similar education, certification, and years of experience as lead teachers.¹⁷

Performance Evaluation

Even the best teachers benefit from informed peer and supervisor feedback. Such feedback and direction is even more important to ensure that less experienced and less capable teachers do a better job. Some of this feedback can happen on an informal basis. But some should be part of a more formal procedure known in many professions as “performance evaluation.” In Newark, performance evaluation procedures are different for

preschool teachers in district-run, Head Start and other private provider programs.

Early childhood staff told us that non-tenured teachers working in district programs are observed three times a year by administrators. They also receive an end-of-the-year evaluation. Tenured staff in district-run programs receive two observations and an end-of-the-year evaluation. As part of the evaluation process, teachers are judged on their performance in lesson planning and teacher-student interactions. School administrators also mentor uncertified teachers and conduct some of the evaluations that newer teachers need to earn certification.

Supervisors in private provider programs evaluate their own staff. At the end of the year, district staff collect those evaluations. Use of the district's evaluation protocol by private providers is voluntary. As of Fall 2004, the district's Early Childhood Education department was working with providers to develop a uniform evaluation procedure.

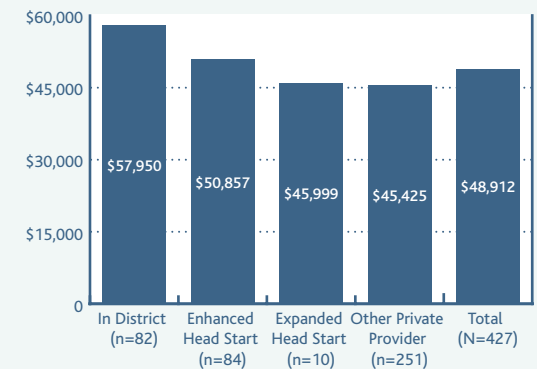
Professional Development

In addition to feedback, teachers also benefit from opportunities to continue learning through activities such as outside conferences, in-school workshops, weekly teacher meetings, and coaching and mentoring from peers and supervisors. In these sessions, teachers share experiences and exchange ideas with colleagues; improve their teaching skills; and learn about current issues in education. No matter how many years of experience they have, teachers must be willing to update their knowledge and skills in order to keep up with the changing times. When teachers take part in ongoing, high-quality staff development focused on instruction, classroom practice improves.

In Newark, master teachers conduct workshops and demonstration lessons for preschool teachers and teaching assistants. Community provider directors are invited and encouraged to participate in these sessions. One community reviewer noted that while teachers in provider programs have access to these professional development opportuni-

FIGURE | 2.11

Average Preschool Teacher Salary by Provider Type: Newark, 2004-05



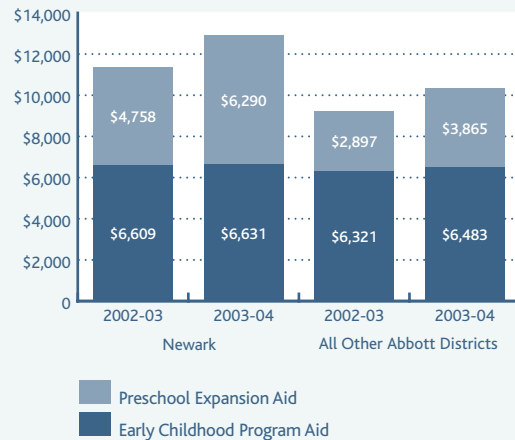
SOURCE | Newark Public Schools, 2004-05

2

The Preschool Program

FIGURE | 2.12

Per Student Preschool Aid by Source: Newark and All Other Abbott Districts, 2002–03 and 2003–04



SOURCE | New Jersey Department of Education, Office of School Funding, 2002-2004

ties, they might not be able to take advantage of them because of the limited availability of substitutes to cover for them.

When the preschool program was first implemented, the district held a three-day summer institute for community preschool directors that included discussion about district goals. In addition, all new providers received a binder with all of the district policies and procedures. The district now holds bi-monthly meetings with provider directors, and works with the financial officers of provider programs at least twice per year. The director of the Office of Early Childhood, Early Childhood Supervisors, and financial specialists conduct these meetings.

Four things play a role in the professional development activities the district selects for its preschool teachers: the Expectations, staff feedback (via survey results), and the Professional Improvement Plans (PIP) developed by each staff member with his or her supervisor (usually a principal or program director).¹⁸ Program quality assessments also inform staff development.

Preschool Budget

The Abbott preschool program is funded by the state from two different sources. Early Childhood Program Aid (ECPA) is allocated to all Abbott districts and another 102 school districts serving low-income students. Since 2002–03, Abbott districts also receive Preschool Expansion Aid (PSEA) to cover the costs of expanding the programs to meet full enrollment.

Figures 2.12 and 2.13 show the amount of preschool aid per student received by Newark and all other Abbott districts in 2002–03 and 2003–04. In 2002–03, Newark received \$11,366 per preschooler, \$6,609 from ECPA funds, and \$4,758 from PSEA. Newark saw a sizable funding increase in 2003–04 to \$12,921 per preschooler, with most of the increase coming from PSEA.¹⁹ In both years, the district's per student aid exceeded that of the other Abbott districts.

Preschool Leadership

State regulations require each Abbott school district to organize and convene an Early Childhood Education Advisory Council (ECEAC). The ECEAC is a group of community stakeholders who are interested in the education and welfare of preschool-age children. The purpose of the ECEAC is to meet regularly, review the school district's progress towards full implementation of high-quality preschool programs, and participate in program planning, budget development, and early childhood facilities planning.

Prior to 2002-03, the Newark Public Schools had an Early Childhood Collaborative (NECC), which represented all district-run and community provider programs participating in the Abbott preschool program. In 2002-03, the district established the Newark Early Childhood Education Advisory Council (ECEAC) made up of parents, community leaders, private provider program directors, general and special education teachers; and representatives from the district's Early Childhood office, the New Jersey Depart-

ment of Education's Office of Early Childhood Education, Head Start, the Newark Preschool Coalition, Essex County government, and local businesses.

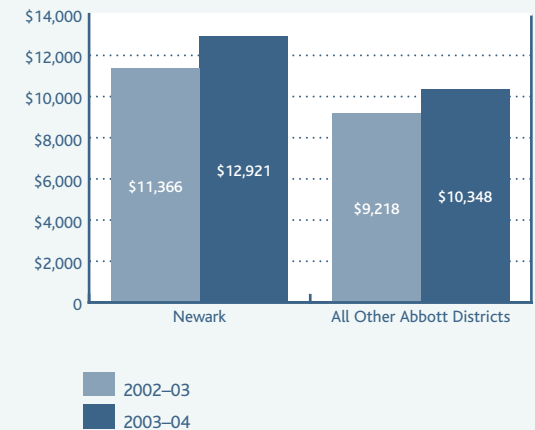
In following with the district's understanding of New Jersey Department of Education guidelines, Newark's ECEAC has not been involved in developing district plans and budgets. The ECEAC reviews the results of the district's self-evaluation and provides feedback on areas needing improvement. The ECEAC has an opportunity to provide input on early childhood facilities construction plans. In addition, a member of the council is involved in district-wide facilities planning on an ongoing basis.

Preschool Student Outcomes

We turn now to the outcomes of the Abbott preschool program to ask if the elements we have discussed so far – supports for students and families, opportunities for students to learn, teacher qualifications and supports, and leadership – have worked together to improve stu-

FIGURE | 2.13

Per Student Preschool Aid: Newark and All Other Abbott Districts, 2002-03 and 2003-04



SOURCE | New Jersey Department of Education, Office of School Funding, 2002-2004

2

The Preschool Program

dent learning among the district's three- and four-year-olds. As a recent report published by the United States Government Accountability Office noted, New Jersey's public preschools do not currently generate information that will help us to understand how well children are doing statewide.

Fortunately, the Newark preschool program was part of a study conducted by the Early Learning Improvement Consortium to assess the language development of preschoolers. In 2002-03, ELIC tested the vocabularies of 99 students entering Kindergarten from the preschool program. They used the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT-III). We report the results below in standard scores and national percentile ranks.

The average standard score of the 99 English-speaking children was 84.5. These children scored on average in the 23rd percentile of a national sample of children who took the same test.²⁰ In light of the small number of children who were assessed, we must note that these scores may not accurately reflect preschoolers' language development in the

district as a whole. Because earlier assessments were not done with the same children, we cannot tell if these results indicate positive or negative language development.

In addition to the ELIC study, some Newark preschool programs develop student portfolios with scores on developmental screens, copies of student progress reports, and the results of a home language survey.

In 2003-04, the New Jersey Department of Education's Office of Early Childhood Education began training teachers in a few Abbott districts to use the Early Language Assessment System (ELAS). The system is another assessment intended to help preschool teachers tailor instruction to children's needs. It is not yet clear if the ELAS can be used to assess how well preschoolers are learning on a district or statewide basis. Early childhood education specialists are reluctant to do widespread assessment of young children; however, we need to strike a balance between these concerns and the need to know exactly how well Abbott preschoolers are doing.

The Status of Preschool: A Summary

We conclude this section by presenting key findings in two ways. First, we present an overview of the progress made to date and the challenges that lie ahead for Newark's Abbott Preschool Program. We then present a summary table showing the status of the program on a smaller set of indicators that have standards or requirements under Abbott or other state or federal law.

Opportunities for Students to Learn

- By 2005-06, each Abbott district is required to serve 90 percent of its eligible population. Five years into the Abbott preschool program, Newark served about three-quarters of the city's three- and four-year-olds in its preschool program.
- The Newark Public Schools contracts with 54 private provider and Head Start programs to offer Abbott preschool in over 100 locations. The district also runs 36 preschool programs in its own school buildings.
- The information provided by the district suggests that it has used creative strategies to identify and recruit children into its preschool program. It will be a great deal more challenging and expensive for the district to bring the remaining unserved children into the program.

- Newark uses a variety of high-quality, research-based curricula in its preschool programs. The district plans to move toward a uniform approach across its 100-plus program locations.
- The law requires schools and districts to provide children with disabilities with appropriate educational experiences that are tailored to their individual needs. For as much time as possible, this education must be provided in inclusive, rather than separate settings. Eighty-one percent of Newark's 200 preschoolers with disabilities were educated in self-contained classrooms.
- A state-sponsored study found that Newark's overall program quality was the same as the Abbott districts on average. The strongest feature of the program, earning a score slightly above "good," was the quality of discipline, supervision, and emotional support in the classroom.
- More data on program quality – such as the results of reliable measures like the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ECERS-R) – are needed in all Abbott districts so that we can understand the strengths, weaknesses, and challenges confronted by their preschool programs.

Preschool Teacher Qualifications and Supports

- In 2004-05, nearly all of the 427 teachers in district, Head Start, and other private providers

2

The Preschool Program

FIGURE | 2.14

Abbott Preschool Program: Benchmark Status In Newark

Benchmark	Status
District teachers required to have bachelor's degree	Met
Expanded Head Start teachers have four years from the date their program contracted with district to earn bachelor's degree	Met
District teachers required to have certification	Met
Expanded Head Start teachers have four years from the date their program contracted with district to earn certification.	Met

had earned at least a four-year college degree and were certified, as required under Abbott.

- In Newark, the average preschool teacher salary was \$48,912. On average preschool teachers in district-run programs earned \$13,000 more than did teachers in any other provider type. The reasons for this continued difference in salaries is unclear. When compared to teachers in other private provider programs, district teachers have similar levels of education and certification, and years of experience as lead teacher.

Preschool Budget

- At \$12,921 per preschooler in 2003-04, Newark's preschool aid was comparable to the district's combined per student budget for Kindergarten through Grade 12.

Preschool Leadership

- The representative body that advises Newark's preschool program provides feedback on areas needing improvement and gives input on plans for early childhood facilities construction. Per the district's understanding of state guidelines, the Newark Early Childhood Education Advisory Council does not participate in budget and plan development.

Preschool Student Outcomes

- Public preschool programs in New Jersey do not yet generate consistent and reliable information that will help us to understand how well preschoolers are doing. We need to strike a balance between the concerns of early childhood education specialists about widespread assessment of young children and the need to know how well the programs are serving Abbott preschoolers. Outcome measures are needed to help stakeholders to identify programs that work and those that need more assistance.

Endnotes

6. The New Jersey Department of Education covers the costs for six-hours, 180 days per year of pre-school education. The New Jersey Department of Human Services funds the mandated before- and after-school "wraparound" care and care during the summer to provide a ten-hour, 245-day per year program.

7. Age eligibility for three- and four-year-olds is based on the date the district uses to determine age eligibility for Kindergarten.

8. It is also important to note that New Jersey Department of Education estimates of the preschool universe fall short in their ability to account for mobility, changes in birth rates, and other factors affecting the size of age cohorts in the districts.

9. Federal laws guiding the educational environment of people with disabilities include: the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (amended in 2004) 20 U.S.C. § 1400, et seq.; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (1973) 29 U.S.C. § 794; and less directly, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 42 U.S.C. § 2131, et seq. State regulation is New Jersey Administrative Code 6A:14, and state statute is New Jersey Statutes Annotated 18A:46.

10. The Newark Public School district is organized by five School Leadership Teams (SLTs). Four serve schools in a defined geographic area. The fifth SLT contains all of the high schools citywide.

11. We report the 2003-04 educational environment of three- and four-year-olds in Newark and the other Abbott districts. The New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities report includes children ages three through five in 2002.

12. Curiosity Corner was developed by the same organization that developed the state's default Whole School Reform model. Success For All, in response to Abbott preschool requirements. Research done by the developer shows better overall instructional quality in preschools using the program and better expressive language development. The Bank Street Model (also known as the Developmental Interaction Approach) was developed by the New York-based college of education of the same name. Its emphases are similar to those of the High/Scope model.

13. The district's bilingual department administers this survey to children who speak another language at home. It is offered in Spanish, Portuguese, and Haitian Creole to determine the most appropriate educational program, such as bilingual, ESL, or some combination of both.

14. The Supports for Early Literacy (SELA) is used to examine classroom practices that support children's early language and literacy skills. The Preschool Classroom Mathematics Inventory (PCMI) assesses the materials and teaching strategies used to support and enhance children's math skills.

15. The Newark Public Schools did not grant teachers in community provider programs this extension unless they had earned at least 90 credits by September 2004.

16. As with the Abbott preschool teacher education requirement, the certification standard applied immediately to teachers in district-run programs. Teachers in community provider programs have until September 2006, and Head Start teachers have four years from the date when their program contracted with the Abbott district.

17. For the purpose of these analyses, preschool teacher salary includes wages only and does not include fringe benefits. Any tuition reimbursement paid to alternate route teachers is not included.

18. A Professional Improvement Plan (PIP) is a document that outlines the content of a teacher's professional development. It includes both district and individual professional development experiences. Goals and activities may be modified throughout the calendar year to meet emerging needs of the staff member.

19. Revenues may not be evenly distributed across provider types. Some providers may receive less aid per preschooler than this district average.

20. The number of questions a child answers correctly is converted into a standard score. Standard scores range from a low of 40 to a high of 160. Scores between 90 and 109 are considered to be "average."

New Jersey's Core Curriculum Content Standards define what all students should know and be able to do at each grade and by the time they graduate from high school. Abbott provides several means to help students in low-income, urban districts achieve these standards.

3

3

K-12 Education

Abbott Overview

These include:

- Funding at the same level as the wealthiest (“I and J”) suburban districts in the state;
- Class size limits;
- Comprehensive, or “whole-school” reform;
- Programs and services to meet the needs of students and families;
- Assessment in each content area to measure student improvement at the classroom, school, and district levels; and
- Ways to help “low-performing” schools improve.

As a first step toward decentralizing the district and bringing the educational structure closer to communities, the district was organized into five School Leadership Teams (SLT). Four serve a defined geographic area; the fifth, (SLT II) contains all of the high schools citywide. The purpose of the SLTs is to enable the district to directly address the specific educational needs of the diverse communities within the city and promote increased parent and community involvement.

In 2003-04, Newark housed 42,802 students in 76 public schools (not including children enrolled in private preschool

programs). Among schools serving Newark’s young people in preschool through Grade 8, there were 18 different grade configurations (Appendix page 144). Twenty-seven schools had classrooms spanning from Kindergarten to eighth grade; 17 of those schools also housed preschool classrooms. There are six middle schools and 12 high schools (including Renaissance Academy, which also serves students in Grades 6 through 8). Five additional, ungraded schools serve many of the district’s special education students.

Opportunities for Students to Learn**Whole School Reform**

When Abbott first began, every elementary school was required to select a Whole School Reform model.²¹ Whole School Reform is an all-around approach to improve student learning and achievement. All models are not alike, but many have characteristics in common. In general, Whole School Reform models: 1) give decision-making authority

to school-based teams that are representative of the district and the neighborhood; 2) provide help and training to schools by external experts; and 3) specify supports for teachers, students, and parents, including what the district can do to lead school improvement efforts. The New Jersey Department of Education chose Success for All as the preferred model for Abbott schools because they thought it had the best track record for urban school improvement. Abbott schools were free to choose one of five other models: the Comer School Development Program, Accelerated Schools, Coalition for Essential Schools, Community for Learning, and Modern Red Schoolhouse.²² Schools could propose other models, including ones that they or their district had developed. These models had to be approved by the New Jersey Department of Education.

Over the years, state support and enforcement of the Whole School Reform requirement has varied. Recently, the state has outlined ways for high-performing schools to opt out of their Whole School Reform models.

There is also a way for the New Jersey Department of Education to require that low-performing schools use alternate approaches.

In this section, we review how Newark responded to Abbott's Whole School Reform requirement and what models it chose.

District staff told us that Whole School Reform adoption was difficult for Newark. Whole School Reform was first implemented in some Abbott schools in 1998-99. The majority of Newark schools did not adopt a model until 2000-01 because most model developers did not have enough staff to serve a district the size of Newark. In the early days, some developers provided professional development and materials in person but this did not last long. On-site training and technical assistance became rare. One person guessed that the Newark schools that successfully implemented Whole School Reform were probably using the main principles of reform beforehand. District staff also found some models not challenging enough to help Newark students meet New Jersey's high standards.

FIGURE | 3.1

Whole School Reform Models: Newark, 2001-02

Model name	Number	Percent
Success for All	20	26.0%
Accelerated Schools	17	22.1%
Comer School Development Program	11	14.3%
America's Choice	5	6.5%
Communities for Learning	6	7.8%
Talent Development High Schools	5	6.5%
Coalition of Essential Schools	5	6.5%
Alternative design (state-approved)	3	3.9%
Co-Nect	2	2.6%
Microsociety	1	1.3%
No design	2	2.6%
Total	77	100.0%

SOURCE | New Jersey Department of Education Abbott Division

3

K-12 Education

Abbott Indicators in Newark: A State-Operated District

The Newark Public Schools has been a state-operated district since failing certification by the State Board of Education in 1995. Community members who reviewed this report in draft form were surprised that the findings contained so little evidence of the New Jersey Department of Education's role in operating the district. According to a recent report by Rutgers University, Institute for Education Law and Policy, minimal state involvement should not have been surprising. The Rutgers report finds that New Jersey's takeover plan did not specify steps for the district to take in order to regain local control. The report also notes that the state's takeover effort did not include plans to build the district's local capacity. Newark and the other state takeover districts have identified their own school improvement plans and monitored their own progress. A likely explanation for the absence of state intervention in the Newark Abbott Indicators Report is that Newark has developed, implemented, and monitored its school reform efforts largely through its own initiative.

By 2001-02, a total of 10 Whole School Reform models were being used in the Newark Public Schools (Figure 3.1). Among the most frequently used models were: Success for All, Accelerated Schools, and Comer School Development Program.

In 2002-03, the district developed "Reaching for the Brass Ring," a preschool through Grade 12 Whole School Reform model with math, literacy, and science units. The model is driven by the Core Curriculum Content Standards and accepted professional standards in the content areas. District staff developed the model using best practices observed in Newark's schools and selected features of the most successful commercial models. Based on our interviews with district staff, we know that all schools in the district have now switched to "Reaching for the Brass Ring," but still have the option to purchase specific services from model developers or attend their conferences. At the time of this writing, the model was not yet approved by the New Jersey Department of Education.

School and district staff told us that the district model gives school principals the flexibility to address the unique needs of their students with programs and services. Reaching for the Brass Ring specifies: 1) which skill areas should be taught along with minimum instructional times; 2) high-quality professional development from external experts; and 3) recommended staffing patterns to successfully implement the model. Schools pay fixed fees to obtain access to professional development providers.

Reaching for the Brass Ring has language arts literacy, mathematics, and science components. Like Success For All, it provides an intensive early literacy program (including a ninety-minute reading block) tailored to the individual needs of students. The model requires those schools demonstrating need to have a Reading Recovery teacher.²³ Reading tutors are also provided to support students with reading difficulty. The primary grade Reading Tutor works with students in small groups in the classroom during the reading block and works with students outside the

classroom throughout the day. The Reading Tutor also provides thirty-minute small-group instruction for students in Grades 4 through 8. The number of tutors a school receives is based on the number of students who need this assistance.

The district uses two standards-based math curricula that are both endorsed by the National Science Foundation and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. Everyday Mathematics is used in Kindergarten through Grade 5. Connected Mathematics in Grades 6 through 8. The high school math program begins with a foundations course in algebra and geometry in Grade 9. Students then have the opportunity to learn higher-level mathematical concepts through a sequence of courses in Grades 10 through 12. The district is currently looking for standards-based textbooks and curricula to support this program.

(continued on page 46)

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Success For All/Roots & Wings

Success for All/Roots & Wings created by Robert Slavin, Nancy Madden, and a team of developers at Johns Hopkins University, is designed to boost the basic skills achievement of all students while building problem solving skills, creativity, and critical thinking. The purpose of the model is to create well-structured curricular and instructional approaches for all core academic subjects, preschool to Grade 6, using research-based principles of instruction, assessment, classroom management, motivation, and professional development. Success for All schools have a full-time facilitator to help implement the program, a family support team to improve community and parent involvement, and a school-based advisory team that advises the principal on general direction and goals and evaluates school climate. Many of the elements of Success for All – such as intensive early literacy, tutoring for elementary grades students who are not reading on grade level, and family support teams – are required under Abbott, even in schools that do not adopt this model. The Roots & Wings version of the program adds math, social studies, and science to the original reading-only model.

America's Choice

The America's Choice model, appropriate for Kindergarten through Grade 12, has as its chief goal to help all students (except those with the most severe disabilities) reach a standard of achievement in English and mathematics by the time they graduate. The model uses early detection, intervention, and acceleration to spot and prevent failure. Elementary school students get 150 minutes of literacy and 60 minutes of math instruction each day. Secondary school teachers work in teams, and larger high schools are encouraged to create small learning communities (or "schools within schools"). America's Choice schools are required to have Leadership Management Teams to oversee school reform.

Comer School Development Program

The program developer, James Comer, recognized that many children living in inner cities come to school unprepared for school success and that many teachers never learned about child development, and how home cultures affect academic success. The School Development Program aims to help teachers understand child development, improve relations between schools and parents, and of course, increase student achievement. The main program elements are: a school-based management team that develops and monitors the use of a comprehensive school plan; a student and staff team focused on improving school climate and providing support services; and a parent team that promotes parent involvement. The program is known for a blame-free approach to problem solving, and an emphasis on collaboration and shared decision-making. A special unit of the management team focuses on curriculum, literacy skills, teacher development, and other instructional issues.

Accelerated Schools

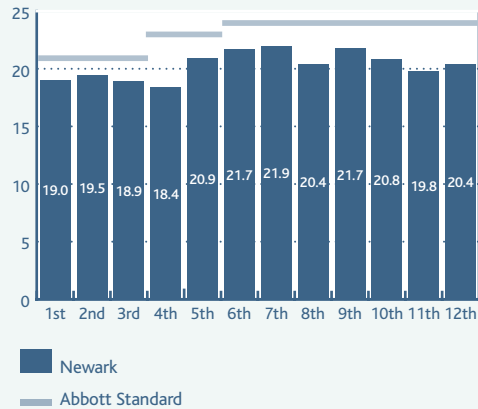
The Accelerated Schools developer (Henry Levin) believed that too many urban schools lacked challenging curricula and high expectations for their students. Schools using this model offer all students the kind of curricula and instructional approaches typically used with gifted-and-talented children. School-based teams work together to make every classroom a “powerful learning environment,” where students and teachers think creatively, explore interests, and achieve. The model is not prescribed: instead, it offers a process and philosophy that will help schools develop their own programs. The philosophy is based on unity of purpose, empowerment and responsibility, and building on strengths. An “inquiry process” helps schools and community partners analyze their problems, take actions to make improvements, and assess the results.

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FIGURE 3.2

Average Class Size by Grade: Newark, 2002–03



SOURCE | School Report Card, 2002–03

Of the six Newark schools we visited in 2003–04, three used the district’s model (Mount Vernon, Hawkins, and Benjamin Franklin Elementary Schools). All three schools had used the Accelerated School model before switching to Reaching for the Brass Ring in 2002–03. The reasons they changed varied: some told us that they needed more instructional guidance than they could get from the developer; others cited legal problems between the developer and the state. They liked Accelerated Schools because of the high expectations it encouraged, its use of mixed-ability grouping in classrooms: all practices they felt they were doing in their schools before they adopted the model. Mount Vernon staff said that Accelerated Schools blended well with its preschool curriculum and approach. First Avenue School also used Accelerated Schools, but switched to the district model in 2003–04 after experiencing problems during contract renewal. The First Avenue School has had tremendous achievement gains in recent years: in fact, the school won a “National School Change” award

in 2003. Staff believed that their school’s success was at least partly due to Accelerated Schools.

Staff from a fifth school, Eighteenth Avenue Elementary, said they liked Success for All because it was relatively inexpensive; offered extensive, direct professional development; and the developer showed commitment to the Newark Public Schools (Success for All had an office in Newark). Ultimately, the school was required to adopt the model because its graduates attend a Project GRAD school (Central High School).^{24–25} The only model weakness the staff mentioned was its writing instruction. Eighteenth Avenue did not adopt the “Roots & Wings,” the Success for All add-on, so they adopted the district’s math program.

Luis Muñoz Marin Middle School used Communities for Learning until 2002–03. The staff did not feel that the achievement gains the school made had happened as a result of using this model. School staff reported having difficulty getting assistance from the

developer when confronted with an influx of students who were not reading on grade level.

Class Size

Class size research suggests that smaller class sizes can help teachers spend less time on behavior management and more time on instruction that is better attuned to their needs. In fact, there is strong evidence that smaller class sizes help students in the early elementary grades to perform better in school. Evidence on the benefits of smaller class sizes for students in later grades is less clear. In recognition of the potential benefits to students of all ages,

Abbott schools have class size standards as follows:

- Kindergarten through grade 3: 21
- Grades 4 through 5: 23
- Grades 6 through 12: 24

Figure 3.2 shows the average class size by grade for Newark compared to the Abbott standards. In the most recent year in which we have information, Newark's average class size was lower than the maximum allowed by Abbott in every grade. District staff report,

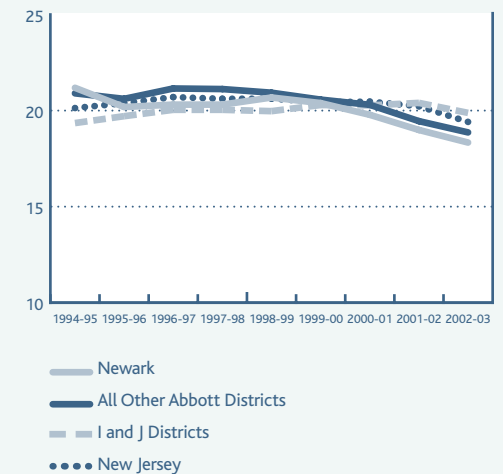
however, that in some areas of the city, particularly in the North and East wards, many class sizes exceed the Abbott standard due to inadequate facilities.

Figure 3.3 shows a comparison of elementary school class sizes by district grouping from 1994-95 to 2002-03. Elementary school class sizes across the state and in the wealthiest districts have stayed at about 20 students between 1994-95 and 2002-03. Elementary school class sizes in the Abbott districts other than Newark decreased a little, from 21 to about 19. In 1994-95, Newark's average class size was 21, above the other Abbott districts and the state average. By 2002-03, elementary school class sizes in Newark decreased to a level slightly below the other Abbott districts.

Why did class sizes go down in Newark's elementary schools? Possible reasons include more classroom space, more teachers, or lower enrollments. We can see that enrollment has decreased by eight percent from just over 34,000 in 1994-95 to 31,358 in 2002-03 (Figure 3.4). These data suggest that decreased enrollment contributed to a decline in class size. District staff noted that

FIGURE 3.3

Elementary School Average Class Size by District Grouping, 1994-95 to 2002-03



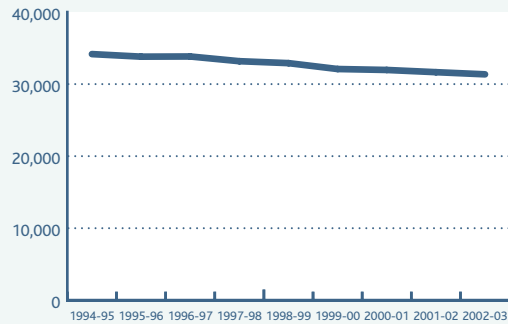
SOURCE | School Report Card, 1994-95 to 2002-03

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FIGURE | 3.4

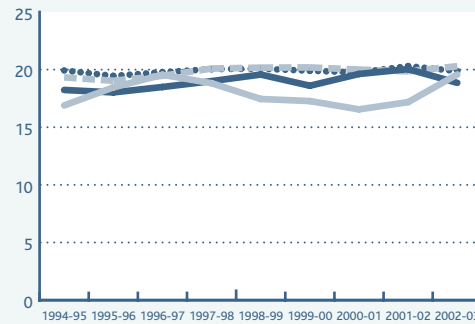
Elementary School Enrollment: Newark, 1994–95 to 2002–03



SOURCE | School Report Card, 1994-95 to 2002-03

FIGURE | 3.5

High School Average Class Size by District Grouping, 1994–95 to 2002–03



SOURCE | School Report Card, 1994-95 to 2002-03

the decrease in enrollment could be due to the demolition of many high-rise apartment buildings and housing developments in areas of the city undergoing revitalization.

High school class sizes in Newark have been going up and down during the same time period (Figure 3.5). Newark’s high school class sizes were at 17 in 1994-95 and 20 in 2002-03, growing about 18 percent over all. In most of the years we examined, Newark’s high school class sizes were lower than the other Abbott districts.

We turn to Figure 3.6 to see if enrollment patterns might explain the changes in class size. The figure shows that high school enrollment in Newark declined by about five percent between 1994-95 and 1999-00. After 2000-01, however, the enrollment numbers grew to a high of over 10,400 in 2002-03. Enrollment changes may help to explain the overall growth in high school class sizes. We need to know more about classroom space and teacher hiring to be able to explain the periods when class sizes went down.

Programs for Students with Disabilities

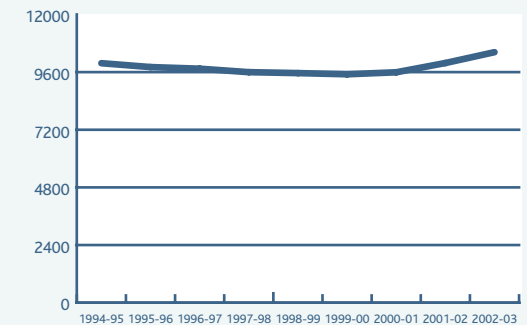
Federal and state laws guide the education of individuals with disabilities.²⁶ The law requires that children with disabilities be educated in the “least restrictive environment.” This means that, to the maximum extent possible, students are educated in the school they would have attended if they did not have a disability, and participate in academic, nonacademic, and extracurricular activities with students who do not have disabilities. The general education classroom is the preferred placement for children with disabilities; however, school districts must also offer a range of alternative services for students who cannot be educated in the general education classroom for part or all of the day. The law also states that children with disabilities should only be placed in separate classes or schools, or removed from the general education classroom when the nature or severity of the disability prevents them from being educated in the general education classroom, even with the use of supplemental aids and services.

The law requires schools and districts to provide children with appropriate educational experiences and quality services that are tailored to their individual needs. For as much time as possible, this education must be provided in inclusive, rather than separate settings. Below, we discuss the settings where Newark’s special needs students are educated.

Newark schools place fewer students with disabilities in general educational settings relative to the other district groupings (Figure 3.7). About 12 percent of Newark’s 6,575 special needs students go to school in a “very inclusionary” setting (spending 80% or more of their day with the general education population). More than half of the students with disabilities in Newark (60%) are in self-contained classrooms for a major portion of the day (spending less than 40 percent of the day in general education classrooms) – a much greater percentage than for the state as a whole (17%) and the I and J districts (8%). Newark and the other Abbott districts place about 15 percent of their special education students in out-of-district schools, compared

FIGURE | 3.6

High School Enrollment: Newark, 1994–95 to 2002–03



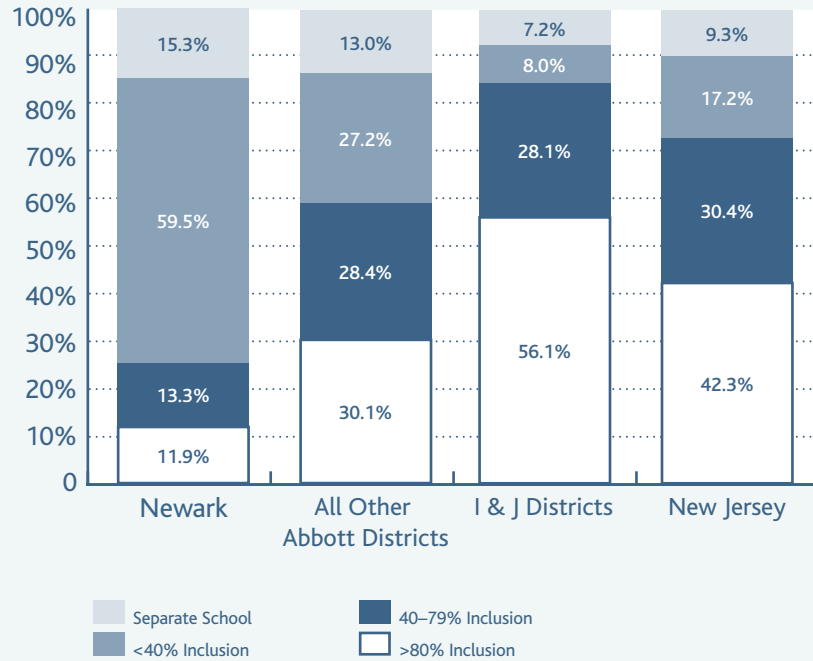
SOURCE | School Report Card, 1994-95 to 2002-03

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FIGURE | 3.7

Educational Environment of Students with Disabilities Ages 6–21 by District Grouping, 2003–04



*Home and residential placements, less than one percent.

SOURCE | New Jersey Department of Education: Office of Special Education Programs, 2003-04

to nine percent in districts throughout the state.

Curriculum

In 1996, New Jersey was among the first states to adopt curriculum standards, called the Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS). The CCCS describe what students should know and be able to do in nine content areas at each grade level from Kindergarten to Grade 12 and upon high school graduation. The content areas are: career education and consumer, family, and life skills; comprehensive health and physical education; language arts literacy; mathematics; science; social studies; technology; visual and performing arts; and world languages. The CCCS define a “thorough and efficient education,” to which all New Jersey residents are entitled under the state constitution.

Most of the curricula used in the Newark Public Schools are developed in the district; a few specialized curricula, such as automotive technology and culinary arts are purchased. Content-specific curriculum committees,

made up of teachers and external consultants, review external programs or develop new ones. Curriculum development occurs on a five-year cycle. Curricula developed by the district are submitted to the district's Department of Teaching and Learning for review, then to the district Advisory Board's Curriculum Committee, and finally, to the entire Advisory Board for a vote.²⁷

The curriculum committees want to ensure that curricula are rigorous and linked across subject areas. For example, the social studies curriculum is linked to African-American and Latino history and language arts. They also want to ensure that each curriculum guide includes: units to be covered and themes; classroom activities and recommended duration of each activity; national and state standards in the content area; and a sample lesson plan, sample assessment, and the required skills students should master by the end of the school year.

Student test scores influence elementary school curriculum development. Committee members analyze them and use the results to

determine what knowledge and skills students still need to have. Members make sure that high school curricula provide students with the skills needed to make them more attractive job and college candidates. Vocational and technical education curricula are selected by committees based on industry standards.

College preparatory classes. Nationwide, high school students of color are under-represented in college admissions. One reason might be a lack of opportunity to learn challenging material in high school. Newark's high schools offer a number of courses to prepare students for the challenge of college and make them more competitive in the college application process. College preparatory and honors courses are offered to students in English, Algebra, Trigonometry, Calculus, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Anatomy and Physiology, U.S. History, World History, Spanish and French.

Newark's seniors also have the opportunity to take advanced placement (AP) courses in Literature, Composition, Calculus, Computer Science, Biology, Chemistry, European

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History, U.S. History, Spanish and French. In general, honors courses are well distributed throughout Newark's 12 high schools. Advanced placement courses are offered in a smaller number of schools, and are most frequently offered at the selective, magnet high schools.

We compared Newark's honors and AP course offerings to those in Glen Ridge, a nearby "I" district. We found that Newark offers all but three of the same courses as Glen Ridge: Math Analysis Honors, AP Physics, and AP Studio Art. Unlike Newark, Glen Ridge does not offer AP European History.

The district also has a pre-engineering program it runs in cooperation with the New Jersey Institute of Technology called "Project Lead the Way." Students in the project can take Principles of Engineering, Introduction to Engineering Design, Engineering Robotics, and Engineering Design and Development.

Student and Family Supports

Abbott Overview

Under Abbott, the New Jersey Supreme Court requires the state to fund and implement "supplemental programs." The purpose of these programs is to address disadvantages experienced by young people who grow up in poor cities. There are two kinds of "supplemental" programs under Abbott. Some programs are required. Those are:

- Full-day Kindergarten
- Intensive Early Literacy
- Parent involvement
- Class size limits
- Health and social service referral
- Access to technology
- Alternative education and dropout prevention
- Early math instruction
- Professional development
- Violence prevention and school security
- School-to-work and college transition

Funding to support other programs is available if a school or district can show that the students need them. They are:

- On-site social and health services
- Literacy supports for schools not using Success for All
- After-school instructional programs
- Summer instructional programs
- Nutrition programs
- Exemplary music, art, and special education
- School-based management and budgeting

In this section we discuss the type of supplemental programs available to the young people attending Newark's public schools. We were able to gather information on supplemental programs and services by visiting schools and by reviewing budgets and other documents. We did not catalog all of the supplemental programs in Newark or the other Abbott districts, nor did we assess their quality. Such extensive study was beyond the scope of our project. If a program is not listed below, it does not mean that it is not available: only that we did not gather information about it to include in this report.

Full-Day Kindergarten

Research shows that children who attend full-day Kindergarten learn more reading and math than those in half-day classes. Children in small Kindergarten classes learn more than those in medium-sized or large classes. The research also shows that children from low-income families learn more in classes that are led by a teacher and supported by an instructional aide. All students enrolled in Kindergarten in an Abbott district are entitled to a full day of school in a class that is no larger than 21 children and taught by a certified teacher and an instructional aide.

All of Newark's Kindergarten classes have been full day at least as early as 1998-99, as have the majority throughout the state. The findings below show the average size of Newark's Kindergarten classes from 2000-01 to 2002-03 compared to all other Abbotts, the wealthiest districts, and the state average. The findings reveal – for every district grouping we analyzed – Kindergarten class sizes were smaller than the Abbott standard of 21 and rose to close to the maximum class size by

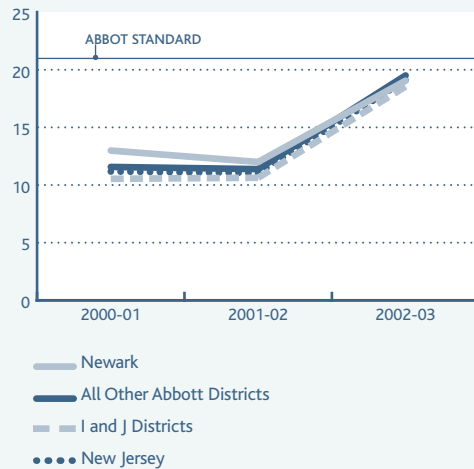
Emerging research suggests that children with parents who are involved in their learning are more likely to succeed in school.

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FIGURE 3.8

Kindergarten Average Class Size by District Grouping, 2000–01 to 2002–03



SOURCE | School Report Card, 2000-01 to 2002-03

2002–03. Newark’s Kindergarten class size was 13 in 2000–01 and increased 47 percent to 19.1 in 2002–03. The average Kindergarten class size in all other Abbott districts was 11.6 in 2000–01 and 19.5 in 2002–03.

These findings suggest a combination of possible factors that could affect Kindergarten class sizes across the state: limited classroom space for Kindergarten, a growing Kindergarten enrollment, and/or districts have either dropped Kindergarten teacher staff lines that did not keep pace with enrollment. Figure 3.9 below shows the cumulative percent changes in Kindergarten enrollment for Newark, all other Abbott districts, and the state from 1998–99 to 2003–04. We use cumulative percent change because it allows us to compare district groupings of unequal sizes and illustrates the actual enrollment trend over time including all of the ups and downs in between. Reading left to right; the points show the cumulative percent change in Kindergarten enrollment since 1998–99. The first point shows the percent change between 1998–99 and 1999–00, the second includes

the change from the previous year plus the change between 1999–00 and 2000–01, and so on.

Newark’s Kindergarten enrollment decreased by three percent from 1998–99 to 2003–04. These findings suggest that the increased Kindergarten class sizes we saw above are not related to enrollment changes in these classes. More must be known about classroom space and Kindergarten staffing patterns to understand the increase in class size.

Early Literacy

Under Abbott, schools are required to provide 90-minute blocks of reading instruction to children in Kindergarten through Grade 3. Students in Grades 1 through 3 who are not reading at grade level must receive one-on-one tutoring; older elementary grade students not reading at grade level must receive small-group tutoring.

We reviewed early literacy programs through operational plans posted on the Internet and in the five schools we visited that serve students in the early elementary grades.

Our impression is that schools use different programs to meet early literacy needs. Examples include: Thematic Learning and Kinder Roots, Rigby Reading Program, the Balanced Literacy Program, Children's Literacy Initiative, and Leap Frog. Most programs provide guided and independent instruction in reading and writing. Some schools have a parent-child reading program, and some have home-lending libraries.

Not all of the schools we visited in 2003-04 had a literacy tutor to hold one-on-one or small-group tutoring sessions for students who were not reading on grade level. Four out of five schools had some small-group tutoring. Three offered tutoring for some grades, but not others: First Avenue School and the Benjamin Franklin School offered tutoring to students in Grade 1 only; and Eighteenth Avenue offered tutoring to students in Grades 1 through 3. Mount Vernon School did not provide literacy tutoring to any students because it lacked the specialized staff. All of the schools cited staffing or budget limits as the reason they did not have the complete tutor-

ing programs required under Abbott. Only Hawkins Elementary School offered tutoring to all students reading below grade level in Kindergarten through Grade 8. Hawkins was able to provide these services with a reading specialist tutoring students in Kindergarten through Grade 3, and the Soar to Success program for students in Grades 4 through 8 needing extra help.

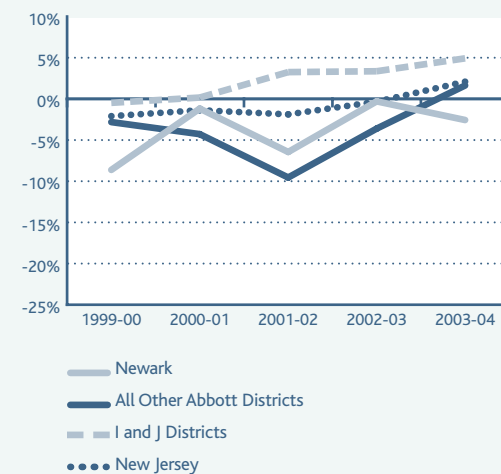
Parent Involvement

Emerging research suggests that children with parents who are involved in their learning are more likely to attend school, earn higher grades, improve their social skills, graduate from high school and go on to college. Parent involvement in the school can be important too if it is linked to improving learning, developing specific skills or encouraging children to take more challenging classes. Parent involvement can also build a sense of community accountability for student learning.

Under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, districts are required to use a portion of their federal funding to form and support

FIGURE | 3.9

Cumulative Percent Change in Kindergarten Enrollment by District Grouping, 1999-00 to 2003-04



SOURCE | School Report Card, 1994-95 to 2002-03

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a district Parent Advisory Council. Abbott schools are required to make efforts to involve parents and caregivers in their children's education and in general school decision-making. At the very least, each school should have a parent-community (family) liaison and parent representation on its SLC. SLC chairs at all six schools we visited told us that there are parent representatives on their management teams.

The Newark Public Schools has policies to encourage parent involvement and establish school-home-community partnerships in every school. The district's policy requires each school to implement the following: 1) at least two parent-teacher conferences per year; 2) communications with parents during the year through newsletters and flyers; 3) a school-parent organization; and 4) workshops and conferences to help parents help their children with their school work at home. The district has established Parent Involvement Resource Centers at four schools in the district: Camden Middle, Luis Muñoz Marin Middle, Harold Wilson, and William

H. Brown. The centers provide libraries of materials and have offered parents workshops on topics such as: Computer Literacy; Effective Parent/Teacher Conferences; Helping Your Child With Math; Raising Readers; Leave No Child Behind; and Parents Rights and Responsibilities. Where space allows, schools in the district have parent rooms to offer resources and information as well. The district also has a number of groups, such as the Concerned Fathers of The Newark Public Schools, the Special Education Parent Advisory Council, and the Grandparents Support Network, which serve as a source of support for caregivers and enable them to become more involved in their children's education.

The district's parent involvement policy states that parents should have the opportunity to participate on districtwide committees but our interviews did not reveal the extent to which these policies are being carried out. One community reviewer noted that the number of parents throughout the district who are involved is small compared to the number

who could be involved if the policies were more far-reaching.

Health and Social Services

Referral and coordination. Under Abbott, schools should have staff to connect parents, caregivers, and children with needed health and social services. The goals of this staff are to: 1) ensure that the children are able to come to school every day prepared to learn; and 2) reduce time taken out by teachers to address students' nonacademic problems. Aside from connecting families to neighborhood services, staff should provide counseling and educational services. At the very least, elementary schools are required to have a Family Support Team, made up of a nurse, social worker, counselor, parent-community liaison, and the Whole School Reform instructional facilitator. At middle and high schools, the community services and health and social service coordinators do the job of the Family Support Team.

The district employs Family Support Teams, each of which serves more than one

school. The teams are made up of a parent liaison, a Whole School Reform instructional facilitator, social worker, nurse, and parent-community liaison.

Every school in the district also has a Pupil Resource Team. The purpose of the team is to identify ways to meet children's needs for health and social services before referring them for an evaluation for special education. The team works with teachers, district staff, specialists, and parents to discuss difficulties as they arise; review and monitor services used by children; and propose new programs and services.

As part of their regular practice, health services staff in each school observes students and work together to develop programs or link students to the services that they need. For example, health staff began a dental program after observing how many children came to school with rotten teeth. The district has a relationship with the Newark Health Department whose staff provided middle and high school students with Hepatitis B vaccines. Recently, all of the students in one school were

Abbott districts are required to identify and provide services to students at risk of dropping out.

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tested after a teacher died of Hepatitis B. The district also worked with the Newark Health Department to ensure that every student gets immunized. There is a districtwide crisis intervention team to conduct group counseling and school assemblies following traumatic incidents.

Direct service. Through a partnership between the Healthcare Foundation of New Jersey, Saint Barnabas Healthcare Systems, and the district, there are several School-Based Health Clinics in Newark. Clinics are currently located at Quitman Street, Dayton Street, and George Washington Carver Elementary Schools, and Shabazz and Barringer High Schools. These clinics are designed to provide comprehensive care to Newark students and their families that meets their physical, dental, and mental health needs. With the construction of new school facilities (see School Facilities Construction, below), the district plans to build 10 full school-based clinics, with a physician on-staff at each. Satellite clinics will also be placed at existing schools. Their hope is that one day, clinics can

serve as the primary care neighborhood providers for Newark's students, many of whom use emergency rooms in charity-care hospitals for this purpose or simply go without health care. The district plans to raise enough revenue through insurance to cover the cost of the medical staff. District staff also reported that they need more physical and occupational therapists in the schools, particularly in the Central, South, and West wards of the city. The district spent \$54 million in 2002-03 to place about 1,000 students out of district for these services.

In Newark, pregnant young women stay in their own schools until the time when they need home instruction. The district also has a program at Barringer High School where parenting teens can be re-introduced to school. An additional parenting program was slated to open at Newark Vocational School in September 2004.

Access to Technology

Abbott districts are required to have at least one media specialist and one technol-

ogy coordinator who make sure that students master the technology needed to reach the state's Core Curriculum Content Standards, that classrooms and libraries have adequate equipment, and technology is effectively used to support teaching and learning. Under Abbott, there should be no more than five students to each computer in each school throughout the district.

Below, we show the number of students to every computer in Newark, the other Abbott districts, the wealthiest districts in the state, and statewide. We have information about the student-computer ratio starting in 1997-98, so we can see if student access to computers improved after the Abbott funding came in. We do not know, however, whether and how well this computer technology is used to enhance students' learning experiences.

Figure 3.10 shows that Newark students had dramatically better access to computers in the first year after Abbott and that access kept improving throughout the time period. In 1997-98, there was one computer to every 16 students on average, compared to about

nine students per computer in the next year alone. By 2002-03, Newark had purchased enough computers to ensure that there was a computer for every four students in the district.

Student access to computers improved dramatically in the other Abbott districts too. The average number of students to every computer decreased steadily from 9.4 to 4.9 in the other Abbott districts, below (better than) the maximum of five students to every computer. Access to computers also improved throughout the state and in the wealthiest districts.

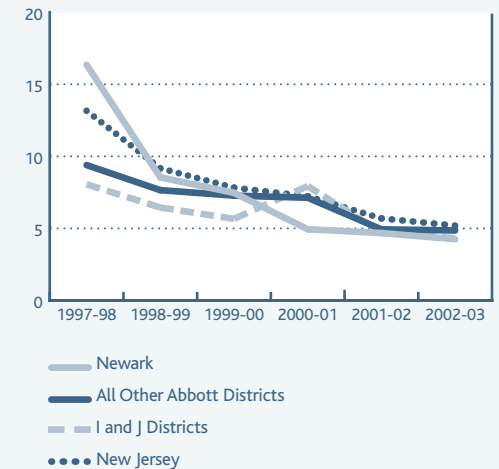
Alternative Education

Abbott districts are also required to identify and provide services to students at risk of failing and dropping out as soon as possible. At a minimum, the districts should provide alternative programs for young people in middle and high school, and be adequately staffed with dropout prevention specialists.

In Newark, the Family Support Team at the elementary school level and dropout prevention coordinator at the high school level are

FIGURE | 3.10

Student-Computer Ratio by District Grouping, 1997-98 to 2002-03



SOURCE | School Report Card, 1997-98 to 2002-03

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Newark Public Schools provides three meals a day to any student who walks into any summer school site in the city.

responsible for identifying students who are at-risk for dropping out of school. When they spot risk indicators – such as repeated suspensions or extended absenteeism – they call families or conduct home visits. In some instances, they refer students and families for counseling. Seriously at-risk students are referred to an alternative program.

Students who are having difficulty at their regular high schools have the option of attending twilight programs (3–7 P.M.). Collectively, these programs are called the Renaissance Academy. There are six Renaissance alternative programs throughout the city, one at each of the comprehensive high schools. At-risk students ages 11 to 15 attend an alternative (Renaissance) middle school program. There are four such programs, one located within each SLT in the district (one program is dedicated to over-age middle school students). Renaissance programs are meant to be short-term, but some students who thrive in them are allowed to stay.

College and Work Transition Programs

High schools in Abbott districts are also required to provide programs to help students transition to their chosen pathways after graduation. These programs should help students: 1) explore their interests and strengths; 2) improve their skills and prepare for responsible self-reliance in adulthood; and 3) prepare for college admissions and/or employment applications.

The School-to-Career and College Initiatives (STCCI) program is designed to provide successful transition of high school students to the world of work, college, or post-secondary education. In the Newark Public Schools, the STCCI program begins in Kindergarten and extends through Grade 12. At the elementary and middle school levels, students learn about different careers through curricula, visits to workplaces, job shadowing, and classroom visits by guest speakers.

In the eighth grade, students may choose to apply to a magnet career academy. Students who do not go to a magnet academy attend their area high school and may select

an academy at that school. School-to-career programs have three basic components: 1) school-based learning; 2) work-based learning; and 3) connecting activities. Each academy provides a structured academic program to meet all district and state graduation requirements and offer students elective courses related to their specific career focus. Through work experiences, students study subject matter in a hands-on working environment with assistance from a workplace mentor. Students then explore the connection between the academic learning that takes place in school and the occupational learning occurring at the workplace.

The STCCI program also offers the following activities and services: summer internships and apprenticeships, college/university admission and financial aid seminars, pre-employment training programs, job location/placement assistance, and enrollment in college courses.

After-School Programs

The Newark Public Schools offers all students Grades 2 to 12 after-school programs at locations throughout the city. Programs for younger students take place between 3 and 6 P.M.; programs for older students are between 6 and 9 P.M. These programs include tutoring for students with identified needs; Grades 4, 8, and 11 test preparation; and recreational activities.

The district partners with the City of Newark for evening recreational programs and after-school youth employment. In 2003-04, 109 high school students participated in the Mayor's Office of Employment Training program (MOET). Students received course credits and a stipend for their participation and were placed in jobs related to their high school academy or "pathway."²⁸ Some students also received certificates from the state for skills they gained while "on the job," such as mastery of software applications. Some MOET students continued their jobs during the summer too.

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Many schools run their own after-school programs in addition to those offered district-wide. The following is a sampling of school-based after school programs in the schools we visited in 2003-04:

Eighteenth Avenue School

- LeapFrog Academy for students in Kindergarten through second grade to work on math and literacy skills
- Saturday NJASK academy for students in Grades 3 and 4

Benjamin Franklin Elementary

- Girl Scouts
- I Love to Read book club
- Newark Do Something
- Mothers and Others Mentoring Students (MOMS)
- GED and ESL classes for parents

Also at Franklin, in collaboration with La Casa de Don Pedro

- Field trips,
- After-school instruction
- Counseling and art therapy

- Tennis and golf lessons
- Dance
- Karate

Hawkins Elementary

- Saturday and before and after-school GEPA preparation
- Athletic competitions
- Newark Boys and Girls Club programs

Luis Muñoz Marin Middle

- Literacy and math tutoring
- GEPA academy
- Math Olympics

Mount Vernon Elementary

- Homework assistance
- Project Pride
- Basketball (in 2004-05)
- Girl Scouts
- Bank Street College of Education's New Beginnings Project

Summer Programs

The focus of the district's summer program is to keep students involved in school and prevent learning loss. There are program centers located in each ward of the city. At the elementary school level, the program is interdisciplinary and provides enrichment classes. The program lasts five weeks. Students can take part in instruction provided by the schools in the morning and recreation provided by the City of Newark in the afternoon. First Avenue School also has a two-week Summer Academy for incoming eighth grade students to begin preparing for the GEPA.

There are two summer high school sites for students needing to repeat failed courses and one site offering other classes for enrichment. Qualifying Newark high school students can take college-level courses during the summer at Essex County College and Rutgers University-Newark Campus.

Enriched Nutrition

Breakfast and lunch is provided to Newark students every day. Staff observed that break-

fast and lunch programs are more heavily used in the middle of the month when parents are most likely to run out of money. Newark Public Schools contracts for cafeteria services to provide snacks to all after-school program participants. The district provides three meals a day to any student who walks into any summer school site in the city to ensure that students have nutritious meals throughout the summer.

Art and Music

Supplemental funding is available for schools that show the need for exemplary art and music programs. Below, we briefly review the art and music programs at the schools we visited, who taught them, and where they were held. Ideally, instruction should take place in rooms that are dedicated to these subjects and taught by specialists in the subject matter.

Five of the six schools we visited had a music program (all but Eighteenth Avenue); all of these either had two music teachers (one each for instrumental and vocal music) or were searching to fill a vacant position. Marin

Space Limitations in Newark After-School Programs

The First Avenue School's district-sponsored after-school programs serve 100 students: far fewer than actually need them according to school staff. Because of the limited number of slots, parents submit applications and students are selected on a first-come, first-served basis. Some consideration is given to teacher recommendations for students who would especially benefit. Typically, there is a waiting list for First Avenue's after-school program. Mount Vernon Elementary School also has a 100-student limit in its after-school programs. Throughout the city, approximately 10,000 students are served by the district's after-school programs. At the time of this writing, 8,000 are still on waiting lists.

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Art at Franklin

Benjamin Franklin Elementary School recently received a grant from the Getty Foundation to participate in an “arts in education” program with Montclair State University. Students took part in a special “Backpack Art” program in 2003-04. Montclair State gave students backpacks containing information about a famous artist and activities for students. Twice a week, Montclair State students and others came to the school to review their activities and materials. The students got new backpacks each week. Some students also served as docents (museum guides) for university deans and faculty at a Newark Museum conference. The students gave them a tour, sharing facts about the art they were viewing.

Middle School and Mount Vernon Elementary School had dedicated music facilities; First Avenue and Hawkins Elementary Schools held music in their respective school auditoria. Students enrolled in Benjamin Franklin Elementary School’s choral program had an opportunity to sing at Carnegie Hall with other children. Schoolmates in the instrumental music program had an opportunity to receive violin instruction from orchestra musicians from the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra and some students even performed at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center.

All six schools had an art program; three had space dedicated to art instruction: Eighteenth Avenue Elementary, Mount Vernon Elementary, and Luis Muñoz Marin Middle Schools. Art is taught at First Avenue School in a regular classroom, and Hawkins’ art teacher brings materials from classroom to classroom, often referred to as “art in a cart.”

K-12 Teacher Qualifications and Supports

There are no wholly adequate ways to assess teaching quality without observing instruction and talking to teachers, parents, and children. These methods are beyond the scope of our project, so we offer information about the number and qualifications of teachers, the training available to them, and information about how their colleagues and the district help them to do the best job they can do.

Student-Teacher Ratio

Student-teacher ratios are different from class size. With class size we can see how many children are in the classroom on average, while student-teacher ratios show the relationship between the total number of certificated faculty on staff and total enrollment. Student-teacher ratios may be smaller than class sizes if classes are team-taught, or if specialized faculty are present in the classrooms—such as reading specialists, or bilingual or special education aides. All things considered, we would like to see fewer students for every teacher. And we expect to see

lower student-teacher ratios after 1997-98, when Newark and the other Abbott districts began to receive adequate foundational funding to reduce class sizes.

Figure 3.11 shows that the student-teacher ratios improved in Newark and the other Abbott districts. Since 1998-99, there were fewer students to every teacher in Newark and all of the other Abbott districts than in the wealthiest districts or the state as a whole.

Faculty Attendance

Teachers who like their jobs, are involved in decision making at school, and who believe that their schools support their efforts are absent from the job less often. The quality of a school's environment plays a big part in explaining teacher stress, and therefore teacher attendance. Teachers say that student misbehavior and even the change of school reform contribute to stress and burnout. Of course, personal circumstances, such as health and family responsibilities, also account for some teacher absence. Next we examine the faculty

attendance rates in Newark, compared to other Abbott districts, the wealthiest districts, and the state as a whole.

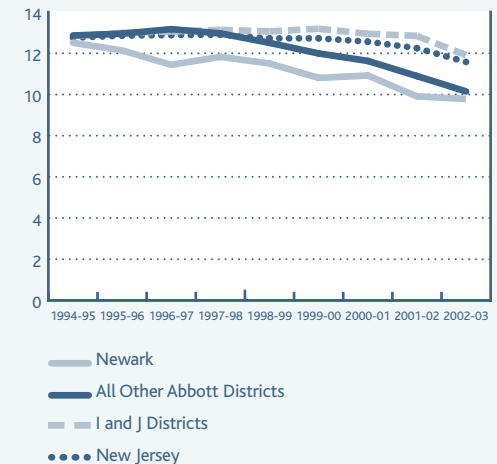
Figure 3.12 shows a positive statewide trend in teacher attendance between 1994-95 and 2002-03. Faculty attendance improved at about the same pace throughout the state, in the wealthiest districts, and in the other Abbott districts. In 2002-03, faculty attendance in those three district groupings ranged from 95 to 97 percent. Faculty attendance in Newark also improved since 1994. Newark faculty attendance was at its lowest (85%) in 1995-96, at its highest (95%) in 1999-00, and dropped only slightly to 94 percent by 2002-03.

Highly Qualified Teachers

The Federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) outlines several measures that schools and districts must take to ensure a quality public education to all of their students. One provision requires that certain teachers must be "highly qualified" in each subject they teach.²⁹ The requirements of becoming highly

FIGURE 3.11

Student-Teacher Ratio by District Grouping, 1994-95 to 2002-03



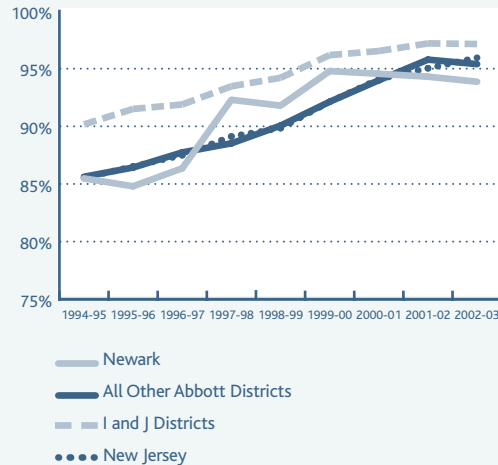
SOURCE | School Report Card, 1994-95 to 2002-03

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FIGURE | 3.12

Faculty Attendance by District Grouping, 1994–95 to 2002–03



SOURCE | School Report Card, 1994–95 to 2002–03

qualified under federal law vary depending on when the teacher is hired and what type of school he or she teaches in. In general, a teacher must hold a four-year college degree, be fully certified, and show a level of knowledge in his or her subject matter by passing a state test. New middle and high school teachers must also have a certain amount of college credits in the subject matter they teach. The law applies equally to teachers who teach many core subjects (such as many elementary school and special education teachers), those who specialize in a single subject (such as many middle and high school teachers), basic skills teachers, and bilingual and ESL teachers.

Figures 3.13 and 3.14 show the percentage of highly qualified teachers in Newark, other Abbott districts, the wealthiest districts, and the state average for elementary and secondary schools respectively. Reading left to right, the three sets of grouped bars show the percent of teachers who are highly qualified in at least *one* subject, the percent who are highly qualified in *all* core subjects, and the percent of core subject area *classes* taught by a highly

qualified teacher. All districts must submit a Highly Qualified Teacher report. Many districts, including Newark have reported difficulty compiling the information needed to fulfill this requirement.

Figure 3.13 shows that a large majority of the teachers in all district groupings were highly qualified. More than four out of five of Newark's elementary teachers were highly qualified in at least *one* subject and three out of four were highly qualified in *all* of the core academic subjects they taught (Figure 3.13). Even so, Newark had the lowest percentage of highly qualified teachers among the district groupings we examined.

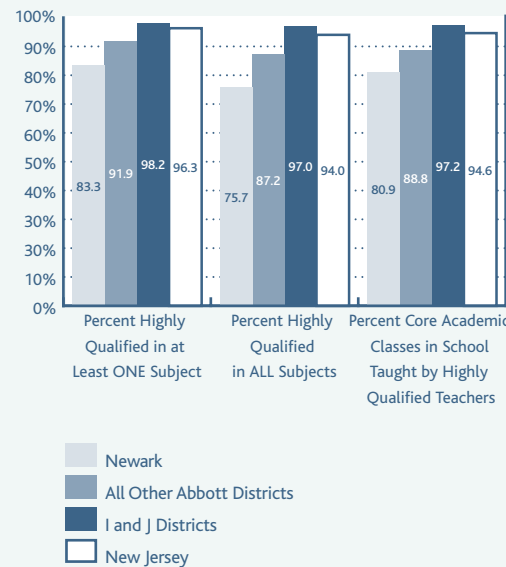
Figure 3.14 shows the information about highly qualified teachers in the Newark high schools. Similar to what we found in the elementary schools, a large majority of New Jersey's high school teachers are highly qualified. Newark's high school teaching staff compared even better with the other district groupings than their counterparts in the elementary schools. Ninety-five percent were highly qualified in at least *one* subject they

taught and 94 percent were highly qualified in *all* of the subjects they taught. Somewhat fewer core *classes* were taught by highly qualified teachers in Newark’s high schools (86%). There are two reasons why we might see a difference between the percent of highly qualified teachers on the one hand and the percent of classes taught by them on the other. The percent of classes may be lower if highly qualified teachers have lighter course loads. Also, teachers may be asked to teach subjects other than the ones they are highly qualified for. In Newark high schools, either the highly qualified teachers teach fewer classes than their colleagues or they are being assigned to teach other subjects.

Staffing Patterns

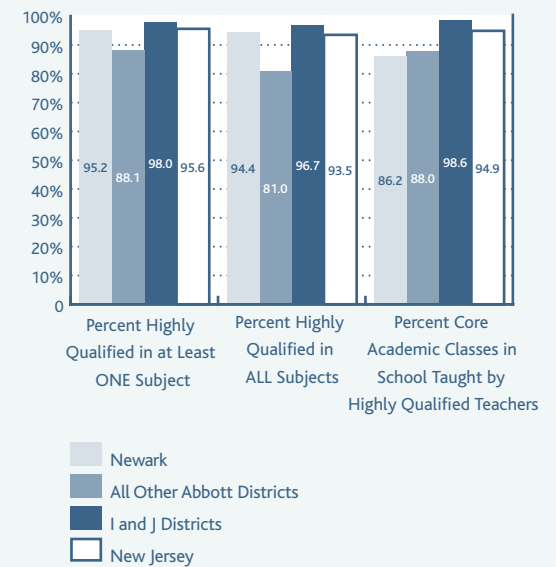
Abbott districts electronically submit their school-by-school staffing plans to the New Jersey Department of Education each year. We present the districts’ submissions as estimates of the true number of staff that are employed. These numbers do not reflect any

FIGURE | 3.13
Highly Qualified Teachers by District Grouping:
Elementary Schools, 2003–04



SOURCE | Highly Qualified Teacher Survey, 2004

FIGURE | 3.14
Highly Qualified Teachers by District Grouping:
High Schools, 2003–04



SOURCE | Highly Qualified Teacher Survey, 2004

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FIGURE | 3.15

Percent of Schools with Required Abbott Staff Positions: Newark and All Other Abbott Districts, 2002-03 to 2003-04*

	Newark		All Other Abbott Districts	
	2002-03	2003-04	2002-03	2003-04
Elementary Schools Staff				
Instructional Facilitator	100.0%	100.0%	96.7%	94.2%
Social Worker	98.2%	98.2%	64.0%	62.9%
Teacher Tutor	40.0%	87.3%	21.5%	30.9%
All Positions	38.2%	85.5%	16.7%	23.6%
Middle and High Schools Staff				
Attendance/Dropout Prevention Officer				
	12.8%	10.9%	59.1%	62.8%
Health-Social Service Coordinator				
	23.4%	23.9%	37.5%	40.9%
All Positions	6.4%	6.5%	30.2%	30.1%
All Schools Staff				
Family Liaison (Parent-Community Coordinator)				
	92.0%	93.3%	63.6%	66.4%
Guidance Counselor				
	96.0%	96.0%	93.4%	93.1%
Librarian/Media Specialist				
	90.7%	90.7%	89.3%	91.2%
Nurse/Health Specialist				
	98.7%	98.7%	97.0%	96.7%
Security Officer				
	97.3%	97.3%	86.2%	87.3%
Technology Coordinator				
	97.3%	96.0%	79.3%	84.3%
All Positions	84.0%	84.0%	51.8%	51.2%

SOURCE | DOENET Abbott School-Based Budget Staffing Tables, 2002-03 to 2003-04

* Renaissance Academy's Abbott staffing was not in the district's DOENET report, and is not included.

new hires or layoffs that occurred after the data were reported by the district to the state.

Several staffing positions are needed to put the Abbott reforms into action. Some positions are required in all schools; others are specific to elementary or secondary schools. Below, we compare Newark and the other Abbott districts on the percent of schools with each position in 2002-03 and 2003-04. Findings are shown separately for schools serving students in the elementary grades, students in Grades 6 through 12, and all schools.

Under Abbott, children in Grades 1 through 6 who are not reading at grade level are entitled to tutoring sessions. Each school should have teacher-tutors to provide one-on-one tutoring to students in Grades 1 through 3 and small-group tutoring to students in Grades 4 through 6. Abbott elementary schools should also have an instructional facilitator to coordinate Whole School Reform efforts and act as a mentor and information resource to his or her teacher-colleagues. Finally, each elementary school should have a

social worker to work as an integral part of the Family Support Team coordinating supportive services for students.

Most Newark schools serving students in the elementary grades employed all of the staff positions required under Abbott in 2003-04 (Figure 3.15). Fewer than two in five elementary schools had all of the positions in the previous year, however. All Newark schools had an instructional facilitator and almost all employed social workers in both years. A large majority of Newark elementary schools had teacher tutors in 2003-04, but only 40 percent did in 2002-03. Newark was in better compliance with elementary school staffing requirements than the other Abbott districts on average.

Abbott requires each school serving middle and high school-age students to have two staff positions: dropout prevention coordinator and health and social services coordinator. Dropout prevention coordinators work with staff, parents, and students to identify students at risk of dropping out and intervene by referring students to needed services. Health

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and social service coordinators ensure that students get the services they need to come to school ready to learn, benefit from instruction, and succeed in school.

Compared to its elementary grades staffing, Newark had weaker compliance with the middle and high school level requirements (Figure 3.15). About one in four Newark schools serving students in the middle and high school grades had health and social service coordinators; about one in nine had dropout prevention officers. In the other Abbott districts, a majority of schools had dropout prevention coordinators and more than a third had health and social service coordinators in both years. Newark district staff report that a fewer number of middle and high schools had health and social service coordinators because they had to choose between this position and a social worker.

Figure 3.15 also lists the positions that every Abbott school should have and compares Newark's compliance with the other Abbott districts. Almost all of Newark's schools had each of the positions required under Abbott

and a large majority had all of the required positions staffed. Most schools in the other Abbott districts had at least one guidance counselor, media specialist, nurse, security officer, and technology coordinator too. Fewer schools, although still a majority, had a family liaison. About half of the schools in the other Abbott districts were in compliance with the full staffing requirements in both years.

Professional Development

All teachers, regardless of their level of experience, can benefit from opportunities to update their knowledge and sharpen their skills. Most importantly, instructional practice tends to improve when teachers are provided with the supports they need to work effectively in the classroom. Below, we present the types of professional development offered to Newark's K-12 teachers.

For teachers. Newark's teachers have eight full professional development days built into their union contracts, four of which are provided by the district and conducted

districtwide. In 2003-04, teachers received district professional development on its new math curriculum, Everyday Mathematics. The district received a federal grant to offer more learning opportunities for teachers in 2004-05.

The district's School Leadership Teams (SLTs) provide weekly professional development for teachers after school. Staff development takes place at weekly grade-level meetings too. Topics vary from week to week and have included in the past: early literacy, writing, math, technology, and science. Teachers work through student's text- and workbooks during staff meetings and half-day staff development days to ensure that everyone is thoroughly familiar with the curricula. In 2003-04, elementary teachers worked through Everyday Math. Kindergarten and Grade 1 teachers were involved in character education training in 2003-04; teachers in other early elementary grades were introduced to the district's new literacy initiative. Experienced instructional facilitators also

provide workshops and in-class demonstrations for colleagues within their schools.

District content specialists work with teachers during their preparation periods and observe teachers in action. For example, a technology specialist works with teachers to develop ways to use technology in their day-to-day instruction. Inexperienced teachers and teachers needing additional help receive in-class modeling by more experienced teachers, visit other schools, and attend professional development workshops. Through "Reaching for the Brass Ring," preschool through Grade 12 teachers receive training in best practices of reading and writing instruction. The district's Whole School Reform model also provides a minimum of 25 hours a year in staff development for math instruction. Some schools raise their own grant funding to support professional development. The 2003-04 school year was the last of three years in which First Avenue School received special federal grant money to support professional development.

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Ideas for professional development activities come from several sources: a school's or the district's predetermined learning goals; areas where students need improvement as assessed through student test scores; and teacher performance evaluations.

Tenured teaching staff are observed formally once a year when their performance is reviewed by their principals. Non-tenured teachers are formally evaluated three times per year. Informal observations take place more frequently and are often followed by one-on-one discussions with the principal. Inexperienced and less capable teachers may be observed more often. The district currently has a partnership with the Educational Testing Service (ETS) to develop a customized assessment tool to ensure that all principals observe and evaluate teachers in a uniform manner.

For principals. The Superintendent holds half-day meetings with principals once a month. Most of these meetings are dedicated to training. Principals also receive professional development from the Assistant Superintendent assigned to oversee their SLT.

SLT meetings are smaller, so there are more opportunities for focused discussion on topics such as budget, curriculum, and the new teacher observation form. Assistant Superintendents conduct annual principal performance evaluations and work with them on their own Performance Improvement Plans.

Whole School Reform model developers used to provide training for school administrators. Through the district model, principals and vice-principals receive training on how to observe and supervise math teachers. Principals and vice-principals can also attend a district-sponsored Leadership Institute and select additional training opportunities on their own.

K-12 Budget

Overview

Up to this point, we have explored the characteristics of Newark and its children, and what schools and district offices do to provide children with a sound public education. Of

course, schools and districts need money to pay for the elements of effective schooling we have discussed. An adequate budget is, in itself, another essential element of effective schooling.

Unlike any other state in the nation, New Jersey ensures that the poorest urban school districts have enough money to provide children in preschool through Grade 12 with a sound public education. In this section, we describe the fiscal conditions in New Jersey's cities that resulted in a funding gap between its urban and suburban districts. We then recount efforts led by New Jersey residents to help close that gap. Finally, we explore how these efforts have affected the money that is available to Newark and other school districts throughout the state to support public education.

Fiscal Distress

Newark, like several cities in the United States, entered into a state of fiscal distress in the mid- to late-20th Century. A pattern of urban decline was marked by a loss of private-sector employers and residents at the upper

end of the income scale. Job and resident losses continued in a downward spiral that resulted in decreasing property values and local tax revenues.

Neighborhoods in these cities began to experience the all-too-common symptoms of urban distress, including unemployment, high crime, and public health problems. Compared to those who left, the lower-income residents who remained placed a greater demand on public services such as public assistance, law enforcement, and subsidized health care and housing. State and federal money that helped cities meet the increased demand for these services decreased over the same time period and did not make up for the lost local revenues.

Public education is, of course, an essential service provided by local governments and education costs are higher in school districts with high concentrations of low-income households. In New Jersey, public education is supported in large part by local taxes.³⁰ When property tax revenues decline, cities have less money to pay for education.

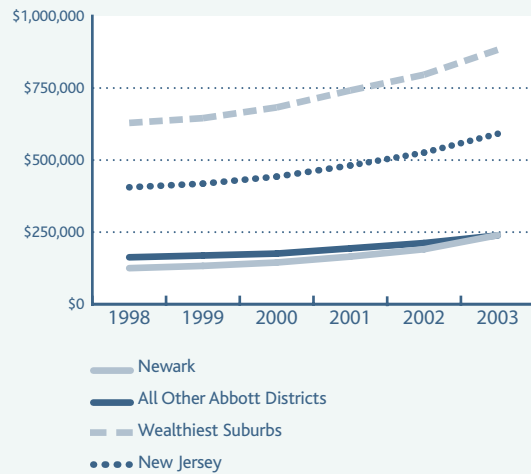
As a result of property wealth differences and New Jersey's reliance on property tax to fund schools, there was a large funding gap between urban and suburban districts.

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FIGURE 3.16

Average Property Value Per Student by District Grouping, 1998–2003



SOURCE | New Jersey Department of Community Affairs: Office of Local Government Services, 1998–2003

Figure 3.16 compares the property wealth in Newark, the other Abbott cities, the wealthiest suburbs in the state, and the state over all. Because local taxes are based on property values, property wealth is a good indicator of the availability of money to support education and other services provided by New Jersey's towns and cities.^{31,32} The most striking feature of Figure 3.16 is the enormous gap in property wealth between Newark and the other Abbott cities on the one hand and the wealthiest (I and J) suburbs on the other. In 1998, per student property values were five times higher in the wealthy suburbs (\$628,955) than in Newark (\$124,931). Property values rose dramatically across the state between 1998 and 2003: by 46 percent on average and by more than 90 percent in Newark alone. By 2003, there was still almost four times as much property wealth per student in the I and J suburbs (\$882,773) than in any of the Abbott cities (\$239,343 in Newark, for example). The state average of nearly \$600,000 of property wealth per student was more than double that of Newark in the same year.

Strapped for money to pay for public services, distressed cities could either increase their property wealth or raise local tax rates. It would not be an easy task to reverse the process of decline and replace lost property wealth. As a result, many cities were forced to raise their taxes, even though higher taxes might prevent potential residents and employers from moving in.

Figure 3.17 compares the total equalized tax rates in Newark with those found in the other Abbott cities, the wealthiest suburbs, and across the state.³³ Newark's rate was 3.9 in 1998, almost twice as high as in the wealthiest suburbs the same year (2.2) and much higher than the 3.0 maximum recommended by two state commissions created to study local taxes in New Jersey. On the whole, local tax rates in New Jersey have declined between 1998 and 2003: by 11 percent across the state and by 40 percent in Newark. In 2003, Newark's total equalized tax rate was about the same as the state average, at 2.3. The average rate in all of the other Abbott cities was much higher at 2.9 that same year.

School Finance

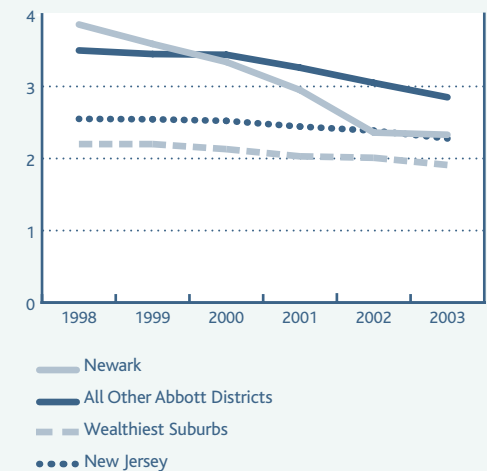
Abbott districts receive two kinds of state aid in addition to funding available to other school districts in New Jersey. The first type, Abbott Parity Aid, ensures that Abbott districts have as much money per student to support a general education as the most successful suburban districts in the state. Abbott Parity Aid has been distributed to Abbott districts every year since 1997-98. Abbott districts must apply to the state to receive a second type of state aid, which we call Additional Abbott Aid. Along with other state and federal funding, Additional Abbott Aid supports programs and services such as intensive early literacy, full-day Kindergarten, on-site school clinics, and after-school and nutrition programs.³⁴

In this section, we examine the resources that Newark has had to support its educational program for students in Kindergarten through Grade 12. General education funding and supplemental programs funding are presented separately below.

General education funding. As a result of property wealth differences and New Jersey's heavy reliance on the property tax to fund public schools, a large funding gap opened between New Jersey's urban and suburban school districts. By 1989, New Jersey's low-income communities had \$1,500 less per student in general education funding.³⁵ Although the state constitution grants the right to a "thorough and efficient" education, the reality was that students in low-income, urban districts did not receive the same educational resources as their suburban peers. From the 1970s onward, education stakeholders throughout the state fought for the rights of children in urban school districts to have the same resources as their peers. The lawsuits, known collectively as *Abbott v. Burke*, were integral to this effort.

In 1996, the state legislature enacted the Comprehensive Educational Improvement and Financing Act of 1996 (CEIFA) to restructure the state's school finance system. CEIFA provided several forms of state aid that are still distributed to school districts to this

FIGURE 3.17
Average Equalized Tax Rate by District Grouping, 1998–2003



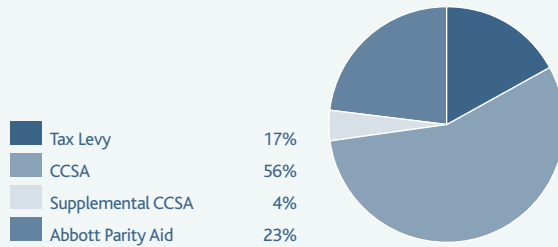
SOURCE | New Jersey Department of Community Affairs: Office of Local Government Services, 1998–2003

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FIGURE | 3.18

General Education Funding by Source: Newark, 2003–04



SOURCE | New Jersey Department of Education, Office of School Funding, 2002-03 to 2003-04

day. Core Curriculum Standards Aid (CCSA) was intended to make up the difference between what school districts could afford and what the state – at the time – considered to be an adequate level of school funding to support a thorough and efficient education. Some districts also receive Supplemental CCSA to ease their local tax burdens. A third type of funding that comes from CEIFA, Stabilization Aid, goes to districts that might otherwise lose too much CCSA from year to year because of enrollment changes.

In a groundbreaking Abbott decision, the New Jersey Supreme Court found the school funding solution under CEIFA to be unconstitutional. The justices said that the cost of education in the poorest urban districts should be determined by what successful districts spend and identified the wealthiest suburban (I and J) districts as their standard. Since 1997–98, Abbott Parity Aid has made up the difference between what these urban districts could afford (plus CCSA) and what the wealthiest districts actually spent on average.³⁶

Figure 3.18 shows the sources of funding for general education in Newark’s schools in 2003–04. Seventeen percent of the revenue to support general education comes from local property taxes. Newark draws the largest portion (56%) of its revenue from Core Curriculum Standards Aid. About one fourth (23%) of the money that the Newark Public Schools has to spend on general education comes from the state in the form of Abbott Parity Aid.

We now compare Newark’s general education funding with general education funding in the other Abbott districts, the I and J districts, and the state average (Figure 3.19). The figures have all been divided by the resident enrollment in each category to provide per student amounts. Newark had about the same amount of general education funding on a per student basis as the other Abbott districts, the I and J districts, and the state overall.

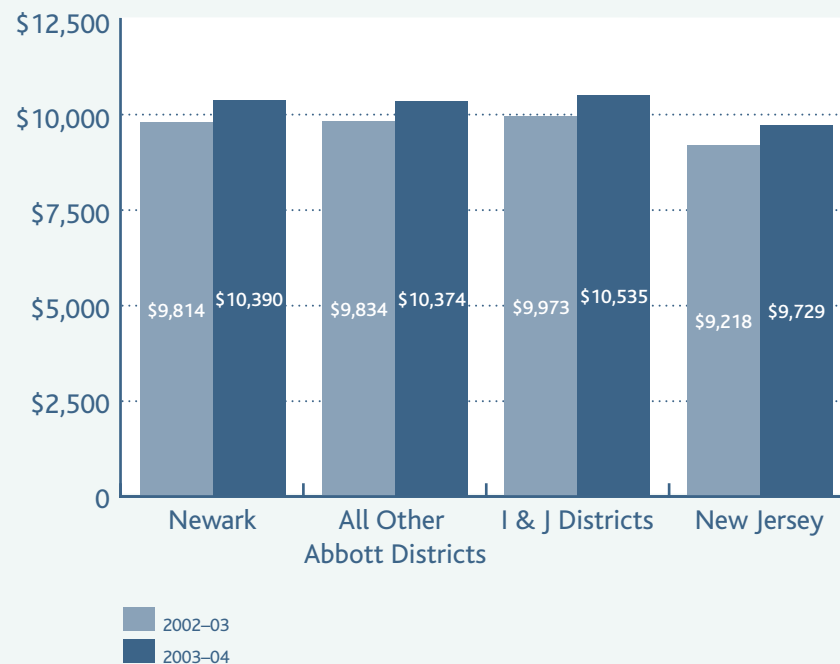
Figure 3.19 shows that Abbott Parity Aid, in combination with other state aid, now provides the Abbott districts with a per-student general education budget about on par with the wealthiest suburban school districts. We

turn now to school taxes, the portion of local taxes that pays for public education. Like the total tax rate, a school tax rate is expressed as a fraction of the assessed property value. An important benefit of the Abbott decisions was to allow the urban districts to freeze locally supported school spending at the 1997 level. If property values rise and school spending is frozen, then school tax rates should drop in proportion.

We have shown (Figure 3.16) that property wealth increased in Newark between 1998 and 2003. As expected, Newark's school tax rates declined sharply (Figure 3.20). In 1998, Newark homeowners paid \$1.63 in school taxes for every \$100 of assessed property value, a higher rate than in the wealthiest suburbs (1.31), the other Abbott cities (1.33) or across the state on average (1.4). Property values also increased in the other district groupings and their school tax rates also fell between 1998 and 2003. Newark's school tax rates fell 49 percent during this time period, more sharply than in the other Abbott cities (28%), the wealthiest suburbs (10%), and statewide

FIGURE | 3.19

Per Student General Education Funding by District Grouping, 2002–03 and 2003–04



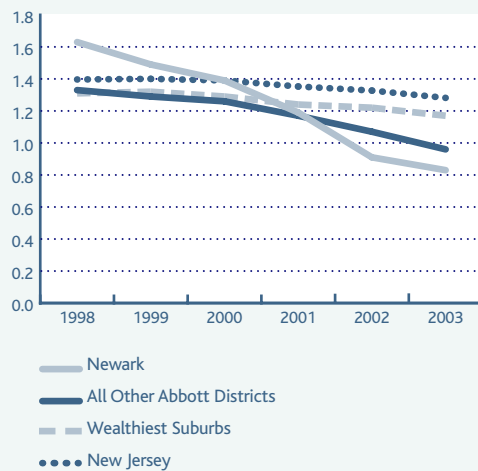
SOURCE | New Jersey Department of Education, Office of School Funding, 2002-03 to 2003-04

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FIGURE | 3.20

Average School Tax Rate by District Grouping, 1998–2003



SOURCE | New Jersey Department of Community Affairs; Office of Local Government Services, 1998–2003

(8%). By 2003, the school tax rate Newark was 0.83, lower than in the other Abbott cities, the wealthiest suburbs (1.17), or the state on average (1.28).

Supplemental programs funding. To be ready and successful learners, the children and youth of Newark have unique needs for health, nutrition, and social services that must be addressed. There are three sources of money to support supplemental programs in Abbott districts: one comes from the federal government and two from the state. The federal funding is called Title I and provides funding for schools serving children from low-income families. The money is intended to improve educational quality and give extra help to struggling students. The second supplemental programs funding source, Demonstrably Effective Program Aid (DEPA), has been provided by the state since CEIFA. DEPA is targeted to school districts serving poor children and calculated on a per student basis. Both Abbott and non-Abbott districts may receive Title I and DEPA funds.

Only Abbott districts receive Additional Abbott Aid, the third source of supplemental programs funding. Each Abbott district must apply to the state for Additional Abbott Aid and justify its request with evidence of student need. The New Jersey Department of Education reviews district requests and issues its decisions. The state may fully fund, deny portions, or fund programs at lower levels than requested by the districts. School districts may appeal the state's decision in court. Not surprisingly, this process has been a source of conflict between the Abbott districts and the New Jersey Department of Education since it began in 1999.

How did the Newark Public Schools support its supplemental programs and how much money did it have? In 2003–04, Newark Public Schools had \$3,546 per student to support its supplemental programs (Figure 3.21 and Figure 3.22). Newark had a great deal more supplemental program aid per student than did the other Abbott districts on average (\$1,682). Newark also received a larger portion of its supplemental program funding

from Additional Abbott Aid than did the other districts.³⁷

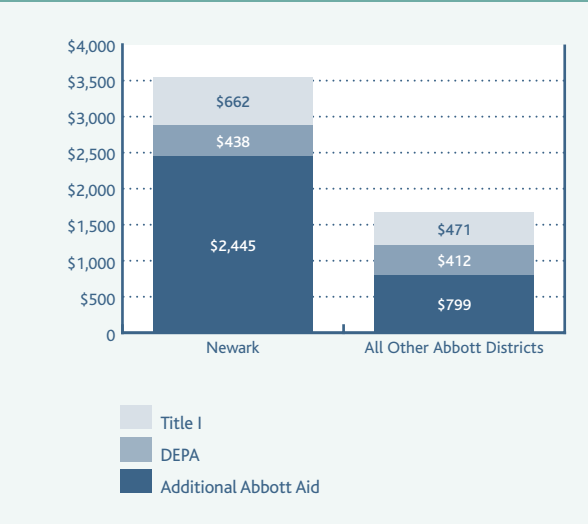
During the 2003-04 school year, Newark Public Schools requested \$201 million in Additional Abbott Aid (supplemental funding). They received \$112.1 million to support the programs we have listed above after appealing to the New Jersey Supreme Court. Figure 3.22 shows that supplemental funding decreased by \$132 per student or by about four percent between 2002-03 and 2003-04. The other Abbott districts lost, on average, about \$33 per student.

Abbott Parity Aid supports only the “first half” of the required full day of Kindergarten. The remaining money (the “second half” of the day) must come from Additional Abbott Aid. The district needed about \$17 million to cover the cost of the second half-day of Kindergarten in 2003-04 leaving about \$95 million to support the full array of supplemental programs intended for low-income children.

The New Jersey Department of Education did not fully fund any district’s 2004-05 request for Additional Abbott Aid. Nineteen

FIGURE | 3.21

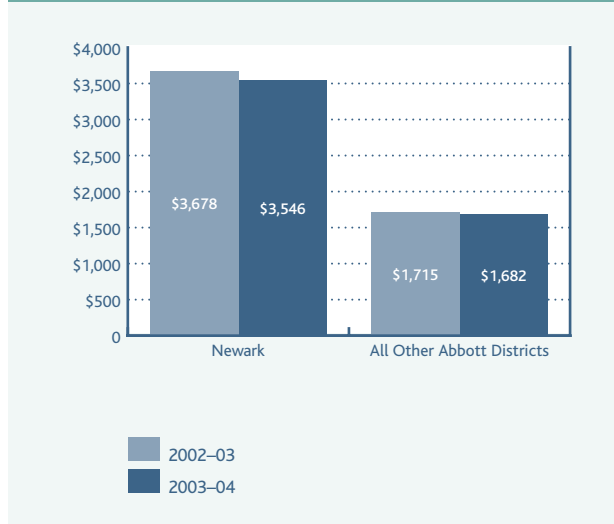
Per Student Supplemental Program Aid by Source: Newark and All Other Abbott Districts, 2003-04



SOURCE | New Jersey Department of Education, Office of School Funding, 2002-03 to 2003-04

FIGURE | 3.22

Per Student Supplemental Program Aid: Newark and All Other Abbott Districts, 2002-03 and 2003-04



SOURCE | New Jersey Department of Education, Office of School Funding, 2002-03 to 2003-2004

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school districts appealed the state's decision. Newark Public Schools requested \$187.2 million and the New Jersey Department of Education initially approved about \$82.9 million – less than half the requested amount – citing disallowed programming and budget inefficiencies. The district appealed the state's decision and was ultimately awarded about \$176.1 million to support its supplemental programs in 2004-05.

K-12 Leadership

School Leadership Councils

State regulations require every school in the Abbott districts to have a School Leadership Council (SLC). The SLC is a group that serves on a volunteer basis to represent school staff and the neighborhood. Their primary purpose is to help improve teaching and learning. They do this by taking part in program planning and decision-making and encouraging broad participation by school staff and neighborhood stakeholders. Typically, SLC membership includes the principal, teachers,

non-instructional staff, parents, community representatives and the Whole School Reform facilitator. Sometimes the SLC includes students. Some SLC members are elected by the groups they represent, such as staff and parents. The principal appoints community representatives from a broad and diverse candidate pool. SLC members serve at least two years with staggered terms. The SLC should meet at least once a month.

SLCs should take part in a wide variety of activities to carry out their functions, including: reviewing needs assessment and achievement data, reviewing school-based budgets prepared by the central office and making recommendations to amend them, and participating in training provided by the district or New Jersey Department of Education. SLCs that are trained to perform personnel functions may also interview school principal candidates and recommend candidates to the district's Superintendent. The following types of training should be made available to SLC members by the district or the New Jersey Department of Education: SLC member roles

and responsibilities; budgeting and planning; needs assessment; state and federal laws and regulations; the CCCS; personnel functions; and programs for English language learners and students with disabilities.

Representation on SLCs varies from school to school in Newark. Typically, they are made up of the required members listed above.

The Assistant Superintendent that oversees a school's SLT attends SLC meetings from time to time. Other district staff visits SLCs to provide information and training on issues such as the role of SLC members and chairpersons and how to facilitate workshops. District staff receive all SLC minutes.

Along with the other Abbott districts, Newark used school-based budgeting in the early years of Abbott. These budgets were "zero-based," that is, they specified each and every needed program and staff member from the ground up. In general, SLCs took the lead in school-based planning and budgeting efforts getting input from a variety of school staff and community members on needed programs and staffing.

In all Abbott districts, control over budgeting and planning moved away from the schools and their SLCs and returned to the district office in 2002-03. Since then, budgeting has begun with the district's business administrator, who sets school budgets based on a state template, previous spending levels, and a cost-of-living increase. The district's business administrator sends a copy of each school's budget to its SLC for review and modification. Any SLC request over the allowance must be reviewed for approval by the district office. SLCs may then be asked to support and sign their school's budget before it is packaged with the district's budget and sent to the New Jersey Department of Education.

Of the six schools we visited in Newark, five SLCs were organized into subcommittees. Some subcommittees addressed organizational issues such as staffing, budgeting, and curriculum; others addressed goals that the SLC had previously set during the district's planning process before the 2002-03 school year. All six participated in the three-year planning process, but the timing and extent

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of their participation varied widely. SLCs at Eighteenth Avenue, Benjamin Franklin, and Mount Vernon seemed to be the driving force in developing their schools' plans and budgets from the beginning. These SLCs collected and reviewed a range of data: student test scores, violence and vandalism rates, school climate, staff development, and teacher and parent feedback from surveys. The findings informed the school's goals, programs and services specified in the plans. Hawkins' SLC formed a smaller subcommittee that was equally involved in both planning and budgeting throughout both processes. Marin Middle School's SLC discussed and offered input into their school's plan before it was drafted by their principal. Similarly, the principal of First Avenue sought input from the SLC before drafting the school's three-year plan. Four SLCs had the opportunity to vote in support of their schools' plans (as required by Abbott); three SLCs had the opportunity to vote in support of their budgets.

All of the SLCs spoke of clear goals and objectives for their schools, most of which

were driven by the school's three-year planning process discussed above. One SLC reviews data on a regular basis and adjusts its goals, objectives, and work plan accordingly. Three SLCs also told us about their efforts to encourage public participation in decision-making. Eighteenth Avenue's SLC holds two evening forums each year to introduce themselves, invite participation, and report on activities and student achievement. First Avenue's SLC got public participation in the planning process through a parent survey.

An SLC representative from Benjamin Franklin Elementary School told us that it had a hard time scheduling subcommittee meetings. They had four afternoon meetings per year during pre-scheduled half-day staff development periods. As a result, this SLC has a difficult time following through on their plans and discussions. We suspect that this is a more widespread issue experienced in other schools.

The Newark Public Schools provides a range of training opportunities for SLC members. Two orientations are held throughout

the year where newly elected SLC members can learn about the purpose of the SLC, and their roles and responsibilities. The district also provides a three-day training for all SLC members every summer. Topics reflect SLC member requests throughout the year. Typically, they stress budget and curriculum issues. SLC chairpersons receive additional training on state and federal mandates and upcoming policy changes. The district's business administrator trains SLC members in the budget process each year. The business administrator also visits schools on an as-needed basis, to provide technical assistance on budget issues.

Abbott Advisory Council

The Abbott Advisory Council (AAC), formerly known as the district Whole School Reform Steering Committee is a joint steering committee for Whole School Reform, represented by district and community representatives. The responsibilities of the Abbott Advisory Council are to: 1) review the district's policies and procedures that implement the Abbott

reforms; 2) review the district's three-year operational plan and annual modifications prior to submission for board approval; and 3) assess efforts to improve teaching and learning in the district, celebrate successes, and identify ways to overcome obstacles that may exist.

Each Abbott district should have an Abbott Advisory Council. In Newark, the Abbott Advisory Council (AAC) is known as the Whole School Reform oversight committee. Members include: the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendents, Advisory Board members, parents, principals, teachers, union representatives, district administrative staff, and Whole School Reform developers. Meetings are said to be held monthly in the Superintendent's office. Despite the name, this committee's focus has shifted from Whole School Reform to meeting the mandates of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). The AAC explored which reform models were used and how well they were used by high- and low-performing schools respectively. The

Each Abbott district should have an Abbott Advisory Council to review district policies and procedures and implement the reforms.

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AAC serves as the district's liaison to the Local Support Team, described below.

Local Support Team

Formerly known as School Review and Improvement Teams (SRI), local support teams (LST) are made up of New Jersey Department of Education staff who provide districts and schools with technical assistance on the development of school and district plans and budgets, the use of data for school improvement, and alignment of federal programs (e.g., NCLB) with district and school plans.

Three of the six schools we visited reported working with the district's LST. Eighteenth Avenue and Hawkins Schools received technical assistance on their three-year operational plans. Eighteenth Avenue School also has worked with the LST to develop a school improvement plan in response to its 2002-03 designation as a "low-performing school." Benjamin Franklin staff had a great experience with one LST member they described as "phenomenal." This LST member attended SLC meetings and other school functions to

be able to assess and serve the school better. Regrettably, Benjamin Franklin School has not had any contact with the LST since this person left the New Jersey Department of Education in 2002-03.

K-12 Student Outcomes

Years ago, educational success was mostly determined by student, family, and neighborhood characteristics. On average, children who grow up in wealthy communities do better in school than their peers who grow up in concentrated poverty. As education stakeholders, our job is to ensure that this is no longer true. The educational success of our children is a product of the elements of schooling that we can affect: opportunities for students to learn; supports for students and families; staff to teach students, and supports for that staff; financial resources to work with; the physical environment; and the leadership and planning at the school, district, and state levels to guide the whole process.

The Abbott remedies were intended to support efforts of schools, districts, parents and advocates to put the elements of effective schooling in place and overcome the effects of poverty on student well-being and academic performance. All of the elements should be in place and working together in a coordinated fashion for schools to provide a chance for children to succeed. We encourage readers to consider the student outcomes presented below in light of what we have presented up to this point and in Section 4 of this report.

Student Attendance

Students who feel safe at school and are engaged in their academic work tend to go to school more often. Of course, students also miss school because of other reasons such as poor health and family problems. In general, we think that student attendance is an important indicator that school is a positive experience for children and youth and that the students' families, the district, and the larger community are addressing any obstacles to attendance that may exist. It is presented here as a leading indicator: students can only

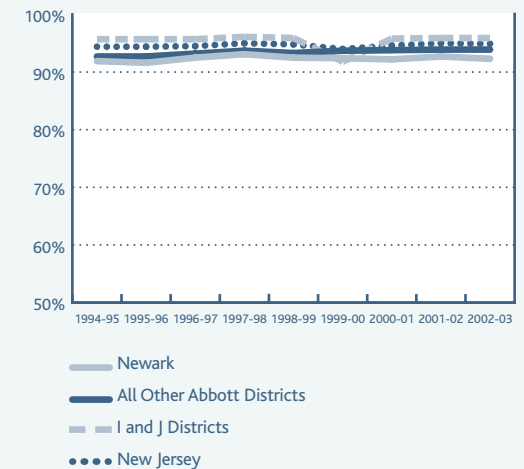
benefit from opportunities to learn if they attend school regularly. Below, we examine student attendance rates in elementary and high schools separately.

At the elementary school level, attendance across New Jersey was high, at about 95 percent in 1994-95 and stayed just as high right through 2002-03 (Figure 3.23). Newark's elementary school student attendance was at 92 percent in 1994-95 and has remained at about 92 or 93 percent through 2002-03. In most years, about 95 percent of elementary students in the I and J districts attended school on any given day.

High school attendance rates were lower across the state when compared to the elementary schools (Figure 3.24). In every year between 1994-95 and 2002-03, fewer students attended Newark's high schools on an average day than in any other district grouping we analyzed. Newark's high school attendance rate improved slightly but steadily from 81 percent in 1994-95 to 86 percent in 2001-02. Compared to Newark, high school attendance was higher in the other Abbott

FIGURE | 3.23

Student Attendance by District Grouping: Elementary Schools, 1994-95 to 2002-03



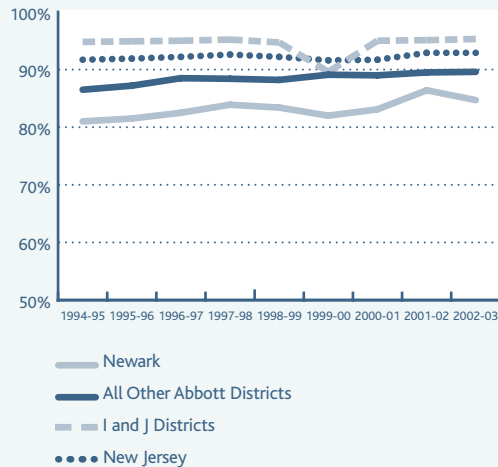
SOURCE | School Report Card, 1994-95 to 2002-03

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FIGURE | 3.24

Student Attendance by District Grouping:
High Schools, 1994–95 to 2002–03



SOURCE | School Report Card, 1994-95 to 2002-03

districts and improved from 86 to 89 percent over the years. The high school attendance rate remained at about 92 percent across the state. High school attendance was highest in the wealthiest suburbs at about 95 percent, with the exception of 1999–00 when it dropped to 90 percent.

Child and Youth Well-Being

Children and youth who are physically, socially, and emotionally healthy are better able to learn at school. Many of Abbott’s supplemental programs have as their purpose to improve the well-being of children and youth of New Jersey’s cities so that they can come to school ready to learn. School staff either provide direct service to children and their families or help them to link with needed services already provided in the community. Service provision and linkage are essential parts of the jobs of health and social services coordinators, parent-community coordinators, family liaisons, social workers, and guidance counselors, to name a few. As a central public institution of the urban community, schools play a critical

role in ensuring the well-being of children and youth. Schools are not alone in their responsibility – parents, elected officials, and public and private agencies in the city must all play a role. As the African proverb so famously says: “It takes a whole village to raise a child.”

Measures of child and youth well-being are not part of the information typically collected or reported by school districts. Such information is usually generated by the various state and local agencies charged with the health and welfare of children. We present five citywide indicators of child and youth well-being (Figure 3.25) for Newark and the State of New Jersey.

Our expectation was that Newark would compare poorly with the state because it is the second poorest city in the nation and its families face many problems associated with poverty.³⁸ But we also expected to see some improvement on these indicators over the past several years because of the many school-based services available to Newark’s young people and the district’s strong efforts to link

students and their families to needed services outside of the schools. Newark compared poorly with the state on all five critical measures. We did find some real improvement in all of these indicators. In the last year of each series, fewer children and teens died; fewer older teens gave birth; and there were much fewer verified reports of child abuse and neglect. The Newark teen death rate declined between 1997 and 2001, but was still more than triple that of the state. Similarly, despite a striking decline in child abuse and neglect, there were 789 substantiated cases in 2002, or nine per 1,000 children, almost triple the statewide rate. Births to younger teens, although relatively rare at only 2.3 per 1,000, are more than four times more common in Newark than throughout the state.

School Safety

For many years, federal law has required every school and district to report the violence and vandalism that occur in schools. The New Jersey Department of Education compiles annual counts and reports them publicly. The

FIGURE | 3.25

Child and Youth Well-Being Indicators: Newark and New Jersey, 1997–2002

Indicator	Time Period	Newark				New Jersey	
		Time 1		Time 2		Time 1	Time 2
		NUMBER	PER 1,000	NUMBER	PER 1,000	PER 1,000	PER 1,000
Child Death	1997-2001	36	0.6	14	0.2	0.2	0.1
Teen Death	1997-2001	28	1.3	21	1.0	0.4	0.3
Births to Teens (10–14)	1998-2002	25	2.4	24	2.3	0.6	0.5
Births to Teens (15–19)	1998-2002	866	83.9	648	62.8	34.1	28.8
Child Abuse and Neglect	1998-2002	1,443	16.4	789	9.0	4.2	3.4

SOURCE | New Jersey Center for Health Statistics, 1998–2002; 2000 US Census; Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2004 Kids Count; Association for Children of New Jersey, 1997–2002 Kids Count

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No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) specified a standard of safety beyond which schools are defined as “persistently dangerous.” Under the Unsafe School Choice Option, the law provides that families of children who are victims of violence or who go to a persistently dangerous school may choose to send their child to another public school in the district or a charter school in the same city.

A school is called persistently dangerous if it meets either one of the two following conditions for three consecutive years:

- 1) Seven or more of the following types of incidents, known as Category A offenses: firearm offenses; aggravated assaults on another student; assaults with a weapon on another student; and assaults on a school district staff member.
- 2) An index rating of 1 or more Category B incidents (calculated by a ratio of the sum of incidents over the square root of the enrollment), including: simple assault, weapons possession or sales (other than a firearm), gang fight, robbery or extortion, sex offense, terroristic threat, arson, sales or distribution of drugs, and harassment and bullying.

The persistently dangerous classification has been roundly criticized by many camps

and on many grounds. The most important criticisms, for the purposes of this report, are related to reporting accuracy. Our first concern is the likelihood of under-reporting by schools and districts. Principals and superintendents who abide to the letter of the law feel that they are unfairly penalized while schools and districts that “fluff” their reports are not. We suspect that fluffing is fairly widespread in New Jersey, considering the critical importance of school safety to parents and children and the attention given to the annual publication of such incidents. Under newly adopted regulations, school districts have the power to penalize any employee who knowingly falsifies incident reports.³⁹ The new regulations do not outline what powers the New Jersey Department of Education has to penalize school districts that knowingly falsify reports.

Our second concern involves the role of interpretation. State guidelines urge school and district staff to consider if each incident is indeed an offense or merely developmentally appropriate behavior. The New Jersey

Department of Education trains school district personnel on how to recognize and classify incidents. The system is not yet perfect, however.

We report information from New Jersey's Violence and Vandalism Reporting System despite our concerns for two reasons: 1) because it is the only available statewide information, and 2) because of the critical importance of school safety.

Figures 3.26 through 3.29 show the number of Category A offenses and the NCLB (Category B) Index for Newark, all other Abbotts, the wealthiest districts, and the state from 1999-00 to 2002-03. Results are reported separately for elementary and high schools. Under NCLB, the persistently dangerous threshold is the same for elementary and high schools. Incident counts and index ratings are reported separately below, because the types of incidents that occur in elementary schools tend to differ in nature from those that occur in high schools. Schools serving students in the middle grades are included with the elementary schools.

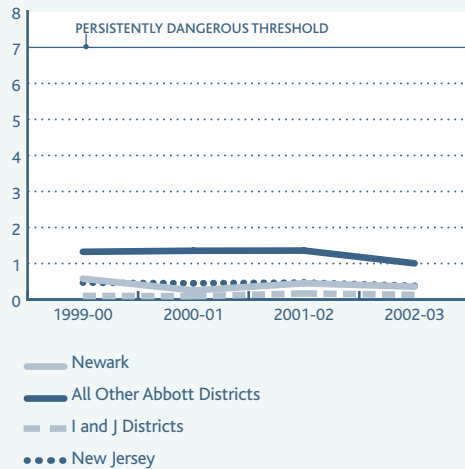
Figure 3.26 shows the number of Category A offenses that took place in elementary schools between 1999-00 and 2002-03 by district grouping. The bar across the top of the chart shows the level at which, after three consecutive years, a school would be considered persistently dangerous. The most striking finding is that none of the district groupings we analyzed had an average that came anywhere near this level. Newark's elementary schools had an average of 0.6 incidents in 1999-00, comparable to the state average, and the number of Category A incidents slightly decreased over the time period. None of Newark's elementary schools had more than four Category A incidents in any single year shown, and a large majority had one, two or no incidents at all.⁴⁰ On average, elementary schools in all other Abbott districts had between 1.0 and 1.4 Category A incidents per year. Elementary schools in the wealthiest (I and J) districts are a little safer by this measure: they averaged less than one-tenth of an incident during the same time period.

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FIGURE | 3.26

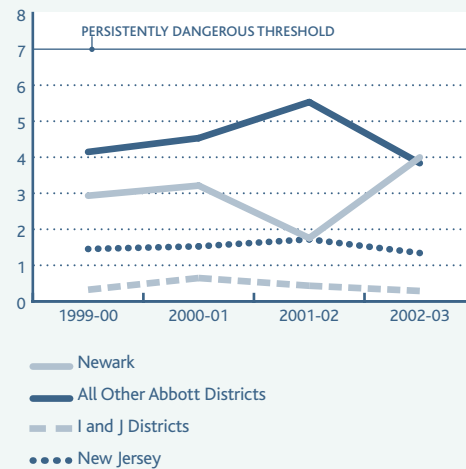
"Category A" Offenses by District Grouping:
Elementary Schools, 1999-00 to 2002-03



SOURCE | New Jersey Department of Education: Office of Program Support Services, Division of Student Services, 1999-2003

FIGURE | 3.27

"Category A" Offenses by District Grouping:
High Schools, 1999-00 to 2002-03



SOURCE | New Jersey Department of Education: Office of Program Support Services, Division of Student Services, 1999-2003

Figure 3.27 shows the number of Category A offenses in the high schools between 1999-00 and 2002-03 by district grouping. What stands out most in this figure is the difference between Newark and the other Abbott districts. Between 1999-00 and 2001-02, Newark high schools had fewer Category A incidents than did the other urban high schools and none of Newark's high schools were classified as persistently dangerous. In 2002-03, high schools in Newark were about as safe as those in the other Abbott districts. By this measure, 2002-03 was the worst year for the Newark high schools, with an average of almost four Category A incidents (Weequahic and Shabazz high schools each had seven or more incidents in that year alone). High schools in the wealthiest districts averaged less than one Category A incident each year. High schools statewide averaged between 1.3 and 1.7 incidents.

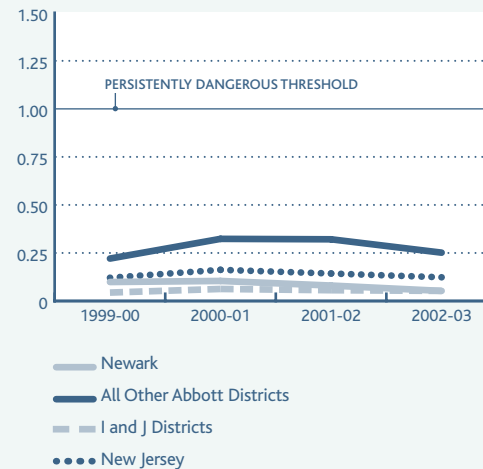
Turning to the NCLB (Category B) index in elementary schools, Figure 3.28 shows that Newark elementary schools were quite safe between 1999-00 and 2002-03. In every year,

the NCLB index was about the same or lower in Newark than it was across the state and far below the persistently dangerous threshold. By this measure, elementary schools were about as safe in Newark as they were in the wealthiest districts in 2002-03.

Figure 3.29 shows the NCLB index in Newark's high schools. According to this indicator, Newark's high schools were safer than the other Abbott high schools (and about as safe as the state average) in three out of the four years shown. In 2000-01 the NCLB index was at a high of 0.6. Although still well below the persistently dangerous threshold, the 2000-01 NCLB index represented a large increase in the number of incidents in Newark's high schools. (Barringer, East Side, West Kinney Alternative, and Shabazz High Schools each had an NCLB index of 0.9 or higher that year.) In contrast, the other district groupings stayed about the same over the four-year period. The index scores for the high schools in the wealthiest districts stayed at about 0.2, the state average at about 0.3, and the other Abbott districts ranged between 0.4 and 0.5.

FIGURE | 3.28

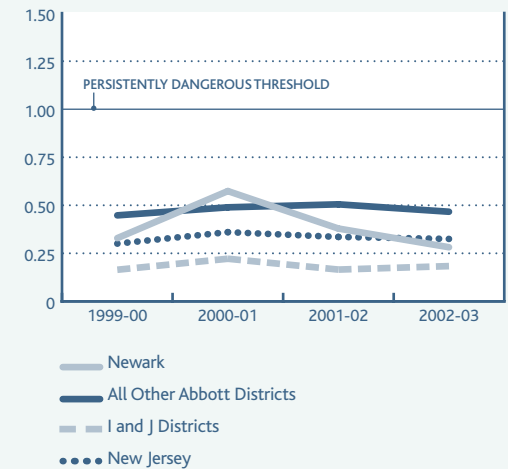
NCLB (Category B) Index by District Grouping: Elementary Schools, 1999-00 to 2002-03



SOURCE | New Jersey Department of Education: Office of Program Support Services, Division of Student Services, 1999-2003

FIGURE | 3.29

NCLB (Category B) Index by District Grouping: High Schools, 1999-00 to 2002-03



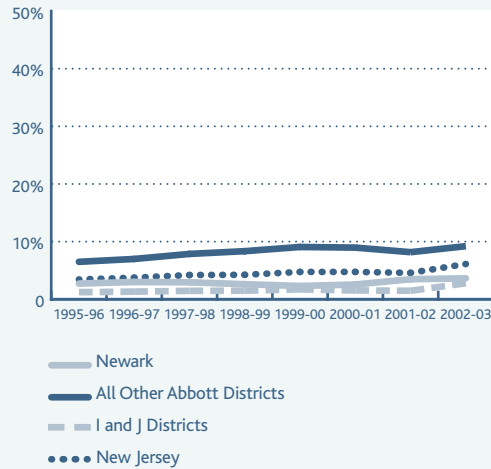
SOURCE | New Jersey Department of Education: Office of Program Support Services, Division of Student Services, 1999-2003

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FIGURE | 3.30

Suspension Rate by District Grouping: Elementary Schools, 1995–96 to 2002–03



SOURCE | School Report Card, 1995-96 to 2002-03

Suspension

Students are suspended from school for reasons usually explained in a district's disciplinary code. Low suspension rates suggest a number of positive things about a district's schools. For example, suspension rates may be low because the students genuinely behave well, they understand and accept the rules, or because the disruptions that occur are addressed without removing students from the classroom. Figures 3.30 and 3.31 show suspension rates in Newark compared with the other Abbott districts, the I and J districts, and the state average. Disciplinary issues and suspension rates differ between elementary and high school, so we examine them separately. Schools serving students in the middle grades are included with the elementary schools.

In 1995-96, the elementary school suspension rate in Newark was three percent, which was at the average of the state and below the average of other Abbott districts (6%). Suspension rates rose for all district groupings by 2002-03, but Newark's rate never

rose above four percent. Suspension was up to nine percent in the other Abbott districts in 2002-03 compared to six percent in the state and three percent in the wealthiest districts.

Compared to the elementary schools, suspension rates were higher in the high schools in all district groupings from 1995-96 to 2002-03. In 1995-96, Newark's suspension rate was two percent – below the average of all other district groupings. In 2001-02 and 2002-03, Newark high school suspension rates rose to 11 percent. Although suspension rates increased in Newark over the time period, they remained lower than the state average (15%) and the average of the other Abbott districts (23%). Suspension rates in the I and J districts were between seven and nine percent from 1995-96 to 2002-03.

Student Achievement

The federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) requires states to have curriculum standards, conduct annual testing, and report test results on a school-by-school basis. An important NCLB goal is for every student to

meet state standards by 2013-14, including students in demographic groups that have historically underperformed on standardized tests. Under NCLB, test results must be reported separately for Asian, Black, Hispanic, Native American, and white students; students with disabilities; English language learners; and students who are eligible for free- or reduced-price lunch.

In New Jersey, the fourth grade test is called the ASK₄ (Assessment of Skills and Knowledge). According to the New Jersey Department of Education, it is essentially the same test as the former ESPA (Elementary School Proficiency Assessment). The 8th grade test is called the GEPA (Grade Eight Proficiency Assessment). The 11th grade test is the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA); before 2001-02 high school students took a different test known as the HSPT (High School Proficiency Test). The HSPT and HSPA are different tests, so results for each are shown separately below.

NCLB also requires states to identify a “target” percentage of students who will pass

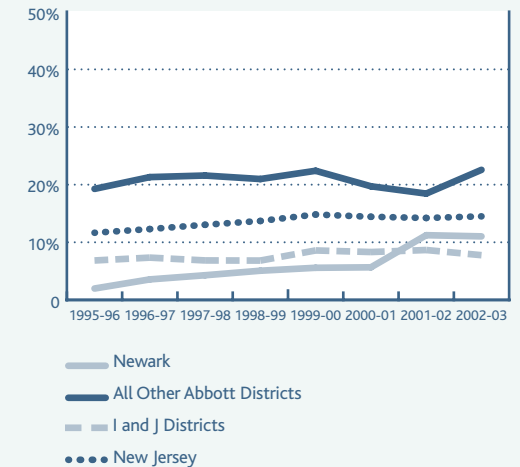
each test each year. These targets must gradually increase until 2013-14, when every student in every demographic group is expected to pass every test. Under NCLB, a school is making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) only if every group of students meets the state’s target in every test. Figures 3.32 and 3.33 show New Jersey’s language arts literacy and math targets. Note that the targets start at different levels in 2002-03 and gradually increase to universal pass rates in 2013-14.

With some exceptions, schools with a subgroup that misses an AYP benchmark for two or more years in a row must undertake a series of actions outlined in Figure 3.34.

There are many ways to examine achievement test results; each way tells a part of the story. Proficiency percentages tell us how many students met standards for their grade level, but do not tell us about small or large changes that did not cross the state’s official proficiency cutpoints. Average test scores show changes that may not register in a proficiency analysis, but do not tell us how many students met the state’s standards.

FIGURE | 3.31

Suspension Rate by District Grouping: High Schools, 1995-96 to 2002-03



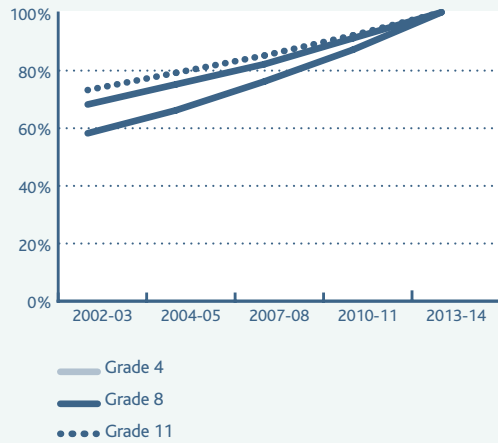
SOURCE | School Report Card, 1995-96 to 2002-03

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FIGURE | 3.32

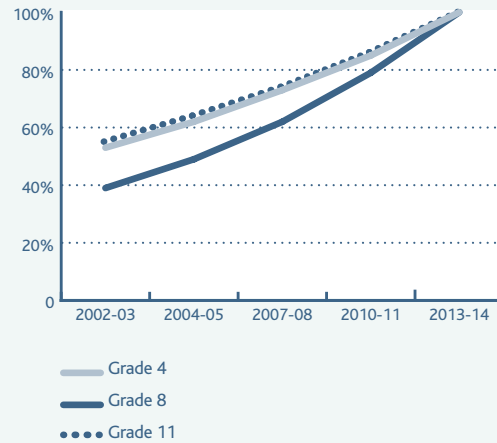
New Jersey's Adequate Yearly Progress Targets for Language Arts Literacy



SOURCE | New Jersey Department of Education: Office of Title I Program Planning and Accountability, September 2004

FIGURE | 3.33

New Jersey's Adequate Yearly Progress Targets for Math



SOURCE | New Jersey Department of Education: Office of Title I Program Planning and Accountability, September 2004

We present proficiency percentages and average scale scores for the language arts literacy and math tests at Grades 4, 8, and 11, respectively. First, we compare average scores over time for general education students in Newark, all other Abbotts, the wealthiest (I and J) districts in the state, and the state over all. Second, we show the percent of Newark's general education students scoring within the three proficiency categories over time. Third, we compare Newark's major student demographic groups according to the percent scoring in the three proficiency categories in 2002-03. Fourth, we present schools that did not make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in 2003-04. Finally, in recognition that district averages may mask important differences among schools, we highlight the Newark schools that did well on each test and improved the most over time.

Grade 4: ESPA/NJASK 4. Nationally, reading achievement scores of students in Grade 4 have not improved since 1992. Math scores have improved by 10 percent between

1990 and 2003 nationwide, but only by four percent since 2000.⁴¹ We turn now to examine the results of the language arts/literacy test given to Grade 4 New Jersey students with particular interest in changes since the Abbott reforms went into effect. Abbott school funding increased in 1997-98, but 1999-00 was when the first wave of Abbott schools started implementing Whole School Reform.⁴² Students tested in 1999-00 experienced one year at most of any instructional improvements brought about by Abbott. In contrast, students tested in 2002-03 could have experienced up to four years of these improvements if they were enrolled in an Abbott school since 1999-00.

Given the potential changes to the instructional program, resources, teaching, and leadership we might expect to see student performance begin to improve over this period. Any positive effects of Whole School Reform have taken five or more years to occur in other school districts throughout the country. We have learned in this report that many Newark schools adopted Whole School

FIGURE 3.34

Categories and Action Steps for Schools Not Making Adequate Yearly Progress

Years not Meeting Standards	Category	Action Steps
1	Early Warning	No actions are required under NCLB, but schools and districts should identify areas that need to be improved.
2	School Improvement	Parents are notified and given the option to transfer their children to a school that made AYP. Schools must identify areas needing improvement and work with parents, teachers, and outside experts to develop a plan.
3	School Improvement	Tutoring and other supplemental services must be made available.
4	Corrective Action	School choice and supplemental services are still available. In addition, schools must undertake at least one of a series of corrective actions, including: staff replacement; curriculum adoption; decreased school authority; external consultant to advise the school; extended school day or year; and/or reorganize school governance.
5	Corrective Action	School must develop a plan for alternate school governance. Choice, supplemental services, and other corrective actions still required.
6	Restructuring	Implement alternate school governance developed in year five.

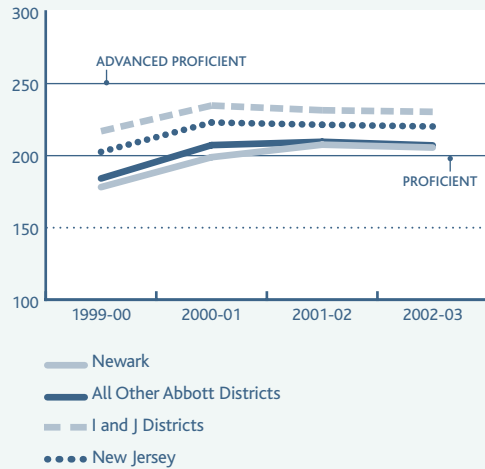
SOURCE | New Jersey Department of Education: Office of Title I Program Planning and Accountability, September 2004

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FIGURE 3.35

Grade 4 Language Arts Literacy Score by District Grouping, 1999-00 to 2002-03



SOURCE | New Jersey Department of Education: Office of Assessment and Evaluation, 1999-00 to 2002-03; School Report Card, 1999-00 to 2002-03

Reform Models as late as Spring 2000-01, and that some had difficulty obtaining support from the model developers. We also have reported that the district began moving a number of schools to adopt an entirely new model in 2002-03. We turn then to Figure 3.35 with moderate expectations.

Newark language arts literacy average scores improved by 16 percent over the time period from 178 in 1999-00 to 206 (above the proficiency threshold) in 2002-03. However, the most striking feature of Figure 3.35 is the increase between 1999-00 and 2000-01 in all of the district groupings we examined. The average language arts literacy score for Grade 4 students in the other Abbott districts was higher but rose slightly less: improving from 184 to 207 or by 12 percent. On average, fourth graders statewide and in the wealthiest districts scored higher than did their peers in Newark or the other Abbott districts.

Figure 3.36 shows the percent of Newark's Grade 4 students scoring in each of the three proficiency categories. The most striking feature of the chart is the change in proportion

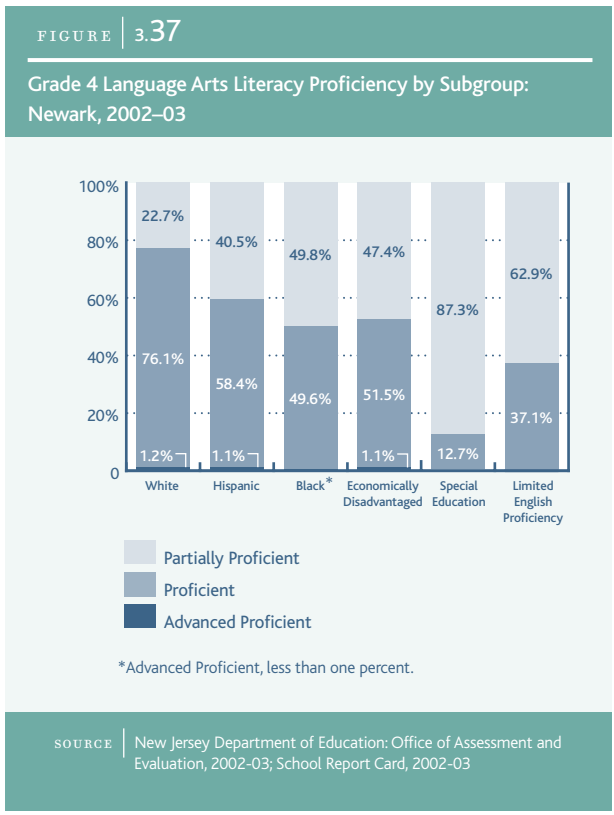
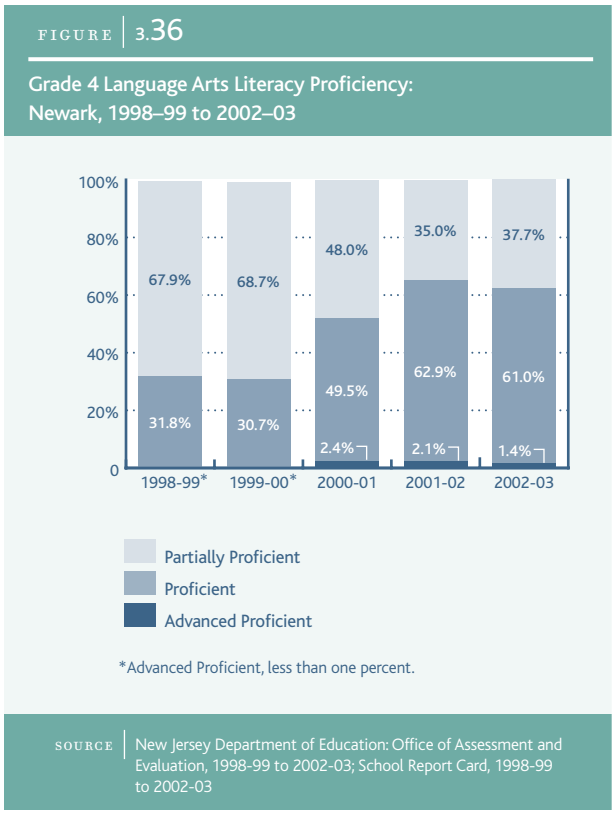
of Grade 4 students scoring in the proficient category. In 1998-99, only 32 percent of the district's fourth graders met or exceeded state standards in language arts literacy, compared to 62 percent in 2002-03. Most of the improvement in Newark occurred in 2000-01 as it did across the state, but it has been sustained through 2002-03.

Next, we present the 2002-03 Grade 4 language arts literacy results for the demographic groups represented in the district (Figure 3.37).^{43, 44} Reading from left to right, we see the percent scoring in the three proficiency ranges among white, Hispanic, Black, economically disadvantaged, special education, and limited English-proficient student subgroups. (2002-03 general education results are shown in Figure 3.36 above.) There is a great deal of variation in the results for the different student groups: more than three quarters (77%) of the white students scored at or above proficient on the Grade 4 language arts literacy test, compared to 59 percent of the Hispanic students, 50 percent of the Black students, and 53 percent of the economi-

cally disadvantaged students in the district. In contrast, 37 percent of the limited English proficient students met state standards in fourth grade language arts literacy whereas only 13 percent of the special education students did so in the district that year.

The New Jersey standards for math instruction in early grades are rigorous, but Abbott districts may or may not put a heavy emphasis on early math. Newark schools recently adopted a reform model with a strong mathematics component. We expected to see little change before 2003-04 when the program was implemented. Newark's fourth grade math scores exceeded our expectations (Figure 3.38). Over the whole time period, the Grade 4 math scores rose by 8 percent. The math scores rose slowly and steadily from 186 in 1999-00 to 201 in 2002-03. From 1999-00 to 2002-03, fourth graders in the other district groupings scored higher but improved less.

Figure 3.39 shows the educational progress that underlies Newark's increasing math scores. The chart shows clearly that fewer



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Abbott Low- and High-Performing Schools

Under Abbott rules, elementary schools may be classified as low- or high-performing depending on how their students perform on the Grade 4 language arts literacy exam. Schools are classified as “low performing” if half or fewer of the school’s general education students score at least proficient on the test. Schools are considered to be “high performing” if their students’ proficiency rates are better than the state average. The New Jersey Department of Education is required to deploy expert teams to review each low-performing school and develop and monitor a school improvement plan. High-performing schools may choose to drop or change their Whole School Reform models. Under Abbott rules, there were 14 low-performing schools in Newark in 2003-04: Avon Avenue, Belmont-Runyon, Burnet Street, Eighteenth Avenue, George Washington Carver, Chancellor Avenue, Dayton Street, Elliott Street, Dr. E. Alma Flagg, Hawthorne Avenue, Peshine Avenue, Speedway Avenue, Louise A. Spencer, and Thirteenth Avenue Schools. There were also six Abbott high-performing schools in the district: Abington Avenue, Ann Street, Branch Brook, First Avenue, Mount Vernon, and Oliver Street Schools.

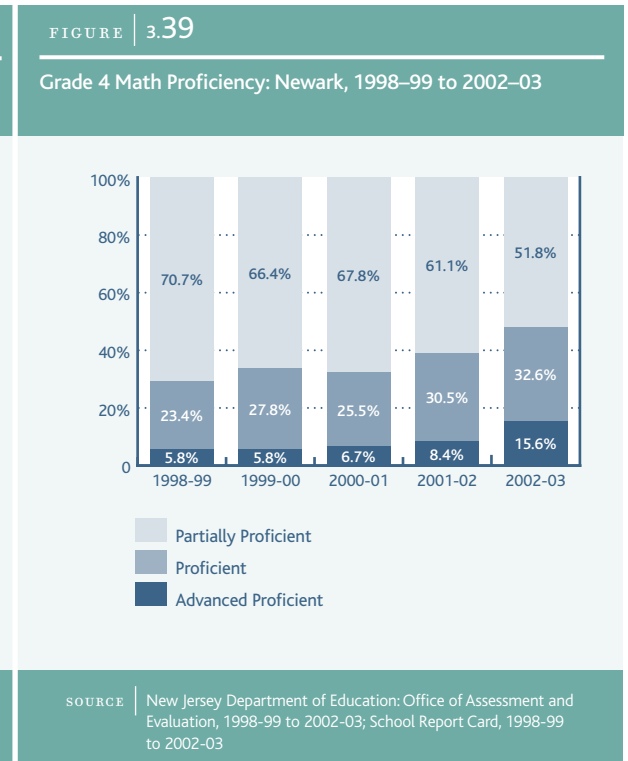
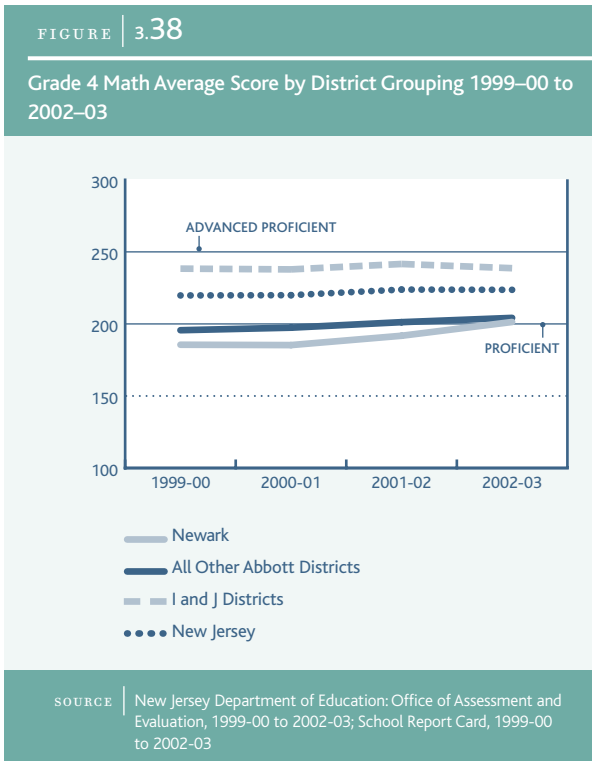
Grade 4 students scored in the partially proficient range over the years, while more and more children scored in the proficient and advanced proficient ranges. In 1998-99, 38 percent of general education students met the state’s math standards compared to almost half (48%) in 2002-03. About 16 percent of Newark’s fourth grade students scored in the advanced proficient range in 2002-03 compared to just six percent in 1998-99.

Figure 3.40 compares the performance of Newark’s various student groups on the 2002-03 Grade 4 math test. The chart shows a pattern that is similar to the Grade 4 language arts results. More than three quarters (77%) of the white students met or exceeded the state’s standards in Grade 4 math, compared to just over half (54%) of the Hispanic students, one-third (34%) of the Black students, and 43 percent of the students identified as economically disadvantaged. (The portion of students that scored in the advanced proficient range was also largest among white students, followed by Hispanic, economically disadvantaged, and Black students.) Forty

percent of the students who were not fluent English speakers scored at or above proficient. Fifteen percent of the special education students met the state standards in math for their grade.

Grade 4: AYP. A school must meet many requirements to make Adequate Yearly Progress under federal law. For the 2003-04 Grade 4 exam alone, schools had to meet 40 benchmarks to make AYP; for each of 10 demographic groups, at least 95 percent of the students had to take the test; 68 percent had to score proficient or better on the language arts literacy exam; and 53 percent had to score proficient or better on the math exam. Figure 3.41 lists the Newark schools that did not make AYP as a result of student performance on the Grade 4 test, the number of indicators on which it fell short, and the number of years it did not meet the standard.⁴⁵

Twenty-nine out of 49 (59%) Newark elementary schools missed one or more AYP benchmarks on the Grade 4 test. Speedway Avenue missed targets for the first time in 2003-04, placing them in the “early warn-

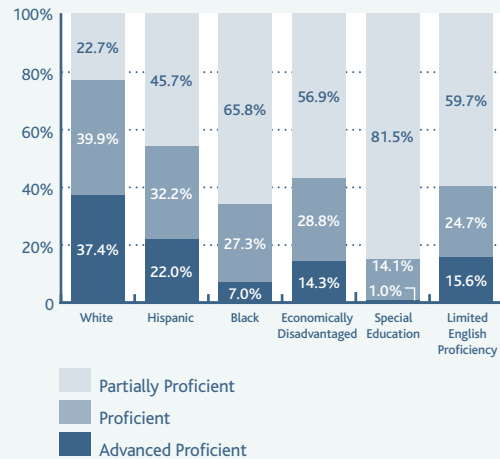


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FIGURE 3.40

Grade 4 Math Proficiency by Subgroup: Newark, 2002–03



SOURCE | New Jersey Department of Education: Office of Assessment and Evaluation, 2002-03; School Report Card, 2002-03

ing” category. Schools in early warning are not required to take any action under federal law, but should examine any practices that may have been responsible for missing the benchmarks. Broadway, Roberto Clemente, Madison, and South Street missed targets for the second year in a row, placing them in the “school improvement” category. Parents with children in these five schools may choose to send their children to another public school in the district or a charter school in Newark. Three schools – Eighteenth Avenue, Elliott Street, and Quitman Avenue – missed AYP targets for the third year in a row. In the third year, schools under “school improvement” must offer supplemental services such as tutoring to help low-income and underperforming students to achieve state standards.

The 14 schools listed at the top of the Figure – from Bragaw to Maple Avenue – did not make AYP for the fourth time in 2003-04, placing them under “corrective action.” Under law, these schools must implement school choice, provide supplemental services targeted to improving student performance, and

undertake at least one of a series of corrective actions listed in Figure 3.34 above. Madison, Bragaw, and George Washington Carver each missed six AYP benchmarks. Avon Avenue and Elliott Street each missed five. McKinley fell short on one AYP benchmark, but made “safe harbor” by improving its test scores by 10 percent or more since 2002-03.

Seven schools that did not make AYP in 2002-03 earned hold status in 2003-04: Belmont-Runyon, Camden Street, Chancellor Avenue, Franklin, Lincoln, Louise A. Spencer, and Warren Street were all in “school improvement,” but met the standards on which they had fallen short previously.

AYP results suggest that there may be important differences in test performance among schools in Newark. In fact, there was a great deal of variation around the district’s 62 percent proficiency average on the 2002-03 Grade 4 language arts literacy test. Fifteen schools met or exceeded the state’s threshold of 68 percent proficiency within the general education population. Eight Newark schools even surpassed the state average (86%):

Branch Brook, Abington Avenue, Ann Street, First Avenue, Ridge Street, Lafayette Street, Wilson Avenue, and Fourteenth Avenue Schools.

On the other hand, in four schools, fewer than 40 percent of the general education students scored at least proficient: Dayton Street, Bragaw Avenue, Hawthorne Avenue, and Avon Avenue Schools.

Improvement over time is, of course, an indicator that a school is moving in the right direction. Five schools showed a 40-point gain in the average score of general education students between 1999-00 and 2002-03: Rafael Hernandez, Quitman Street, Hawkins Street, Miller Street, and Speedway Avenue.

Newark schools also varied widely in general education student performance on the Grade 4 math test. Seventeen schools exceeded the No Child Left Behind threshold of 53 percent. Eight schools did even better than the state average (75%): Branch Brook, Abington Avenue, Ann Street, Lafayette Street, Ridge Street, Oliver Street, First

FIGURE | 3.41

Newark Schools Not Making Adequate Yearly Progress: Grade 4, 2003-04

School	Number Standards Not Met	Years Not Making AYP	School	Number Standards Not Met	Years Not Making AYP
Bragaw Avenue	6	4	Elliott Street	5	3
George Washington Carver	6	4	Quitman Community	3	3
Avon Avenue	5	4	Lincoln	1	3+
Miller Street	4	4	Louise A. Spencer	1	3+
Dr William H Horton	3	4	Warren Street	1	3+
Hawthorne Avenue	3	4	Belmont Runyon	0	3+
Martin Luther King Jr	3	4	Camden Street	0	3+
Dayton Street	2	4	Chancellor Avenue	0	3+
Newton Street	2	4	Franklin	0	3+
Peshine Avenue	2	4	Madison	6	2
Rafael Hernandez	2	4	Broadway	4	2
Burnet Street	0	4	South Street	4	2
Dr E Alma Flagg	0	4	Roberto Clemente	3	2
Maple Avenue	0	4	Speedway Avenue	1	1
Eighteenth Avenue	6	3	McKinley	0	1*

SOURCE | New Jersey Department of Education: Office of Title I Program Planning and Accountability, September 2004

+ AYP Hold: School met NCLB standards that it had missed in previous years.

* Early Warning Hold: School met NCLB standard(s) that it had missed in the previous year.

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Avenue, and Fourteenth Avenue Elementary Schools.

On the other hand, fewer than 40 percent of the general education students met or exceeded the state standards on the Grade 4 math test in 23 of Newark's elementary schools. Fewer than one in four general education students scored at least proficient in nine schools: Maple Avenue, Camden Street, Hawthorne Avenue, Dayton Street, Sussex Avenue, Belmont-Runyon, Avon Avenue, Bragaw Avenue, and Thirteenth Avenue Elementary Schools.

General education students in seven schools improved 35 points or more on the Grade 4 math test between 1999-00 and 2002-03: Fifteenth Avenue, Speedway Avenue, Hawkins Street, Lafayette Street, Alexander Street, Roseville Avenue, and Cleveland Elementary Schools.

Grade 8: GEPA. Across the nation, reading and math achievement results for Grade 8 have lagged behind those of younger students. There has been no significant improvement in Grade 8 reading between 1992 and 2003;

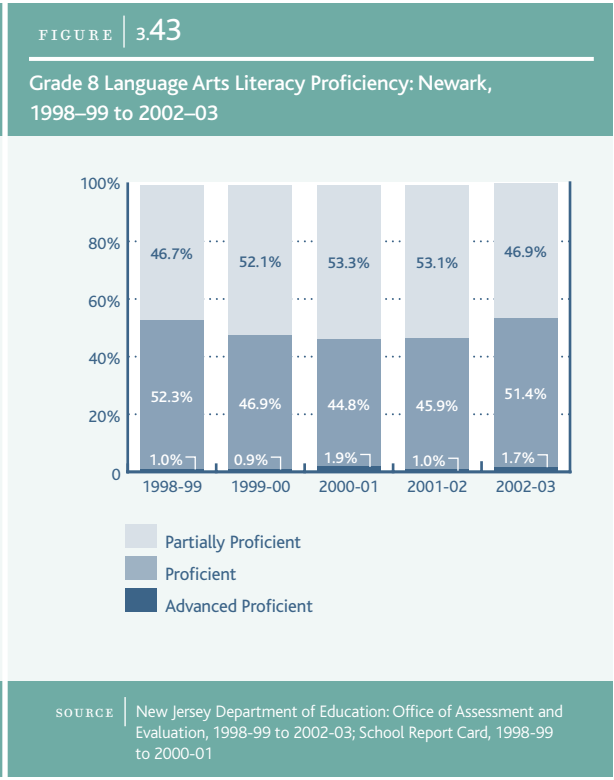
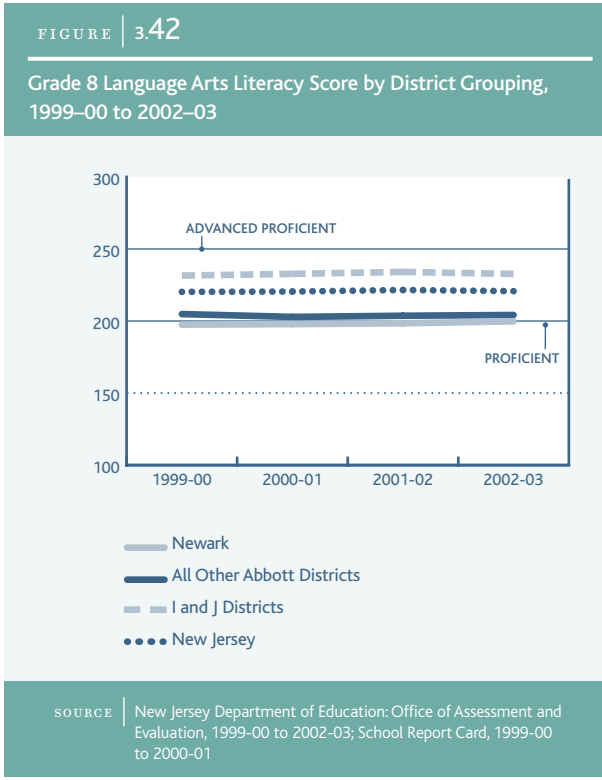
math scores have improved by about five percent during the same time period.⁴⁶ In this section, we ask if Abbott reforms have produced achievement results with middle school-age students. When compared to the array of instructional programs and reforms for elementary school students, however, Abbott has yet to truly provide for students in the middle grades.⁴⁷ This relative lack of attention to middle schools is not unique to New Jersey's urban school districts. We expect to see achievement test results in Newark, the other Abbotts, and indeed throughout the state that are similar to those found in the nation as a whole.

The Grade 8 language arts literacy scores show little to no change in any of the district groupings we analyzed (Figure 3.42). On average, Newark's eighth graders consistently scored between 197 and 200 in all four years.

Figure 3.43 shows the distribution of Newark scores in Grade 8 language arts literacy from 1998-99 to 2002-03. In most years, just under half of the district's eighth graders met the state's standards in language arts literacy.

In 2002-03, 53 percent of Newark’s eighth grade general education students scored proficient or better. This shift in the number of students meeting state standards is not reflected in the average score results shown in Figure 3.42. Such a difference could happen if: 1) many students scored just above the proficient threshold (200), or if 2) students who did not meet state standards scored more poorly over all.

There was a good deal of variation in the performance of Newark’s different student groups on the eighth grade test of language arts literacy in 2002-03. A majority of white (76%) and Hispanic (51%) eighth graders scored at or above the proficient range on the language arts literacy test (Figure 3.44). Forty-two percent of the district’s economically disadvantaged students and 38 percent of the Black students met the state’s standards for language arts literacy that year. One in four limited English proficient students scored proficient or better on the 2002-03 Grade 8 language arts literacy, as did seven percent of Newark’s special education students.

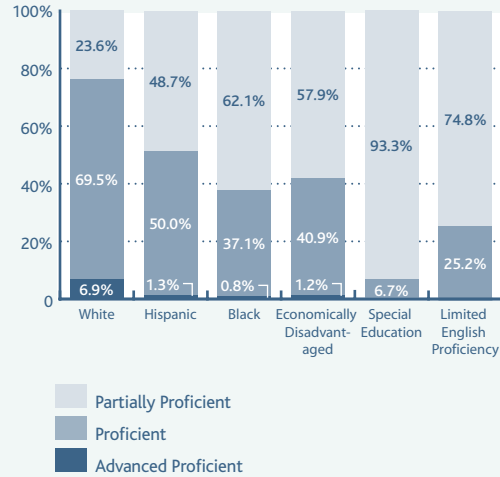


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FIGURE | 3.44

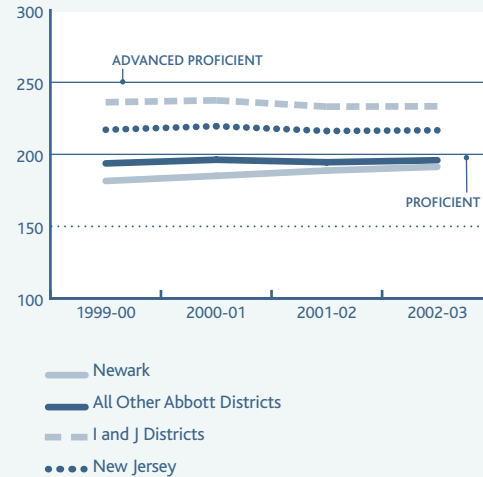
Grade 8 Language Arts Literacy Proficiency by Subgroup: Newark, 2002-03



SOURCE | New Jersey Department of Education: Office of Assessment and Evaluation, 2002-03

FIGURE | 3.45

Grade 8 Math Average Score by District Grouping, 1999-00 to 2002-03



SOURCE | New Jersey Department of Education: Office of Assessment and Evaluation, 1999-00 to 2002-03; School Report Card, 1999-00 to 2002-03

Over the years shown in Figure 3.45, eighth grade math scores changed little in the other Abbott districts, the I and J districts, or throughout the state. Newark's average score of 182 was lower than every other district grouping in 1999-00. By 2002-03, Newark's eighth grade math scores improved by about five percent to 191.

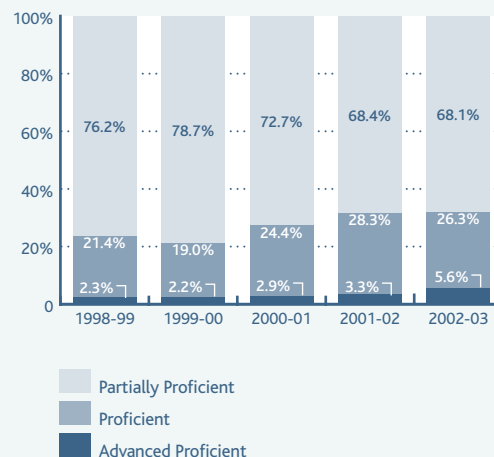
Figure 3.46 reveals that the rise in Newark's eighth grade math score happened when fewer students scored in the partially proficient range and more scored proficient or better in each passing year. In 1998-99, 24 percent at least met the state's eighth grade math standards, compared to 32 percent in 2002-03.

Newark's student groups did not all perform equally on the 2002-03 Grade 8 math test. The differences follow the same pattern seen in the Grade 8 language arts exam. About two thirds (68%) of the white students scored at least proficient on the Grade 8 math exam, compared to 34 percent of the Hispanic students, 25 percent of the students who were economically disadvantaged, and 18 percent of

the Black students. Two percent of the special education and 25 percent of the limited English proficient students met state standards in the Grade 8 math test that same year.

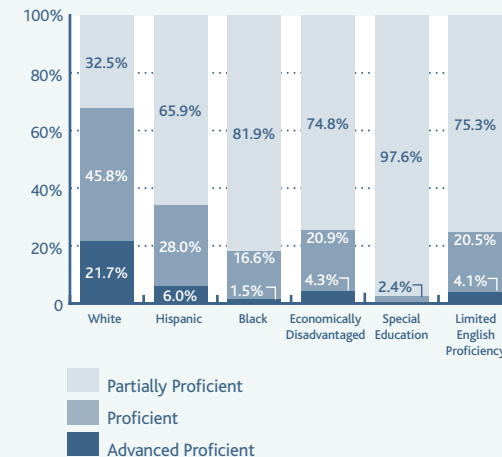
Grade 8: AYP. Twenty-six out of 38 (68%) Newark schools missed one or more AYP benchmarks on the Grade 8 exam. Gladys Hillman-Jones, First Avenue, and Oliver Street did not make AYP this year for the first time, placing them in the “early warning” category. Schools in this category are not required to take any action under federal law, but should examine any practices that may have been responsible for missing the benchmarks. The 2003-04 school year was the second year that four other schools – Hawkins Street, Renaissance Academy, South Seventeenth Street, and Thirteenth Avenue – fell short of one or more AYP benchmarks, putting them in the “school improvement” category under NCLB. Parents with children in school improvement schools may choose to send their children to another public school in the district or a charter school in Newark. Chancellor Avenue missed AYP for the third

FIGURE | 3.46
Grade 8 Math Proficiency: Newark, 1998–99 to 2002–03



SOURCE | New Jersey Department of Education: Office of Assessment and Evaluation, 1998-99 to 2002-03; School Report Card, 1998-99 to 2000-01

FIGURE | 3.47
Grade 8 Math Proficiency by Subgroup: Newark, 2002–03



SOURCE | New Jersey Department of Education: Office of Assessment and Evaluation, 2002-03

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FIGURE | 3.48

Newark Schools Not Making Adequate Yearly Progress: Grade 8, 2003-04

School	Number Standards Not Met	Years Not Making AYP	School	Number Standards Not Met	Years Not Making AYP
Maple Avenue	8	4	Bragaw Avenue	2	4
William H Brown Academy	7	4	Martin Luther King Jr	2	4
Avon Avenue	6	4	Sussex Avenue	2	4
Dayton Street	6	4	Chancellor Avenue	3	3
George Washington Carver	6	4	Harold Wilson	0	3+
Morton Street	6	4	Louise A. Spencer	0	3+
Newton Street	6	4	Renaissance Academy	9	2
Vailsburg	6	4	South Seventeenth Street	6	2
Burnet Street	5	4	Thirteenth Avenue	5	2
Miller Street	5	4	Hawkins Street	3	2
Dr E Alma Flagg	4	4	Gladys Hillman-Jones	3	1
Dr William H Horton	4	4	First Avenue	2	1
Rafael Hernandez	4	4	Oliver Street	1	1
Hawthorne Avenue	3	4	Luis Munoz Marin	0	1*
Peshine Avenue	3	4			

SOURCE | New Jersey Department of Education: Office of Title I Program Planning and Accountability, September 2004

+ AYP Hold: School met NCLB standards that it had missed in previous years.

* Early Warning Hold: School met NCLB standards that it had missed in the previous year.

time and must offer supplemental services aimed at improving student performance in addition to offering parents the school choice option.

The 18 schools listed at the top of the Figure (from Maple Avenue down to Sussex Avenue) failed to make AYP for the fourth year in a row placing them under “corrective action.” Under law, these schools must implement school choice, provide supplemental services targeted to improving test performance, and undertake at least one of a series of corrective actions listed in Figure 3.34. The schools that missed the most AYP targets were Renaissance Academy, Maple Avenue, and William H. Brown.

Three schools earned hold status in 2003-04: Wilson and Louise A. Spencer Schools met the standards on which they had previously fallen short.

Grade 8 test performance varied widely among Newark’s schools. Out of the 37 schools that took part in the 2002-03 test, 16 exceeded the NCLB threshold in language arts literacy (58%) and seven did better than

the state average (85%). At Abington Avenue Elementary School, every general education student who took the test that year scored proficient or better. The five other highest performing schools were First Avenue, Thirteenth Avenue, Ann Street, Wilson Avenue, and Lafayette Street Elementary Schools. Eleven schools outperformed the NCLB threshold in math (38%) and seven did better than the state average (66%): Abington Avenue, Wilson Avenue, Ann Street, Thirteenth Avenue, and Lafayette Street Elementary Schools; Luis Muñoz Marin Middle School; and University High School.

Fewer than 40 percent of general education students met or exceeded the state standards on the Grade 8 language arts literacy test in 10 schools: Dr. E. Alma Flag, South Seventeenth Street, Burnet Street, Martin Luther King Jr., Avon Avenue, Louise Spencer, and George Washington Carver Elementary Schools; Vailsburg Middle School; William H. Brown Academy; and the Renaissance Academy Alternative Program. At five schools, fewer than one in 10 general education students scored

proficient on the Grade 8 math test: Avon Avenue, Martin Luther King Jr., and George Washington Carver Elementary Schools; William H. Brown Academy; and Renaissance Academy Alternative Program.

Thirteenth Avenue Elementary School and Luis Muñoz Marin Middle School showed the biggest gains on both Grade 8 tests from 1999-00 to 2002-03. On the language arts test, Sussex Avenue and Warren Street Elementary Schools improved by 15 or more points. On the math test, six schools improved by 20 or more points: Thirteenth Avenue, Abington Avenue, Miller Street, Wilson Avenue, Sussex Avenue, and First Avenue Elementary Schools and Luis Marin Muñoz Middle School.

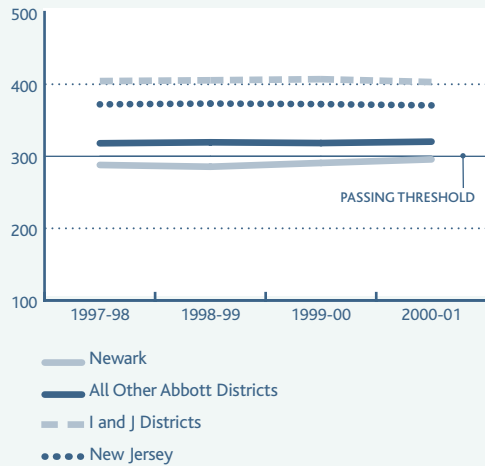
Grade 11: HSPT/HSPA. The United States Department of Education has collected achievement test data from students in Grade 12 since 1990 as part of its National Assessment of Educational Progress. The results of this ongoing national study reveal little change in the reading or math scores of high school seniors over time. We suspect, along

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FIGURE | 3.49

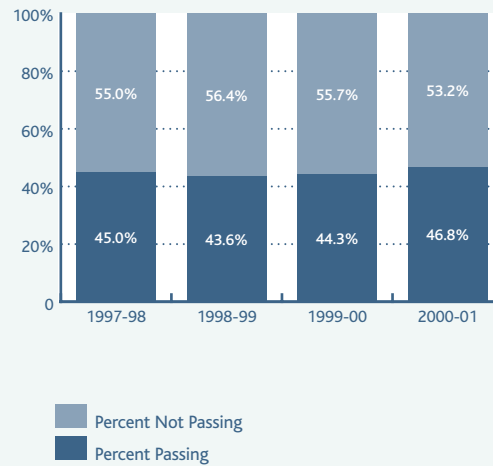
Grade 11 (HSPT) Reading Average Score by District Grouping, 1997-98 to 2000-01



SOURCE | New Jersey Department of Education: Office of Assessment and Evaluation, 1997-98 to 2000-01

FIGURE | 3.50

Grade 11 (HSPT) Reading Proficiency: Newark, 1997-98 to 2000-01



SOURCE | New Jersey Department of Education: Office of Assessment and Evaluation, 1997-98 to 2000-01

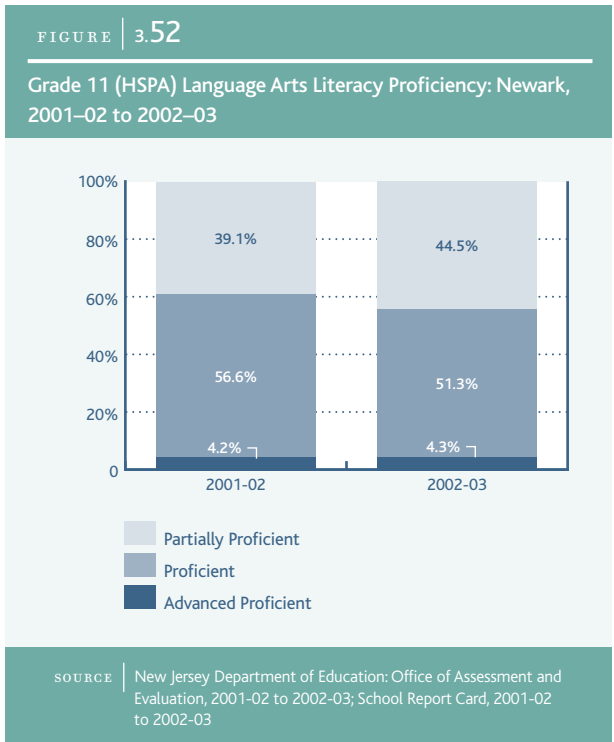
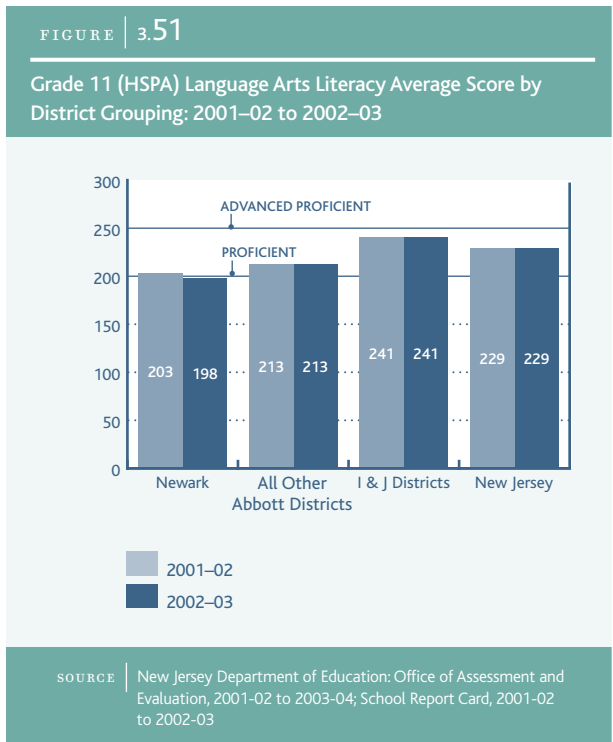
with many other education observers, that this lack of progress is the result of a relative lack of attention to high schools compared to elementary or even middle schools. In this way, the Abbott reforms do not differ from standard educational practice across the state or indeed, nationally. As we discussed above, until recently, the Abbott remedies have provided less in the way of real instructional reforms at the middle or high school levels when compared to what has been available for younger children. We turn next to the results of the Grade 11 assessments. As in the middle schools, we have high hopes but few expectations for large-scale improvement in high school test scores.

The 11th grade test given throughout the state changed in 2001-02 from the HSPT to the HSPA. HSPT scores ranged from 100 to 500, with 300 as the passing threshold. The HSPA ranges from 100 to 300, with 200 as the proficiency threshold, and 250 as the advanced proficiency threshold. Scores on these two tests are not comparable, so we examine them separately below.

Figure 3.49 shows that Newark’s general education high school students performed below their peers in the other Abbott districts on the Grade 11 reading exam. The reading scores remained below the passing threshold in Newark with a slight improvement closer to the passing threshold. Grade 11 reading scores stayed about the same in the other district groupings too.

Although Newark’s Grade 11 average scores increased slightly over this time period, the percent of students who passed the test remained relatively small. Figure 3.50 shows that only 47 percent of high school juniors passed the reading test in 2000-01 compared to 45 percent in 1997-98.

The Grade 11 language arts literacy results from the last two years show the same trend (Figure 3.51). The language arts literacy average scale score of Newark’s 11th graders stayed around 200 (the proficiency threshold). Grade 11 language arts literacy scores in all of the other district groupings remained about the same too. However, under the new test, more than half of Newark’s juniors met

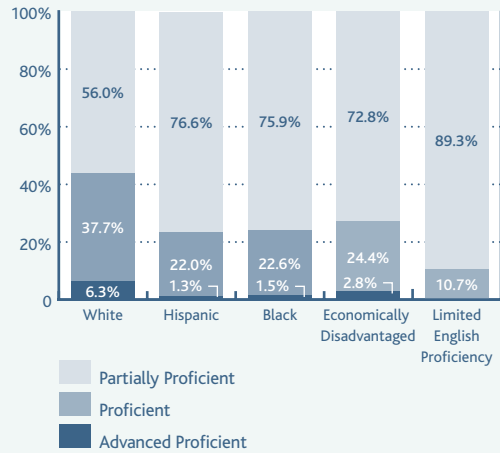


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FIGURE | 3.53

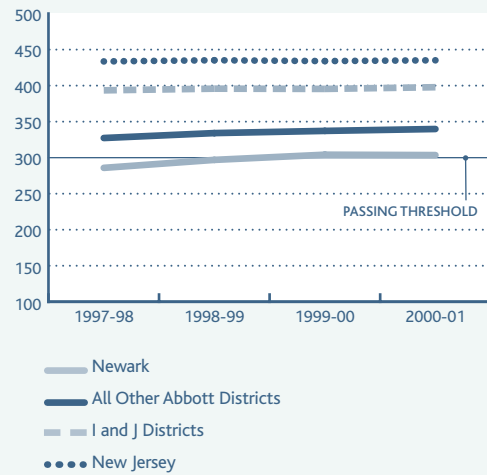
Grade 11 (HSPA) Language Arts Literacy Proficiency by Subgroup: Newark, 2002-03



SOURCE | New Jersey Department of Education: Office of Assessment and Evaluation, 2002-03; School Report Card, 2002-03

FIGURE | 3.54

Grade 11 (HSPT) Math Average Score by District Grouping, 1997-98 to 2000-01



SOURCE | School Report Card, 1994-95 to 2002-03

or exceeded the proficiency standard in 2001-02 and 2002-03. The other district groupings also showed an improvement under the HSPA, with the other Abbott districts moving from 60 percent passing to 75 percent in 2001-02 and 2002-03.

Fewer than half of the students in the individual subgroups passed the Grade 11 exam in 2002-03. Forty-four percent of the white students scored at least proficient on the 11th grade language arts literacy exam, compared to approximately 25 percent of both the Hispanic and Black populations. Twenty-seven percent of the students who were economically disadvantaged, and 10 percent of limited English proficient students passed the Grade 11 language arts literacy exam.

As with the high school reading and language arts literacy scores, we hoped but did not expect to find a substantial change in Newark's high school math scores (Figure 3.54). Newark's high school math scores improved by six percent over the time period, ending above the passing threshold for the test. Scores in the other Abbott districts were

higher on average, but improved less over the same time period.

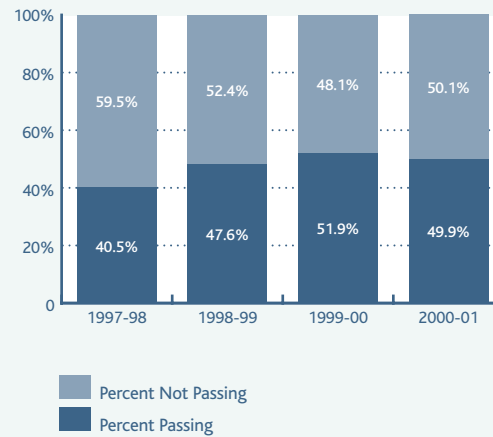
The pattern shown in Figure 3.55 mirrors the average score trend in Newark’s Grade 11 math scores. About forty percent of Newark’s high school juniors passed in 1997-98, compared to 50 percent in 2000-01.

In the later Grade 11 exam, the average scale score remained below proficient in 2001-02 and 2002-03, while the other Abbott districts remained close to the proficiency threshold. There was no change in those two years for the I and J districts and the state with both scoring above proficiency. Around 30 percent of Newark’s 11th graders passed the high school exam, while just under 50 percent of the other Abbott 11th graders passed the math exam. There was also little change in any of the other district groupings shown in Figure 3.56.

The subgroup pass rate on the Grade 11 math exam mirrors the language arts results. More than half (55%) of the white students passed this portion of the test, while less than 25 percent of the Hispanic, Black and

FIGURE | 3.55

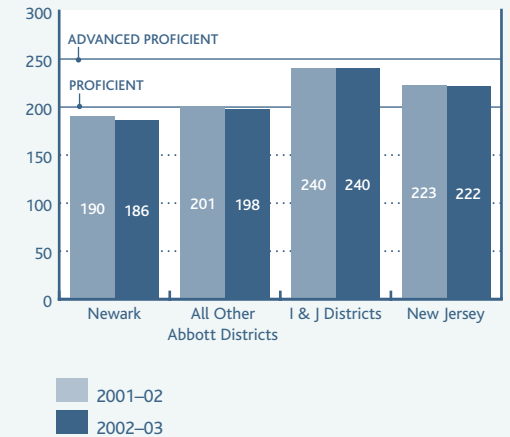
Grade 11 (HSPT) Math Proficiency: Newark, 1997-98 to 2000-01



SOURCE | New Jersey Department of Education: Office of Assessment and Evaluation, 1997-98 to 2000-01

FIGURE | 3.56

Grade 11 (HSPA) Math Average Score by District Grouping, 2001-02 to 2002-03



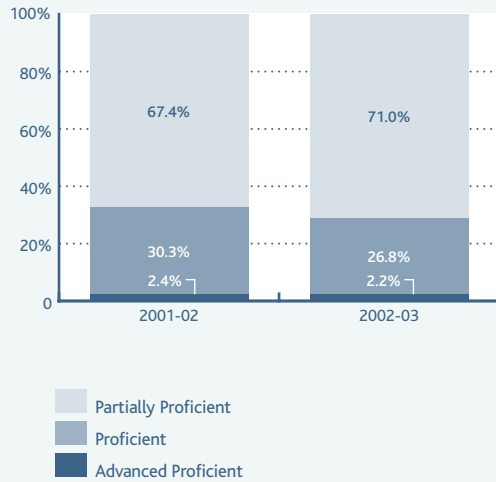
SOURCE | New Jersey Department of Education: Office of Assessment and Evaluation, 2001-02 to 2002-03; School Report Card, 2001-02 to 2002-03

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FIGURE | 3.57

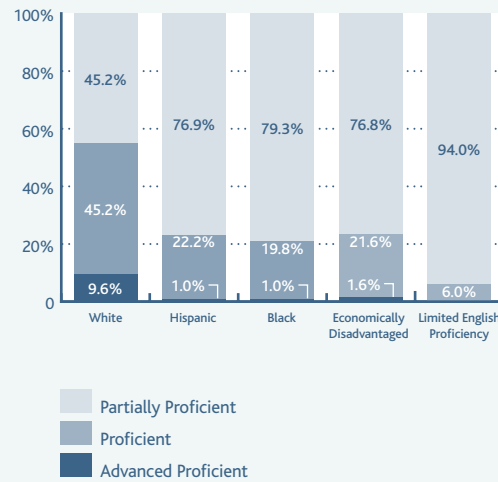
Grade 11 (HSPA) Math Proficiency: Newark, 2001-02 to 2002-03



SOURCE | New Jersey Department of Education: Office of Assessment and Evaluation, 2001-02 to 2002-03; School Report Card, 2001-02 to 2002-03

FIGURE | 3.58

Grade 11 (HSPA) Math Proficiency by Subgroup: Newark, 2002-03



SOURCE | New Jersey Department of Education: Office of Assessment and Evaluation, 2002-03; School Report Card, 2002-03

economically disadvantaged populations showed the same level of achievement. About six percent of the limited English proficient population reached proficiency on the Grade 11 math exam in 2002-03.

Grade 11: AYP. Eight out of 12 (67%) Newark schools serving students in Grade 11 missed HSPA AYP benchmarks in 2003-04: Barringer, Central, East Side, Renaissance Academy, Malcolm X Shabazz, Technology, Weequahic, and West Side High Schools. The schools with the highest number of missed AYP indicators were: Barringer with 20 out of 40, East Side with 14, and Renaissance Academy with 10. This was the second year in which all eight schools did not make AYP, placing them in the “school improvement” category under NCLB. Under federal law, parents with children enrolled in these schools may choose to send their children to another public school in the district or a charter school in the City of Newark. There are four other public schools that serve high school-age students in Newark and one charter school (North Star Academy). NCLB enables parents in such

circumstances to send their children outside of the district, but this provision of the law has not yet been used in New Jersey.

General education students at Science and University High Schools outperformed both No Child Left Behind Grade 11 thresholds. Students at Arts and Technology High Schools also did better than the threshold in language arts (73%).

On the other hand, fewer than two in five eleventh graders scored at least proficient in language arts literacy at Weequahic, Malcolm X. Shabazz, and Barringer High Schools; and Renaissance Academy Alternative Program.

West Kinney and East Side High Schools showed the greatest gains on the language arts literacy test from 2001-02 to 2002-03.

Fewer than one in 10 general education students scored at least proficient on the Grade 11 math test at Malcolm X. Shabazz, Weequahic, and Barringer High Schools; and West Kinney Alternative High School.

East Side High School was the only school that improved the Grade 11 average math score.

Other testing in Newark. The Newark Public Schools have numerous ways to help teachers keep track of student progress and tailor instruction to student needs. District-wide midterms and final exams assess students' language arts/literacy and math skills four times a year before student report cards are issued. The Pearson Developmental Reading Assessment is administered districtwide to students in Kindergarten through Grade 2, and Grades 6 and 7 at the beginning and end of each school year. The Standards Proficiency Assessment is used in Grade 5.⁴⁸ As a rule, teachers assess the progress of English language learners by reviewing portfolios of student work.

High School Completion

High school completion is an important event that greatly affects young people's chances for social and economic improvement. Because of this, and because it is the culmination of a school system's responsibilities to its community's residents, we present graduation as a major indicator of educational success. Abbott reforms have not truly addressed in-

FIGURE | 3.59

Newark Schools Not Making Adequate Yearly Progress: Grade 11, 2003-04

School	Number Standards Not Met	Years Not Making AYP
Barringer	20	2
East Side	14	2
Renaissance Academy	10	2
Central	9	2
Weequahic	8	2
Malcolm X Shabazz	4	2
West Side	3	2
Technology	1	2

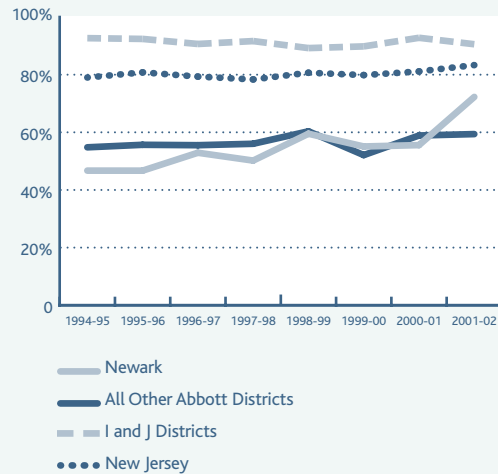
SOURCE | New Jersey Department of Education: Office of Title I Program Planning and Accountability, September 2004

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FIGURE | 3.60

Cumulative Promotion Index by District Grouping,
1994-95 to 2001-02



SOURCE | School Report Card, 1994-95 to 2002-03

structional programs in the high schools, but more recent efforts in Newark have had high school students as their focus.

How many students who entered high school four years ago as ninth graders are graduating this year? Unfortunately, without keeping track of each student, it is impossible to answer this question.⁴⁹ In fact, up until 2002-03, the New Jersey School Report Card reported the percentage of the current year's 12th grade students who graduated. People who study high school graduation rates nationally have come up with a good way to estimate true graduation rates. They use a measure called the Cumulative Promotion Index or the CPI. The CPI is the percentage of 12th graders who graduate this year adjusted by an estimate of the school's promotion rates that year. Like any other estimate we could use with the existing data, the CPI does not account for the number of students who leave the district after entering high school if they moved or for reasons other than dropping out. It assumes, as do other measures, that

an equal number of students move into the district. We present CPI trends over time as a proxy for a true graduation rate in the absence of better quality data.⁵⁰

Below, we use the CPI to estimate graduation rates for Newark, all other Abbott districts, the wealthiest districts, and the state from 1996-97 to 2001-02 (Figure 3.60). Newark's increased rate is the most striking feature of Figure 3.60. According to our estimate, fewer than half (47%) of the 9th graders who entered in 1990-91 graduated from Newark high schools in 1994-95. Newark schools graduated 60 percent of the class of 1999-00: a 27 percent increase in just five years. Newark's estimated graduation dropped off slightly for two years, but improved dramatically in 2001-02 when almost three out of four students graduated.

Graduation estimates varied from school to school in Newark. In 2001-02, for example, we estimate that East Side graduated 91 percent, University 88 percent, and Science 86 percent. In the same year, we estimate that Weequahic graduated 56 percent and Barringer 60 percent.

While some schools do better than others in every year – especially Science and University – none of the schools graduated more than 80 percent in every year.⁵¹

The CPI results suggest that high schools across the state graduate about 80 percent of their students and the wealthiest districts graduated about 90 percent on average. Both rates have been steady. These findings reveal real progress in the Newark schools, although a sizable gap remains between Newark and the other Abbott districts on the one hand and the remaining districts in the state on the other.

Routes to Graduation

Next, we consider how seniors in the Newark high schools show their readiness to graduate. In New Jersey, students can graduate by passing the traditional High School Proficiency Assessment or the alternative Special Review Assessment (SRA).

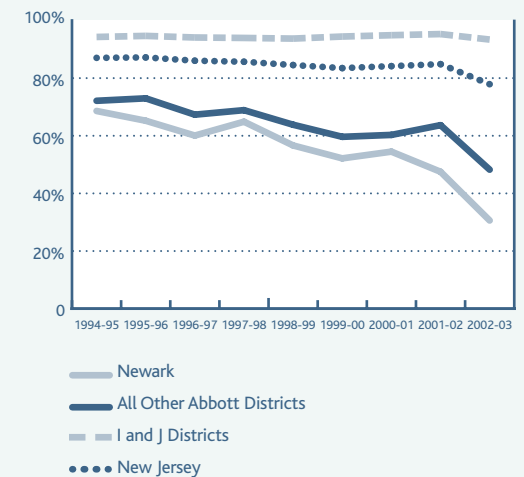
High school achievement tests are meant to show that students have mastered the content and skills outlined in New Jersey's Core Curriculum Content Standards. Prior to 2001-02, it was assumed that most gen-

New Jersey Special Review Assessment White Paper Excerpt

In a 2003 white paper, the New Jersey Department of Education had this to say about the SRA: The original intent of the Special Review Assessment (SRA) was to provide a way for students who met specific criteria through the Child Study Team in each district to demonstrate proficiency...Over the course of time the SRA was used for students who have limited English proficiency and many special education students. Beginning in 1991...administrative code was changed to include all students who did not pass the HSPT in the SRA program. Thus the program emphasis shifted from an alternate way for specific students to demonstrate proficiency to a program that allowed all students the opportunity. Beginning with introduction of the HSPA in 2002, all students who did not score proficient on one or more tests were included in the SRA process.... The original use [of the] SRA for special education students has been replaced by the increased use of the special education exemption process.

FIGURE | 3.61

Graduation by Traditional Grade 11 Exam (HSPT/HSPA) by District Grouping, 1994-95 to 2002-03



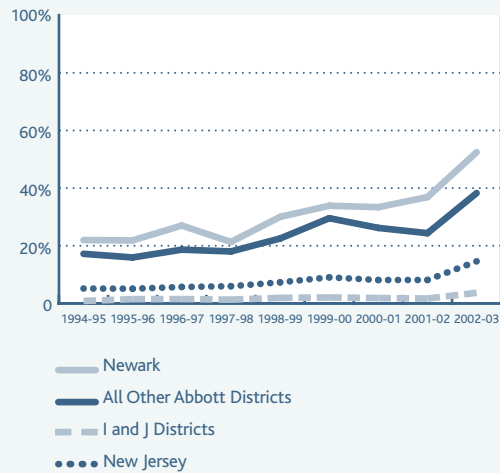
SOURCE | School Report Card, 1994-95 to 2002-03

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FIGURE 3.62

Graduation by Alternative Grade 11 (SRA) Exam by District Grouping, 1994–95 to 2002–03



SOURCE | School Report Card, 1994-95 to 2002-03

eral education students who graduate had shown that they had mastered the appropriate content by passing the traditional exam. Since then, New Jersey high schools students who fail one or more sections of the traditional exam can still earn a standard, academic diploma if they take and pass the alternative exam. We provide information below about how students are showing readiness to graduate and if the change in state policy described above had an effect on Newark, other Abbott districts, and other school districts statewide.

People disagree about alternative routes to graduation like the SRA. Critics argue that students must show that they have mastered curriculum standards to graduate from high school. Supporters praise New Jersey's SRA and argue that states with a single high stakes graduation test have a strong incentive to push those students out of school who cannot pass the test. We believe that the people of New Jersey can do both: maintain high academic standards and make sure that all students have the opportunity to earn academic diplomas.

The figures below show the percentage of students graduating via the traditional and alternative exams respectively (Figures 3.61 and 3.62). In 1994-95 through 2002-03, the wealthiest districts consistently had the highest percentage of seniors graduating by passing the traditional exam, followed by the state overall. Over time, fewer and fewer students in Newark and the other Abbott districts graduated by passing the traditional Grade 11 test. The biggest drop-off was after 2001-02, when general education students who did not pass one or more sections of the exam were first allowed to take and graduate by passing the alternative Grade 11 exam (SRA). Less than a third of the Newark class of 2002-03 graduated by passing the HSPA compared to about half of their peers in the other Abbott districts.

Figure 3.62 is almost a mirror image of Figure 3.61, suggesting that most students who did not graduate by passing the traditional exam had indeed taken the SRA.

College Entrance Exams

Some four-year colleges stopped requiring applicants to submit Scholastic Aptitude Test

(SAT) scores in the past few years. The organization that administers the test recently estimated that as many as 56 percent of all four-year colleges (the remaining 44 percent accept them on an optional basis) and 80 percent of the most competitive colleges in the country still require SAT scores. We examine SAT participation, below, as an indicator that Newark's high school seniors have been seriously planning to pursue a four-year college degree.

Through its School-to-Career and College Initiatives program, Newark's public schools have encouraged high school students to pursue college and helped them with the application process (see Student and Family Supports). We expected to see increased SAT participation in Newark since these programs were introduced. SAT participation in Newark rose by about six percent over the time period from 47 percent in 1994-95 to 53 percent 2002-03 (Figure 3.63). SAT test-taking in the other Abbott districts rose at a similar rate from 55 to about 60 percent. Almost every senior in the wealthiest districts took the SAT: 90 percent took the test in 1994-95 and 96

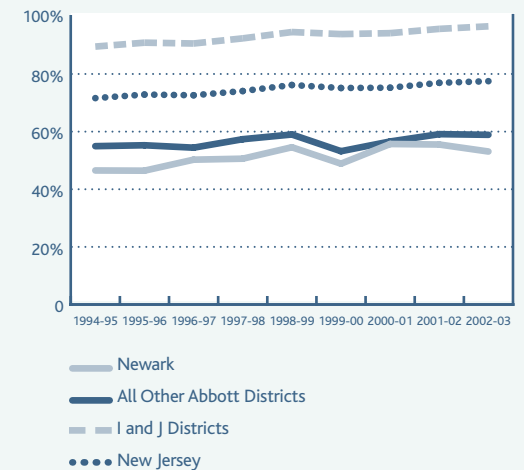
percent did so in 2002-03. The state average rose from 72 to 78 percent SAT participation.

Knowing about and taking the SAT are first steps toward college entrance. To be competitive, students must also do well on the test. SAT proponents believe that it predicts success in college. The test is offered in two sections: a verbal and a math test. Scores on each section range from 200 to 800. Nationally, SAT scores have risen very slightly in both the verbal and math portions of the test. In Figures 3.64 and 3.65, we show how well students – from Newark, all of the other Abbott districts, the I and J districts, and the state – have done on the verbal and math sections of the SAT between 1994-95 and 2002-03.

Figure 3.64 shows that average verbal SAT scores have remained about the same level between 1994-95 and 2002-03 in all of the district groupings we analyzed. On average, students in the Abbott districts scored lower than students throughout the state, and well below the scores achieved by their peers in the wealthiest suburbs. Newark's verbal SAT

FIGURE | 3.63

SAT Participation by District Grouping, 1994-95 to 2002-03



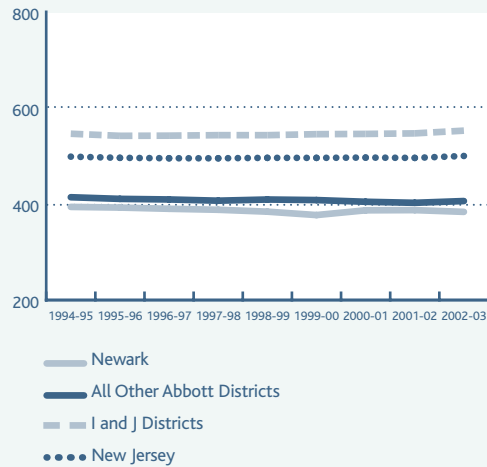
SOURCE | School Report Card, 1994-95 to 2002-03

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FIGURE | 3.64

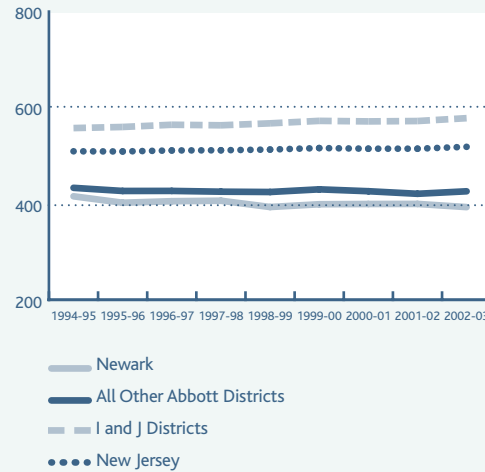
SAT Verbal Average Score by District Grouping, 1994-95 to 2002-03



SOURCE | School Report Card, 1994-95 to 2002-03

FIGURE | 3.65

SAT Math Average Score by District Grouping, 1994-95 to 2002-03



SOURCE | School Report Card, 1994-95 to 2002-03

scores were similar to scores earned in the other Abbott districts.

Students across the state scored higher on the SAT math than on the verbal (Figure 3.65). In the other Abbott districts and throughout the state, scores remained about the same between 1994-95 and 2002-03. Average math scores in Newark were 415 in 1994-95 and went down to 392 in 2002-03; SAT math scores in the wealthiest suburbs increased from 558 to 578 during the same time period.

The Status of K-12 Education: A Summary

We conclude this section with an overview of key findings about K-12 public education in Newark, including standards-based reform and supports for students and families. We first describe the progress that the district has made and the challenges that still remain in each element of effective schooling. We then present a summary table containing findings for the subset of indicators that have specific standards or requirements under Abbott or other state or federal law.

Opportunities for Students to Learn

- Abbott funding has had some immediate, clear effects on conditions in Newark schools: average class sizes are smaller (better) than the Abbott standard in all grades. In Newark, elementary school class sizes decreased from 1994-95 to 2002-03. High school class sizes rose slightly during the same period, however.
- Content-specific curriculum committees develop and review the district's instructional programs on a five-year cycle.
- The district's own Whole School Reform model, Reaching for the Brass Ring has research-based math and language arts components and ample supports for teachers. At the time of this writing, the model was not yet approved by the New Jersey Department of Education.
- Newark has 6,575 special needs students ages six to 21. Only about one in 10 of students with disabilities goes to school in a "very inclusionary" setting where they are educated with general education students for 80 percent or more of the school day.
- Newark's high schools offer an array of honors and advanced placement courses comparable to what is offered in a nearby successful suburban district. Every high school in the district offers honors courses. Advanced placement courses are offered in a smaller number of schools, most frequently at the selective, magnet high schools. The district also offers a

pre-engineering program in cooperation with the New Jersey Institute of Technology.

Student and Family Supports

- The district has collaborative agreements with the Newark Health Department, local hospitals, and many community-based agencies to provide students with a range of health, mental health, and social services. Several Newark schools have on-site health clinics.
- Middle and high school students who are having difficulty achieving at their regular schools can attend alternative programs located throughout the city. Collectively, these programs are called Renaissance Academy.
- Some district-sponsored after-school programs have a limited number of slots for students, despite considerable need. In two schools we visited, the after-school programs had capacity for only 100 students. Students must apply and are admitted to these programs on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Breakfast and lunch is provided to Newark students and snacks for all after-school program participants. The district also provides three meals a day in the summer to any student who walks into several school locations throughout the city.

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K-12 Teacher Qualifications and Supports

- There are fewer students to every teacher in Newark and all of the other Abbott districts than in the wealthiest districts or the state as a whole.
- Newark faculty attendance improved between 1994-95 and 2002-03. At 94 percent in 2002-03, the faculty attendance rate was at about the same level as it was in the other Abbott districts and throughout the state.
- In 2003-04, almost all of Newark's high school teachers were "highly qualified". Ninety-five percent were highly qualified in at least one subject they taught and 94 percent were highly qualified in all of the subjects they taught.
- More than 80 percent of Newark's elementary school teachers were highly qualified in at least one subject and three out of four were highly qualified in all of the core academic subjects they taught.
- In 2002-03 and 2003-04, Newark was in better compliance with elementary school staffing requirements than the other Abbott districts on average.
- Newark had weaker compliance with the middle and high school requirements. About one in four Newark schools serving students in middle and high school grades had health and social service coordinators; about one in nine had dropout prevention coordinators.
- Almost all of Newark's schools had each of the following positions required under Abbott: family liaison, guidance counselor, media spe-

cialist, nurse, security officer, and technology coordinator.

- The Newark Public Schools offers its teachers ongoing and wide-ranging professional development activities both districtwide and by neighborhood.

K-12 Budget

- Property wealth is an important indicator of local capacity to support its public services, including education. There was almost four times more property wealth per student in the wealthiest suburbs than there was in Newark in 2003. That same year, the state average was more than double that of Newark.
- At \$10,390 per student in 2003-04, Newark has had as much as the wealthiest suburbs to support general education since Abbott parity funding began.
- In 2003-04, the district received about \$3,546 per student to support supplemental programs. This level of funding reflects a decrease of about \$132 per student or four percent from the previous year, compared to the other Abbott districts that saw a decrease of \$33 per student.

K-12 Student Outcomes

- The City of Newark compared poorly with the state on five critical indicators of child and youth well-being. There was some improvement on indicators such as child abuse, teen pregnancy, and teen death, but these rates are still at unaccept-

ably high levels. As a central public institution of the urban community, schools play a critical role in ensuring the well-being of children and youth. Schools are not alone in their responsibility – parents, elected officials, and public and private agencies in the city must all play a role. As the African proverb so famously says: “It takes a whole village to raise a child.”

- None of the schools in Newark qualified as “persistently dangerous” under federal law between 1998-99 and 2002-03.
 - At four percent, the district’s 2002-03 elementary school suspension rate was lower than the state average (6%) and the average of the other Abbott districts (9%), and about the same as it was since 1995-96. At 11 percent, Newark’s 2002-03 high school suspension rate was lower than the state average (15%) and the average of the other Abbott districts (23%).
 - Newark’s fourth graders have made gains in language arts literacy and math achievement test scores. Language arts literacy scores improved by 16 percent between 1999-00 and 2002-03 to a level just above the proficiency threshold. Newark’s general education scores rose most dramatically in 2000-01, as did many of the districts throughout the state. Average math scores increased by eight percent over the same period to just over the proficiency threshold.
 - Between 2000 and 2003, Grade 8 and 11 scores stayed at or below the proficiency threshold in both grades and tests. When compared to the array of instructional programs and reforms for elementary school students, Abbott has yet
- to provide for students in the middle and high school grades.
 - In New Jersey, there was no official graduation data until recently. In this report, we estimated historical graduation rates using a cumulative promotion index. Our estimates suggest that Newark’s cumulative promotion index rose from 47 to 73 percent between 1994-95 and 2001-02. By the same measure, high schools across the state gave graduated about 80 percent of their students and the wealthiest suburbs have graduated about 90 percent.
 - Less than a third of the class of 2002-03 graduated from Newark high schools by passing the traditional High School Proficiency Assessment compared to about half of their peers in the other Abbott districts. Most of the remaining graduates that year had taken the alternative test, the Special Review Assessment.
 - Participation in college entrance exams in Newark rose from 47 percent in 1994-95 to 53 percent in 2002-03. Newark student performance on the verbal and math tests has remained below the state average between 1994-95 and 2002-03, however.

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FIGURE | 3.66

Abbott K-12 Programs: Benchmark Status In Newark

Benchmark	Status
Kindergarten-Grade 3 maximum class size: 21	Met
Grades 4 and 5 maximum class size: 23	Met
Grades 6 through 12 maximum class size: 24	Met
Abbott districts have funding parity with the I & J districts	Met
Student to computer ratio is 5 to 1	Met
2003-04 Grade 4 Achievement Tests*: For a school to make Adequate Yearly Progress, each of 10 demographic subgroups had to have: 1) 95% test participation; 2) 68% percent score at least proficient in language arts literacy; AND 3) 53% score at least proficient in math.	Met in: Belmont Runyon Burnet Street Camden Street Chancellor Avenue Dr. E. Alma Flagg Franklin Maple Avenue McKinley
2003-04 Grade 8 Achievement Tests: For a school to make Adequate Yearly Progress, each of 10 demographic subgroups had to have: 1) 95% test participation; 2) 58% score at least proficient in language arts literacy; AND 3) 39% score at least proficient in math.	Met in: Luis Munoz Marin Harold Wilson Louise A. Spencer
2003-04 Grade 11 Achievement Tests: For a school to make Adequate Yearly Progress, each of 10 demographic subgroups had to have: 1) 95% test participation; 2) 73% score at least proficient in language arts literacy; AND 3) 55% score at least proficient in math.	Not Met

* The New Jersey Department of Education provided 2003-04 Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) data several months prior to releasing statewide 2003-04 achievement test scores. Therefore, we include the 2003-04 AYP data to provide readers with the most updated information available, while achievement test score data is only analyzed through 2002-03.

Endnotes

21. The State did not require middle and high schools to adopt Whole School Reform models, because there was not yet sufficient evidence of their effectiveness at those grade levels. The State did recommend the following models, however: Success For All (Preschool to Grade 7), Talent Development (Grades 6 to 8), Turning Points (Grades 6 to 8), High Schools That Work (Grades 9 to 12), and Talent Development High Schools (Grades 9 to 12). In 2004, new regulations were adopted that govern secondary school reform in the Abbott districts.

22. We describe models used in multiple Newark schools in this report. Other models can be reviewed in greater detail on the Internet. Excellent descriptions of many Whole School Reform models can be found at the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory's Catalog of School Reform Models (<http://www.nwrel.org/scpd/catalog/index.shtml>) or the American Institutes of Research's Educators' Guide to Schoolwide Reform (http://www.aasa.org/issues_and_insights/district_organization/Reform/approach.htm).

23. Reading Recovery is an early intervention program designed to help first graders who are having difficulty learning to read and

write. The goal of the program is to provide accelerated learning, helping students catch up with their peers and reach at least the average reading level of their class. Eligible students receive thirty-minute, one-on-one tutoring from a specially trained teacher, five days per week for 12-20 weeks.

24. Project GRAD is a foundation-funded dropout prevention program that stresses the importance of strong curriculum, and building discipline, confidence, and excitement for learning among students. Project GRAD students receive college scholarships if they meet a set of requirements. The requirements are: maintain a minimum GPA, take a required set of courses, participate in a program-sponsored summer program, and graduate from high school in four years. The program funders require feeder schools to adopt Success for All.

25. After our visit to Eighteenth Avenue School in May 2004, Project GRAD no longer required schools to implement Success For All. The district then ended all contracts with the model developer, except for its preschool program, Curiosity Corner.

26. Federal laws guiding the educational environment of people with disabilities include: the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (amended in 2004) 20 U.S.C. § 1400, et seq; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (1973) 29 U.S.C. § 794; and less directly, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 42 U.S.C. § 2131, et seq. State regulation is New Jersey Administrative Code 6A:14, and state statute is New Jersey Statutes Annotated 18A:46.

27. Newark has been a state-operated school district since 1995. Its governing body, an advisory board, replaces the former school board. The State District Superintendent retains veto power over all matters until re-establishment of local control.

28. High schools in Newark have specializations, or pathways, such as technology, business, and the performing arts.

29. Federal law on "highly qualified teachers" applies to teachers in the following "core content areas": English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, world languages, civics and government, economics, arts (music, theatre, and art), history, and geography. New Jersey's Core Curriculum Content Standards that align with

these content areas are: language arts literacy, science, mathematics, social studies, world languages, and the visual and performing arts.

30. In 2002-03 – already many years into Abbott parity funding – 47 percent of New Jersey school districts' total revenues and 69 percent of their general education revenues were from local taxes.

31. The figures shown in the Figure (in thousands of dollars) are average, not total, property values per student in each district grouping because a large city with many low-value properties could have the same total property value as a smaller, wealthy suburb.

32. This and all subsequent analyses of tax rates are based on property values that have been "equalized" by the New Jersey Department of the Treasury, Division of Taxation to reflect current market values. Tax rates used throughout this section are gross figures: they do not include refunds made through the state's rebate programs. Per student property wealth was calculated by dividing the total equalized property value by the total school enrollment in each district grouping.

Endnotes

33. Tax rates are expressed as a dollar amount for every \$100 of assessed property value. In a city with a tax rate of 1.00, a homeowner with a property assessed at \$100,000 would pay \$1,000 in property taxes.

34. As of school year 2004-05, Abbott Parity Aid is known as Educational Opportunity Aid (EOA) and Additional Abbott Aid is known as Discretionary Educational Opportunity Aid (DEOA).

35. We focus on general education funding as the foundation of a school district's budget. Most school districts also receive categorical aid from the federal and/or state governments to provide supportive programs and services for students with disabilities, English language learners, and other special needs populations.

36. In Abbott districts, general education revenues support half-day Kindergarten. Although the other half-day is required under Abbott, it is considered a "Supplemental Program" and is funded by "Additional Abbott Aid," explored below. Preschool is funded separately by the state and is examined in Section 2.

37. The average across all other Abbott districts includes all 29 other Abbott districts, even if they did not apply for Additional Abbott Aid.

38. The 2003 American Communities Survey, U.S. Bureau of the Census.

39. The newly adopted regulation guiding penalizing school employees who falsify violence and vandalism incident reports is New Jersey Administrative Code 6:16, Section 5.3.

40. School by school information is not shown in this report because of space limitations but is available for this and other measures upon request.

41. United States Department of Education, National Center for Educational Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress, 1990-2003.

42. Abbott school funding is described in detail in K-12 Fiscal Resources section of this report.

43. Results are shown for special education students who took the ASK4, CEPA, and HSPA. The results for students with severe disabilities who took the alternate test are not shown.

44. Students are included in more than one category if appropriate. For example, a student may be categorized by race/ethnicity, language proficiency, special needs, and/or socioeconomic status.

45. A school-by-school listing of missed AYP benchmarks is not included in the report because of space limitations, but is available upon request.

46. United States Department of Education, National Center for Educational Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress, 1990-2003.

47. In 2003-04, a statewide work group met and developed recommendations for Abbott middle and high school reform. The group studied successful schools, reform models, and other improvement practices with demonstrated effectiveness at the middle and high school level. The group's recommendations to the Commissioner of Education were adopted in Fall 2004. The regulations require all middle and high schools in Abbott districts to phase in several reforms over the next four school years. The major reforms include: 1) adoption of academic or career-focused curricular themes; 2) formation of small learning communities with

greater personalization and adult attention for each student; and 3) implementation of a rigorous, college preparatory curriculum for all students.

48. The Standards Proficiency Assessment (SPA) was developed by the Educational Testing Service (ETS) to help districts keep track of progress toward the Core Curriculum Content Standards for students in grades other than third, fourth, eighth, and eleventh.

49. The New Jersey Department of Education also has a major project underway to develop a statewide, student-level database that will address this and many similar questions we have not been able to answer. The project, called NJSMART, was piloted in 11 districts. If adequate funding is secured, it is expected to "roll out" to the state level in one to two years.

50. The CPI estimate may be less accurate in the Abbott districts than in the other district groupings because Abbott districts have higher mobility rates.

51. School level information is not shown in this report because of space limitations but is available for this and other indicators upon request.

The New Jersey Supreme Court found that many of New Jersey's urban schools are unsafe, overcrowded, and unsuitable for helping students to achieve the Core Curriculum Content Standards. Under Abbott, the state is required to address this situation. In 2000, the legislature enacted the Abbott School Facilities Construction Program, with several key features.

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School Facilities Construction

Abbott Overview

Key features of the school facilities construction program are:

- Priority to health and safety repairs;
- Long range plans developed by districts with community partners;
- More classrooms to eliminate overcrowding;
- Space to provide preschool to all eligible three- and four-year-olds;
- 100 percent state-financed; and
- Schools to accommodate state-of-the-art teaching and learning.

More than five years after the Abbott school facilities construction program began with the first round of long-range facilities planning, many projects are underway across the state. As this report was being prepared Abbott districts were in a second round of facilities planning. The second round provides districts with an opportunity to build on the strengths and correct the shortcomings of their first efforts. It is another chance for districts to work with their constituents to build schools that meet the needs of children and encourage the best instructional practices. In this section of the report, we describe

the goals, scope, process, and progress of the first-round of facilities planning in Newark. Understanding the successes and challenges encountered to date will help to inform and improve the district's second-round efforts.

The First-Round Long-Range Facilities Plans

The Planning Process

The first step of the Abbott school facilities construction program was to develop a districtwide Long-Range Facilities Plan (known then as a Facilities Management Plan). The New Jersey Department of Education issued guidelines in September 1998 to help Abbott districts develop them. Districts' final plans were initially due to the state just four months later in January 1998. This deadline was later extended to March 1999. The Newark Public Schools advised the New Jersey Department of Education that they would submit their plan in July 1999 because of delays caused by technical problems with the software system developed by the Department of Education

to input project data. LRFP development involved several procedures, including:

- Projecting future enrollments;
- Assessing the safety and educational adequacy of current schools;
- Planning future educational needs, with a set minimum standards as a guideline;
- Engaging parents and other community members in the process; and
- Planning for “swing space” while construction is under way.⁵²

The LRFP process was a unique chance for school districts to assess their existing schools and, where needed, plan to build better ones that would accommodate children’s needs and improved instructional practices. The development of the first-round LRFPs did not go very smoothly for a number of reasons. Most districts did not have time to assess their current educational programs. They also did not have the expertise to translate educational practices into new building designs. As directed by the Supreme Court, the New Jersey Department Of Education set standards for the numbers and sizes of educational spaces plus office and other nonin-

structional spaces. These standards provided very little flexibility for districts to forward innovative designs. The state treated these “facilities efficiency standards” (FES) as strict guidelines, rather than the minimum standards the Supreme Court intended. In sum, the time frame, lack of expertise, and rigid standards worked together to undermine the quality of many district LRFPs.⁵³

For nine months, Newark’s consultant team made up of a demographer, educational planner, architects, and engineers worked with School Leadership Team (SLT) administrators on the first-round LRFP. First, the team reviewed the Existing Facilities Evaluation, an assessment of school building conditions and capacity, and projected school enrollments. Next, planning meetings were held with Assistant Superintendents and SLT staff members to create redevelopment plans for each SLT.⁵⁴ Representatives from the Departments of Facilities Management, Teaching and Learning, and Student Information Services also participated in these meetings. The consultant team also organized

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School Facilities Construction

The LRFP process was a unique chance for school districts to assess their existing schools and plan to build better ones to accommodate children's needs and improved instructional practices.

presentations to the Facilities Advisory Board to elicit their input and feedback (see Leadership section below). SLTs held separate meetings with principals, parents, and School Leadership Councils to present the proposed plans and obtain their feedback. The redevelopment plans were put together to create the LRFP that was then presented to the Superintendent and Facilities Advisory Board for approval.

Figure 4.1 summarizes the school construction projects outlined in Newark's 2002 LRFP update. Newark's LRFP contained 69 projects. There were 43 new schools, 18 rehabilitations, and eight additions. The number of buildings is expected to decrease from 80 to about 70 in future years. Reasons for this include: the elimination of annexes and small schools; decreasing enrollments in some areas of the city; and the district's decision to create or maintain preschool through Grade 8 structures in new and existing schools rather than have separate elementary and middle schools. A community member who

reviewed this report in draft form commented that the district made this decision based on reported benefits for older students but did not adequately consider the potential negative impact on younger children in the district.

Preschool Facilities Planning

Preschool facilities should be healthy, safe, and adequate to support instruction that meets the state's early childhood Expectations. The Abbott school construction program is intended to improve schools housing students at all grade levels, preschool through Grade 12.

When the district's LRFP was developed in 1999 and updated in 2002, there were no facilities standards for early childhood programs. District staff report that the New Jersey Department of Education told the Newark Public Schools that they could maintain the status-quo in district-run programs but that local providers would be responsible for upgrading their own facilities. As such, the Newark Public Schools only included district-run programs in their LRFP. In the 2002 re-

vised plan, the district increased its capacity to serve preschoolers in its own buildings by providing an equal number of preschool and Kindergarten classrooms in each preschool through Grade 8 school.

In May 2004, the State Board of Education adopted a set of preschool facilities standards for newly constructed buildings and additions to existing ones. Requirements include: classrooms no higher than the second floor of a building, a bathroom attached to the classroom, outdoor play space, and adequate natural light. Following the release of these standards, the Newark Public Schools was the first Abbott district to complete an initial evaluation of Head Start and other private provider facilities. The assessment found that 36 percent of the 90 provider centers had toilets in the classroom, 79 percent had adequate outdoor play areas, and 58 percent had adequate natural light. Twenty-nine percent of the centers had classrooms in the basement and two had classrooms on the third floor making entrance and exit difficult.

Under the law, private preschool providers are eligible to receive Abbott school construction funding only if they own their facilities. Without state funding, it is more difficult for providers who lease their facilities to make repairs and upgrades to meet Abbott standards or add space to accommodate additional children. In all of the Abbott districts combined, only about one-third (34%) of the community preschool providers own their own facilities. In Newark, 37 percent own their buildings.⁵⁵ Eligibility for funding under the law did not guarantee inclusion in the district's facilities plans, however. None of the district's eligible community preschool providers are included in Newark's first-round LRFP.

Leadership

Each Abbott district was required by the New Jersey Department of Education's guidelines to assemble a facilities advisory board (FAB) to guide the development of the LRFP. The FAB was to include parents, teachers, principals, community representatives, an archi-

FIGURE | 4.1

Newark's First-Round Facilities Plan Overview

	PROJECTS	
	Number	Percent
New Schools	43	62.3%
Renovations/Additions	18	26.1%
Additions	8	11.6%
Total	69	100.0%

SOURCE | Education Law Center communications with the New Jersey Schools Construction Corporation, New Jersey Department of Education, and individual districts.

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School Facilities Construction

tect, an engineer, and a staff person from the New Jersey Department of Education. The FAB's role was to review and refine the recommendations made by an educational facilities specialist and architect and recommend the plan for adoption by the school board. The Education Law Center has recommended that FABs continue to meet until plans are fully implemented to seek input and guide the districtwide planning, design, and construction of school facilities.

The Newark Facilities Advisory Board (FAB) was made up of the Facilities Consultant/Architect, district and school administrators, teachers, parents; and representatives from city government and community-based organizations. The FAB met monthly to provide oversight until May 1999 when its members approved the LRFP and submitted it to the New Jersey Department of Education. The FAB was re-established in September 2004 as the Facilities Oversight Committee in preparation for the second round of facilities planning in 2005. The facilities committee on

the district's Advisory Board meets monthly with the district's Facilities Consultant to discuss the status of ongoing projects, in particular, problems that have prevented some projects from moving forward.

Community and Other Input

District staff told us that they met with and made presentations to community organizations at the time the LRFP was being prepared, and many times after, in connection with school sites and the 2002 LRFP update. More recently, the district has held community meetings regarding the design of individual school projects. Architects typically made presentations at these meetings and requested feedback and input on what community features the new schools should have. The district's early childhood staff provided architects with input about preschool classroom and building designs.

Community-based organizations are reported to also be very involved in school

facilities projects. Land for Learning, a group of local organizations in Newark, was formed out of frustration with the city's lack of a master plan and concern that city revitalization efforts were not happening in an organized fashion. As an outgrowth of the Master Plan Working Group, Land for Learning was set up to provide community input and guidance on the development of the city's master plan. As a result of the collaborative efforts of the Newark Public Schools and Land for Learning, the district acquired several city-owned properties for schools; and the district's LRF was incorporated into the city's master plan.

La Casa de Don Pedro, in the North Ward of the city, has identified potential school sites that fit with the organization's plans for future housing development. La Casa has also set up community meetings to discuss facilities planning and school design. Many meetings were conducted in Spanish and Portuguese to include a broader group of local residents. The Ironbound Community Corporation in

the East Ward has received a \$70,000 grant from the Wachovia Foundation to participate in school-community facilities planning.

The district keeps the City Council informed about school construction efforts. Several members of the council have been involved with individual school projects.

Approximately one year ago, the Newark Alliance, a group of private business leaders dedicated to Newark's revival, spearheaded an effort to facilitate timely communications and decision-making between the Newark Public Schools, the City of Newark, and the New Jersey Schools Construction Corporation. Every six weeks, leaders from these three entities meet to review the status of school construction, particularly around land acquisition and design plans. The new East Side High School project is an example of how this forum has helped move the construction projects along. The site that was originally selected for the high school was very expensive, relocation costs were high, and community members

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School Facilities Construction

were not happy with the design concept. This issue became a major agenda item for the forum, and the Newark City Council member for the East Ward and community representatives were invited to a meeting to resolve the issue. Several new design concepts were presented, the new site was discussed, and consensus was reached. The City of Newark, in particular, played a key role in the process, responding to the request for city-owned property.

The Newark Public Schools occasionally receive support from other agencies to support school facilities upgrades, and has joint partnership arrangements with local organizations.⁵⁶ The New York New Jersey Port Authority, for example, is putting in all new windows at East Side High School and McKinley School to reduce airport noise. Through partnerships with community organizations, the Boylan Recreational Center will be housed at the proposed new Boylan/Alexander School. This center will provide students with better recreational facilities including an indoor swimming pool. The Boys and Girls Club

of Newark will contribute land for the new Roberto Clemente School in the North Ward. The school will house recreation programs run by the Boys and Girls Club. Both projects are currently in the site investigation stage. The Council of Higher Education in Newark (CHEN), an organization representing the four universities in the city – the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMD), Rutgers University – Newark Campus, Essex County College, and the New Jersey Institute of Technology – agreed to provide a new Science Park High School with the same instructional technology that the universities have. UMD will also allow Science Park staff to use its parking deck.

Progress and Challenges

Progress. The first LRFPs in the state were approved by the New Jersey Department of Education in 2000; the most pressing health and safety projects got seriously underway after Governor McGreevey created a new state agency, the New Jersey Schools Construc-

tion Corporation (SCC), to oversee the whole process in 2002.⁵⁷⁻⁵⁸

For Abbott districts, LRFPs were developed and approved by their school boards, and then submitted to and approved by the New Jersey Department of Education. Once LRFPs are approved, districts prioritize projects and submit them one by one to the New Jersey Department of Education. The Department of Education checks each project for compliance with the approved LRF and the FES, and estimates project costs. Once approved by the Department of Education, projects are sent to the SCC for “predevelopment.” In general, a project progresses through the following stages: predevelopment, design, in bid for construction, in construction, and finally, complete. The events that occur within each of these stages are in the text box to the right.

From the outset, all parties acknowledged that the Abbott school construction program would be a vast undertaking. As with any effort this size, it will take a long time. Many schools operate year-round and the district must have the space to provide an adequate

Abbott School Facilities Projects: Stages Of Progress

Predevelopment

- NJDOE reviews and approves project for educational adequacy.
- If approved by the NJDOE, SCC hires architects, engineers, and surveys property.
- When property is available at fair market value and suitable for school construction, SCC negotiates purchase and initial design documents are prepared.

In Design

- Architects develop next phase of the design documents and preliminary construction documents.
- NJDOE completes final review and approves cost.
- Architects complete design and construction documents.
- New Jersey Department of Community Affairs reviews construction documents for code compliance.

In Bid For Construction

- Documents for letting bids are approved by the SCC, the Attorney General, and the Department of Treasury.
- Construction firms begin bidding for contract.

In Construction

- Contract is awarded by SCC to one or more firms.
- “Shovels in the ground”—construction begins.
- Upon completion, New Jersey Department of Community Affairs inspects construction and issues Certificate of Occupancy.
- SCC transfers title to district.

Complete

- Staff and students occupy the building.

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School Facilities Construction

FIGURE | 4.2

Overview of Newark's Current Projects

School	Type and Estimated Completion	School	Type and Estimated Completion
Central H.S.	New School (January 2006)	Camden Campus—Middle	Rehab (–)
Science Park H.S.	New School (January 2006)	Camden Campus—Primary	New School (–)
Gladys Hillman-Jones	Addition/Rehab (January 2007)	Chancellor Avenue	New School (–)
Ann Street PreK-8	New School (September 2007)	Dr. E. Alma Flagg	Addition/Rehab (–)
First Avenue E.S.	New School (September 2007)	Dr. M. L. King, Jr.	New School (–)
Harold Wilson	New School (September 2007)	Dr. William Horton	New School (–)
North Ward Park E.S.	New School (September 2007)	East Side H.S.	New School (–)
Oliver 3-8	New School (September 2007)	Elliott Street	New School (–)
Ridge Street E.S.	New School (September 2007)	George W. Carver/Bruce Street	Addition/Rehab (–)
Speedway Ave E.S.	New School (September 2007)	Hawthorne/Bragaw	New School (–)
Franklin PreK-4	New School (January 2008)	Lafayette Street	New School (–)
Hernandez PreK-4	New School (January 2008)	Lincoln E.S.	New School (–)
South Street PreK-2	New School (January 2008)	Madison	New School (–)
Harriet Tubman	New School (September 2008)	Maple Avenue	New School (–)
University H.S.	New School (September 2008)	Miller Street	New School (–)
West Side H.S.(2 phases)	Addition/Rehab (September 2008)	Mount Vernon	Addition/Rehab (–)
Hawkins E.S.	New School (September 2009)	North 12th Street	New School (–)
14th/15th Avenue	New School (–)	Peshine Avenue	New School (–)
Abington Avenue	New School (–)	New East Ward PreK-8	New School (–)
Arts H.S.	Addition/Rehab (–)	Roberto Clemente	New School (–)
Avon Avenue	New School (–)	South Seventeenth Street	New School (–)
Barringer H.S.	Addition/Rehab (–)	Sussex Avenue	Addition/Rehab (–)
Boylan/Alexander E.S.	New School (–)	Technology H.S.	Addition/Rehab (–)
Branch Brook	New School (–)	Vailsburg	Addition/Rehab (–)
Broadway/Luis Munoz Marin	Addition/Rehab (–)	W. H. Brown Academy	New School (–)
Burnet/Warren E.S.	New School (–)	Weequahic H.S.	Addition/Rehab (–)
Camden Campus—Elementary	Rehab (–)	Wilson Avenue E.S.	New School (–)

SOURCE | Education Law Center communications with the New Jersey Schools Construction Corporation, New Jersey Department of Education, and individual districts. (–) = Estimated completion date unknown.

educational program while facilities projects proceed. Even though the state finances and oversees the process, the district must take great care in pacing the submission of its projects and moving them through the pipeline to completion.

Figures 4.2 and 4.3 show that as of September 2004 54 (84%) of Newark's 64 projects were in the pipeline toward completion: 36 (56%) were in predevelopment, 16 (25%) in design, two (3%) were in construction, and none had been completed.⁵⁹ Out of 532 planned projects across all Abbott districts, 105 were in predevelopment (20%), 40 in design (8%), 49 in construction (9%), and 12 completed (2%).⁶⁰ Throughout the Abbott districts, 207 (39%) of the estimated 532 projects are in the pipeline.

Challenges. Urban districts are often criticized for not making as much progress as the suburban districts. However, there are a number of factors that make the process different and often more challenging for the Abbotts. The New Jersey Department of Education and the district may disagree about

spaces, forcing a prolonged series of negotiations. The SCC may determine, as a result of its own review, that the district should build a new school rather than renovate the existing one. The school district may have difficulty getting the land needed to build new schools. The list goes on. Like many other urban districts, the Newark Public Schools has had some difficulty getting projects through the pipeline.

One major difficulty has been finding and acquiring suitable, vacant land for new and rebuilt schools. The district's LRFP was developed at the same time that the revitalization of downtown Newark and some surrounding neighborhoods got underway. New construction and investment in the city has led to an increase in land prices that has made it hard for the district to afford suitable sites. According to district staff, where the city has owned parcels of land, they have been cooperative in preventing development on proposed school sites. The problem is that the city cannot stop private development on land it does not own.

Progress also stalls because of the condition of potential sites. Following project approval, the SCC hires an architect/engineering firm to conduct a feasibility study. The purpose of a feasibility study is to determine if a proposed school project is possible. It involves an assessment to determine whether a school can be built on the proposed site, if an existing building can be upgraded, and/or whether the site is environmentally safe. This process usually takes between eight and nine months but can be held up longer by environmental issues. Because of its industrial history, many vacant lots are toxic brownfields that are not suitable for school construction.⁶¹ As an example, the new South 17th Street school project was delayed because of concerns about the chemicals used at the nail polish factory on the site before. Unfortunately, the district cannot get the land until the feasibility study is complete. Getting land also takes longer in Newark because there are only one or two people working on this process for all of the projects in Essex County.

FIGURE | 4.3

Status of Facilities Projects: Newark and All Other Abbott Districts*

	Newark		All Other Abbott Districts
	NUMBER	PERCENT	PERCENT
To Be Submitted to NJDOE	10	15.6%	61.3%
Pre-Development	36**	56.3%	19.7%
In Design	16	25.0%	7.5%
Construction Contract Awarded	2	3.1%	9.2%
Completed	0	0.0%	2.3%
Total	64	100.0%	100.0%

SOURCE | Education Law Center communications with the New Jersey Schools Construction Corporation, New Jersey Department of Education, and individual districts.

* As of September 2004.

** Of the 36 projects in pre-development, the New Jersey Schools Construction Corporation has taken action on four. The remaining projects have been submitted to and/or approved by the New Jersey Department of Education, but no further action has been taken.

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School Facilities Construction

Another issue that has been affecting the pace of future school construction projects in Newark is that the district's project management firm (PMF), Parsons Brinkerhoff, has reached the maximum number of projects allowed in its present contract.⁶² Under original rules, this would mean that the district could not proceed with new construction projects until a new contract was set up with this firm. As the SCC approaches the second round of contracts for PMFs, these rules may be revised.

The Status of School Facilities Construction: A Summary

We conclude this chapter with an overview of key findings about school facilities construction in Newark and describe in more detail the progress that the district has made and the challenges that still remain.

➤ Newark was the first district to complete its own evaluation of 90 community preschool provider facilities. In light of the district's recent evaluation, provider building quality should be addressed during the upcoming, second-round planning process.

- The district has good, collaborative relationships with many community-based organizations and City Hall around facilities planning and development.
- The Newark Public Schools has had a difficult time acquiring sites for its school projects, because of land shortages, rising prices, competition from private real estate development, and environmental problems.
- As of September 2004, 54 (84%) of Newark's 64 school construction projects are in the pipeline toward completion, with two in construction and none yet complete. Across all Abbott districts, about 40 percent of the projects are in the pipeline toward completion.
- The district's project management firm (PMF) has reached the maximum capacity of projects allowed under the current contract. Under original rules, this would mean that the district could not proceed with new construction projects until a new contract was set up with the firm. These rules may be revised as the SCC approaches the second round of contracts for PMFs.

Endnotes

52. Planning for swing space was not part of the original LRFP.

53. District staff told us that because Newark's LRFP was well-grounded in the educational programs mandated by the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards, the district succeeded in getting what was needed to support its educational program.

54. Redevelopment plans include SLT school construction goals and considerations, and a summary of the existing and proposed grade structures and enrollments for each school building.

55. This data was collected by the New Jersey Department of Education in 2003-04 private provider budgets. This figure reflects the 92 Newark providers who responded to this specific question.

56. No new schools have been completed yet with Abbott school construction funding, however, the new Belmont-Runyon school, which was funded by the New Jersey Department of Transportation and district bond funds, opened in September 2004. The project came about several years ago following the death of a Belmont-Runyon student near the school by a car speeding toward the Route 78 ramp.

57. Abbott districts were required to address emergency school facilities defects which would directly affect the health and safety of children in these buildings. Health and safety projects include: roof repairs, window replacement, asbestos removal, and boiler repairs.

58. The SCC is a quasi-public agency housed within the New Jersey Economic Development Authority.

59. The total number of school construction projects has changed since the 2002 LRFP update.

60. Of the 36 projects that are in predevelopment, the New Jersey Schools Construction Corporation has taken action on four of them. The remaining projects have been submitted to and/or approved by the New Jersey Department of Education but no further action has been taken.

61. The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) works with the New Jersey Schools Construction Corporation to inspect and remediate new school sites. On each site, NJDEP conducts a title search to determine if there is any contamination risk. If it is judged to be at risk of contamination, it is then inspected and remediation costs estimated. (The estimated remediation cost is subtracted from the land's sale price.) After remediation, NJDEP

determines if the site meets residential occupancy criteria. If the site does not meet NJDEP approval, additional work is required to ensure that any remaining contaminated material is at a sufficient distance below the surface not to constitute a risk to students and school staff.

62. PMFs are hired by SCC to oversee school construction projects.

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School Facilities Construction

Abbott Indicators List

The following is the list of Abbott indicators in this technical version of the report. The indicators included in the summary report are highlighted in bold. Findings from all indicators are included wherever they were available and of sufficient quality.

The Community and Students

What conditions of living and learning in the community served by the district might affect children's and youth's readiness to learn?

- **Female-headed households with children**
- **Adult educational attainment**
- **Labor force participation**
- **Unemployment rate**
- **Median household income**
- **People living below poverty level**
- **Children living below poverty level**
- **Foreign-born population**
- **Rent-income ratio**
- **Renter-occupied housing**
- **Vacant housing**
- **Violent crimes**

What student characteristics might affect the nature and extent of services offered by the district?

- **Eligibility free-/reduced-price lunch**
- **Race/ethnicity**
- **English language learners**
- **Students with disabilities**
- **Immigrant students**
- **Homelessness**
- **Student mobility rate**

The Preschool Program

Opportunities for Students to Learn

How close is the district to achieving universal enrollment for all three- and four-year-olds?

- **Percent of preschool universe served (Census/ASSA)**
- **Total preschool population served**
- **Number of providers by type**
- **Waiting list**
- **Head Start inclusion**
- **Outreach activities**
- **Identification of unserved families**

Is the district providing a "high-quality" preschool education to all eligible children?

- **Programs for children with disabilities**
 - Preschool Child Study Team (CST)
- **Curriculum development**
 - **Curricula used**
 - People involved
 - Considerations/inputs to adoption
 - Review frequency
 - Alignment to Expectations
- **Transition activities (into preschool and Kindergarten)**
- **Health and social services**
 - Direct services offered
 - Methods for assessment
 - Referral methods
 - Transportation services
- **ECERS-R quality scores**

Teacher Qualifications and Supports

Are preschool programs adequately staffed and are staff adequately supported?

- **Number of teachers**
- **Educational attainment of preschool teachers**
- **Preschool teacher certification**
- **Preschool teacher experience**
- **Preschool teacher salary**

- Performance evaluation
- Professional development opportunities
 - Criteria
 - Methods
 - Joint preschool-Kindergarten professional development

Budget

Are the preschool programs adequately funded?

- **Preschool revenues**

Leadership

To what extent does the district's ECEAC represent its stakeholders and participate in the district's early childhood program planning and decision-making?

- **Early Childhood Education Advisory Council (ECEAC)**
 - Representation
 - Training
 - Frequency of meetings
 - Involvement in program planning, budgeting, and facilities planning
 - Other activities

Student Outcomes

Have preschool students developed the skills they will need to continue to learn and develop in Kindergarten?

- **Assessment methods used**
- **PPVT-III or ELAS scores**

K-12 Education

Opportunities for Students to Learn

Do our schools provide high-quality instruction in a range of content areas adequate to ensure that students can meet content standards?

- **Whole School Reform**
 - Model chosen
 - Approval of model
 - Year adopted
 - Reason for adoption
 - Adoption procedures
- **Class size**
- **Programs for children with disabilities**
- **Curriculum development**
 - Curricula used
 - People involved
 - Considerations/inputs to adoption

- Review frequency
- Method for ensuring alignment across grade levels
- **College preparatory course**
 - **AP courses**
 - AP course eligibility
 - Availability of college preparatory sequence (math and science)

Student and Family Supports

Is the school providing programs and services to support students' well-being and academic performance in accordance with demonstrated need?

- **Full day Kindergarten**
 - Class size
- **Early literacy**
 - **90-minute reading blocks**
 - **Small group/one-to-one tutoring**
- **Health and social services**
 - Referral and coordination
 - On-site services
- **Nutrition program**
- **Access to technology**
- **Student-computer ratio**
- **Alternative education program**
- **College and work transition programs**

Abbott Indicators List

- After-school programs
- Summer programs
- Art and Music programs

Are strategies in place to ensure effective parent outreach and involvement?

- **Parent involvement policies and practices**

Teacher Qualifications and Supports

Are our schools adequately staffed and supported?

- Student-teacher ratio
- Faculty attendance
- **Highly qualified teachers**
- **Abbott staffing patterns**
- Professional development
 - Description of instructionally-linked, curriculum-specific training
 - Inputs to selecting professional development opportunities
- Performance evaluation criteria and methods
- Frequency of teacher networking and collaboration
- Other teacher supports

Budget

Are our schools adequately funded?

- **Property wealth**
- Local tax rates
 - Average tax rates
 - School tax rates
- **General education budget**
- **Supplemental programs budget**
- Additional Abbott Aid application process

Leadership

Do our schools and does our district have adequate and representative leadership?

- **School Leadership Councils**
 - Representation of stakeholder groups
 - Training in roles and responsibilities
 - **Frequency of meetings**
 - Involvement in planning and budgeting
 - Other activities
- **Abbott Advisory Council**
 - Representation of stakeholder groups
 - **Frequency of meetings**
 - Involvement in planning and budgeting
 - Other activities

Student Outcomes

How physically, socially, and emotionally healthy are our children?

- **Child death**
- **Teen death**
- **Teen births**
- **Substantiated abuse and neglect cases**
- **School violence and vandalism rates**

Are all students in Kindergarten to Grade 12 learning according to statewide standards?

- **Student attendance**
- Suspension rates
- **Grade 4 Language Arts Literacy and Math Assessments**
 - Mean scores
 - Proficiency percentages
 - AYP status
- **Grade 8 Language Arts Literacy and Math Assessments**
 - Mean scores
 - Proficiency percentages
 - AYP status
- **Grade 11 Language Arts Literacy and Math Assessments**
 - Mean scores
 - Proficiency percentages
 - AYP status

- **High and low performing schools**
- Kindergarten through grade 2
 - Early Language Assessment System scores
 - Terra Nova Edition 2, where available
- **Graduation**
 - **Estimated rates (cumulative promotion index)**
 - **Graduation via Traditional (HSPT/HSPA) Grade 11 Exam**
 - **Graduation via Alternative (SRA) Grade 11 Exam**
- **College Entrance**
 - SAT participation
 - Verbal and math mean scores

School Facilities Construction

Healthy, Safe and Educationally Adequate Schools

What are the district's long-range facilities plans?

- **LRFP approval status**
- **Number and type of planned projects**
- **Process of development**

How much progress has been made toward completing educational facilities projects in the districts?

- **Plans to upgrade preschool facilities**
- **Status of projects (complete, construction, design, predevelopment, not yet submitted)**
- **Estimated completion dates**
- **Cooperation with municipal partners**
- **Community input**
- **Barriers to progress**

To what extent is there adequate, representative leadership that encourages meaningful public participation for school facilities planning and project implementation?

- **Facilities Advisory Board**
 - Representation of stakeholder groups
 - **Frequency of meeting (beyond LRFP submission)**
 - Involvement in plan development
 - Transparency to public
 - Other activities

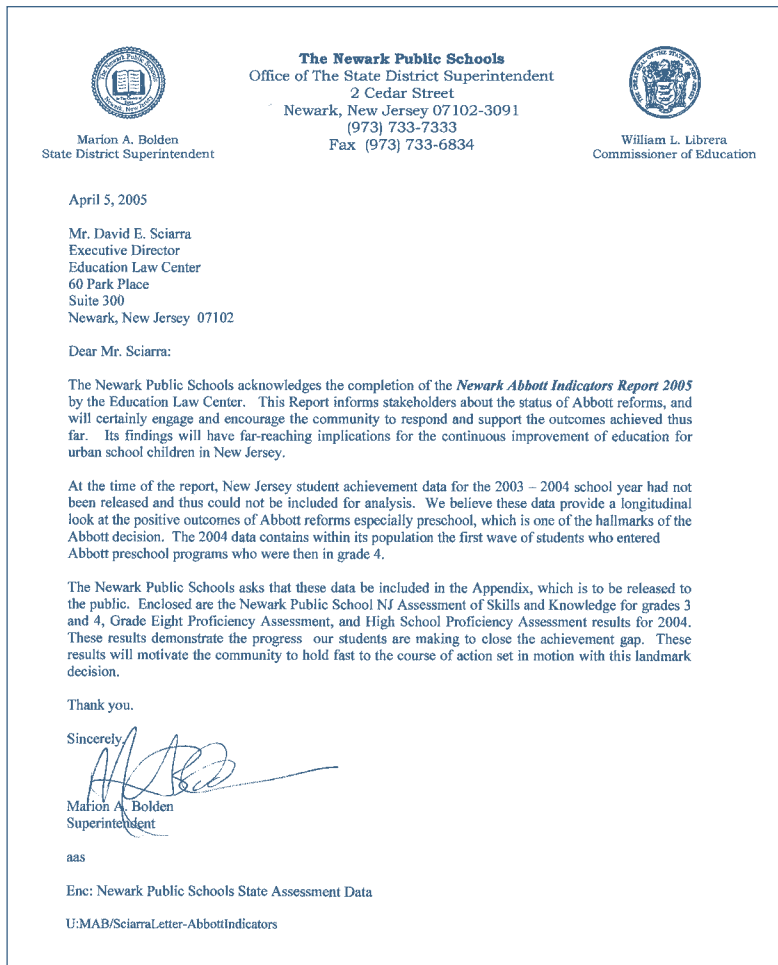
Newark Schools, Grade Structures, and Enrollment: 2003-2004

Newark Schools, Grade Structures, and Enrollment: 2003-04

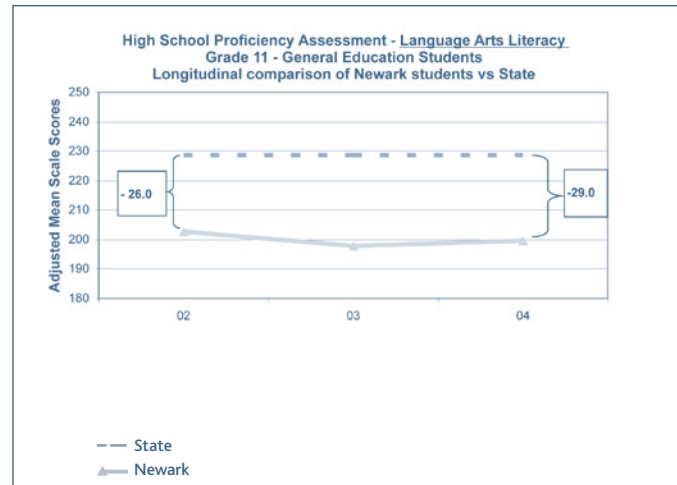
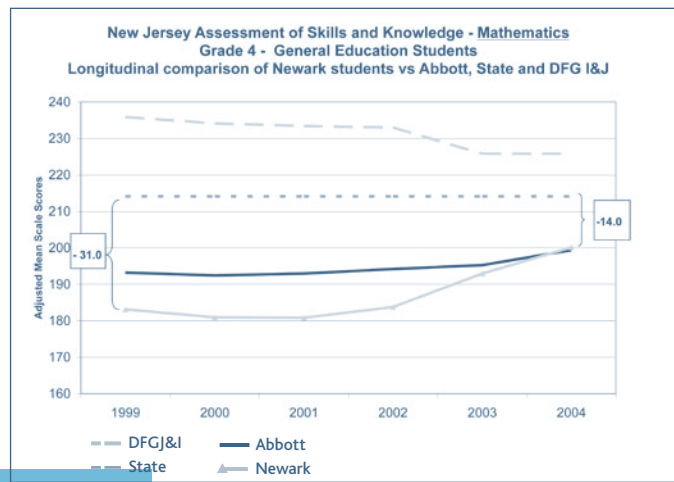
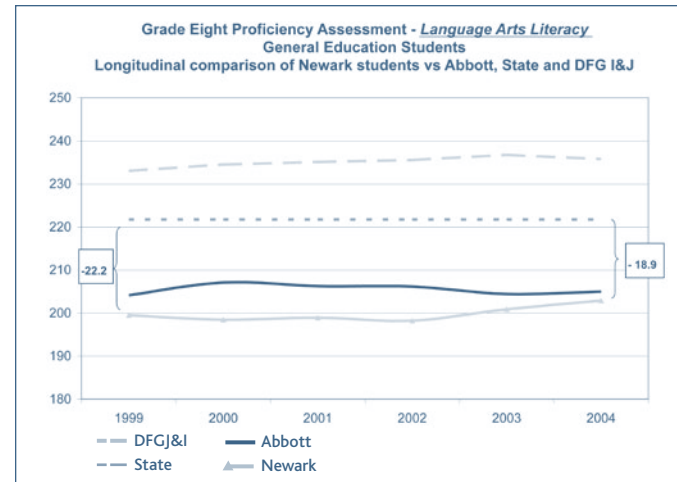
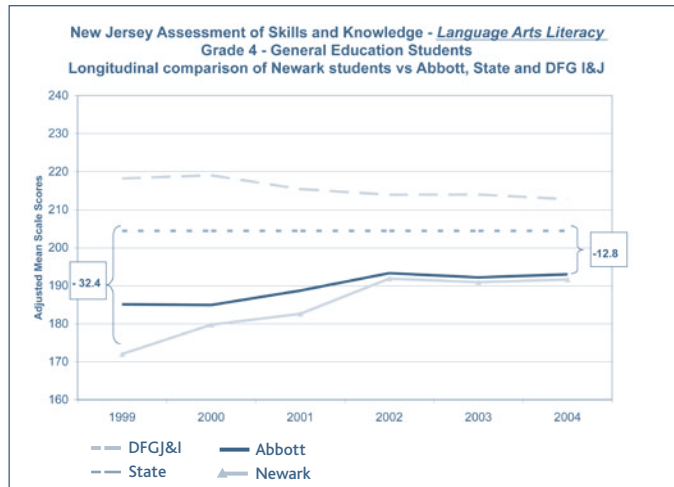
School Name	Grade Range		Enrollment	School Name	Grade Range		Enrollment	School Name	Grade Range		Enrollment
Boylan Early Childhood Center	PK	G1	150	South Seventeenth Street	PK	G8	529	Morton Street	G5	G8	297
Clinton Avenue	PK	G3	308	Louise A. Spencer	PK	G8	807	William H Brown Academy	G6	G8	414
Branch Brook	PK	G4	164	Sussex Avenue	PK	G8	449	Vailsburg Middle	G6	G8	670
Camden Street	PK	G4	531	Thirteenth Avenue	PK	G8	716	Harold Wilson	G6	G8	216
Roberto Clemente	PK	G4	619	Warren Street	PK	G8	244	Renaissance Academy	G6	G12	732
Elliott Street	PK	G4	674	Wilson Avenue	PK	G8	808	Gladys Hillman-jones	G7	G9	331
Quitman Street	PK	G4	381	Chancellor Ave Annex	KG	G2	189	University High	G7	G12	513
Belmont Runyon	PK	G5	320	Broadway	KG	G4	252	Arts High	G9	G12	564
Cleveland	PK	G5	279	Fourteenth Avenue	KG	G4	181	Barringer High	G9	G12	1,960
Eighteenth Avenue	PK	G5	247	Franklin	KG	G4	545	Central High	G9	G12	896
Lincoln	PK	G5	515	Roseville Avenue	KG	G4	212	East Side High	G9	G12	1,489
Madison	PK	G5	587	Speedway Avenue	KG	G4	255	Science High	G9	G12	573
Fifteenth Avenue	PK	G6	270	South Street	KG	G5	237	Malcolm X Shabazz High	G9	G12	1,298
Mckinley	PK	G6	800	Ann Street	KG	G8	1,067	Technology High	G9	G12	602
Harriet Tubman	PK	G6	312	Avon Avenue	KG	G8	620	Weequahic High	G9	G12	1,026
Mt Vernon	PK	G7	959	Bragaw Avenue	KG	G8	392	West Kinney Alternative High	G9	G12	105
Abington Avenue	PK	G8	906	First Avenue	KG	G8	818	West Side High	G9	G12	1,404
Burnet Street	PK	G8	312	Dr E Alma Flagg	KG	G8	674	Samuel L Berliner	ungraded		41
George Washington Carver	PK	G8	930	Hawthorne Avenue	KG	G8	371	Bruce Street	ungraded		66
Dayton Street	PK	G8	449	Dr William H Horton	KG	G8	877	John F Kennedy	ungraded		124
Hawkins Street	PK	G8	582	Maple Avenue	KG	G8	604	Montgomery Street	ungraded		219
Rafael Hernandez	PK	G8	789	Martin Luther King Jr	KG	G8	597	N J Reg Day Sch-newark	ungraded		135
Lafayette Street	PK	G8	791	Ridge Street	KG	G8	805				
Miller St	PK	G8	448	Alexander Street	G1	G5	422				
Newton Street	PK	G8	463	Chancellor Avenue	G3	G8	408				
Oliver Street	PK	G8	844	Camden Middle	G5	G8	681				
Peshine Avenue	PK	G8	813	Luis Munoz Marin Middle	G5	G8	924				

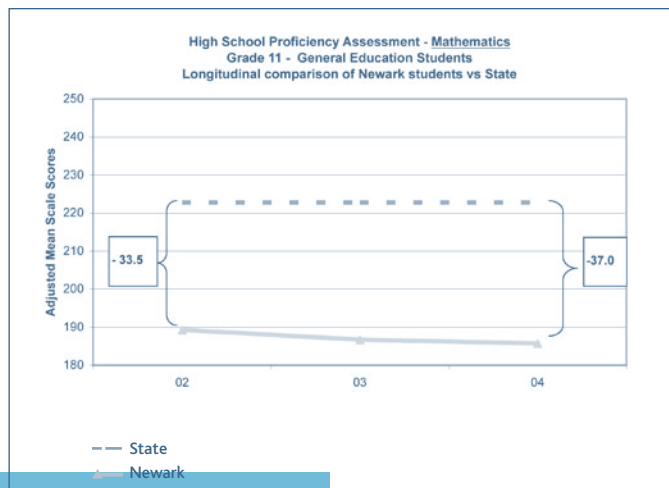
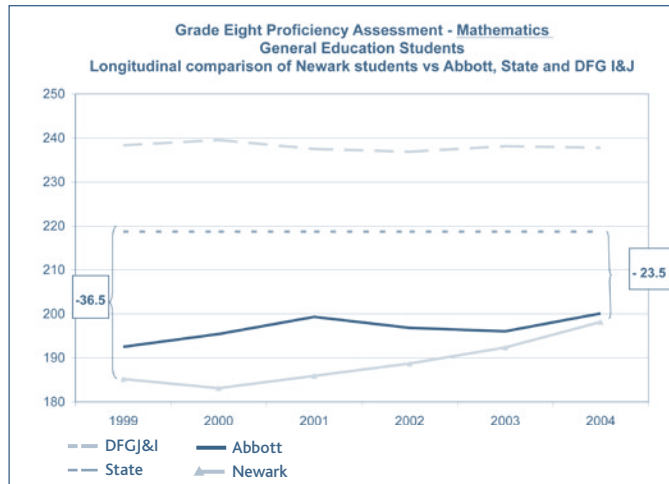
SOURCE | Fall Survey 2003-04

District and Community Reviewer Letters



District and Community Reviewer Letters





List of Abbott Districts

Asbury Park, Monmouth County
 Bridgeton, Cumberland County
 Burlington City, Burlington County
 Camden, Camden County
 East Orange, Essex County
 Elizabeth, Union County
 Garfield, Bergen County
 Gloucester City, Camden County
 Harrison, Hudson County
 Hoboken, Hudson County
 Irvington, Essex County
 Jersey City, Hudson County
 Keansburg, Monmouth County
 Long Branch, Monmouth County
 Millville, Cumberland County
 Neptune Township, Monmouth County
 New Brunswick, Middlesex County
 Newark, Essex County
 Orange, Essex County
 Passaic, Passaic County

Paterson, Passaic County
 Pemberton Township, Burlington County
 Perth Amboy, Middlesex County
 Phillipsburg, Warren County
 Plainfield, Union County
 Pleasantville, Atlantic County
 Salem, Salem County*
 Trenton, Mercer County
 Union City, Hudson County
 Vineland, Cumberland
 West New York, Hudson County

* Salem became an Abbott district in 2004. It was not included among the Abbott districts in the analyses that appear throughout this report.

Project staff collected all indicators data from interviews and secondary data sources. Information sources are identified throughout the report. For interviews, we identify on what type of report our evidence relies: for example, district staff, school staff, or community members. We briefly identify data sources with all Figures and charts; another Appendix contains a detailed treatment of data sources and definitions of terms used in the Figures and charts.

Interviews. We conducted semi-structured interviews with district and school staff in each of the four pilot districts. In each district, we interviewed the district administrator who oversees curriculum and instruction, business administration, early childhood education, school facilities construction, and – in all but one district – the Superintendent. We also selected a sample of schools in each district representing a range of neighborhoods, grade levels, and academic performance. We visited each school and interviewed the principal and chairperson of the school’s leadership team.

Indicators staff took longhand notes during unrecorded interviews, which lasted from 30 minutes (the shortest interview was with the business administrator) to over two hours. We summarized the notes, then organized the summaries by indicator then analyzed them for emerging patterns. Analysis summaries appear throughout the report in narrative form.

Secondary data. We collected a great deal of information presented in this report in electronic and written (paper) formats from various offices in the New Jersey Department of Education, other state agencies, and from the school districts themselves.

Project staff validated and cleaned electronic data before performing analyses. Procedures were used to check and fix missing data, impossible and outlier values, and inappropriate cases.

Data received in paper form were entered in spreadsheets and converted to Figures or graphs. Electronic data were analyzed using a statistical software application, and results presented in Figures and graphs throughout

Data Validation Procedures: An Example

Our procedures for cleaning the data containing achievement test proficiency rates provide a useful example:

Missing data. The percent of students in any given school who scored in the three proficiency categories should always sum to 100 percent. Because schools are grouped into categories before averaging, it is important that all values—including zeros—be accurately reflected. All appropriate missing values were recoded to zeros.

Inappropriate cases. We also checked the number of students who were tested in each year, grade level, and subgroup against the appropriate enrollment. All cases that had test enrollments exceeding the number enrolled by more than 20 percent were eliminated from the analyses. This method also ensured that we did not include schools that did not enroll students in the appropriate grade.

Data Collection and Analysis

the report. Most findings are the result of straightforward descriptive statistics, such as frequency distributions or averages, and are self-explanatory.

Our sources included school- and district-level databases only. To approximate student level findings (e.g., all of the student outcomes and per student revenues), we statistically weighted our data. A simple average across districts would have yielded incorrect results because districts vary in size. For example, an average test score across all of the Abbott districts should not give equal weight to Newark, the district with the largest enrollment, and Burlington City, the Abbott district with the smallest enrollment. Test scores were weighted with test enrollment wherever available. All other student-level findings were weighted using enrollment figures appropriate to the year, grade level, and/or demographic group.

1. The Community and Students

Figure 1.1 Conditions of Living and Learning

Female head of household families. The percent of families led by a female head of household with her own children and no spouse.

Highest educational attainment. The percent of adults ages 25 and over by the highest level of school completed.

Labor force participation. The number of nonmilitary people in the labor force as a percent of civilian population ages 16 and over.

Unemployment rate. The number of people ages 16 and over without a job and looking for work, as a percent of the civilian labor force.

Median household Income. The income level that divides the household income distribution into two equal parts.

Population below poverty level. The percent of people who earn below the poverty-level income threshold for a family of a specific size and ages of family members.

Population 17 and under below poverty level. The percent of children under age 18 whose family's income is below the poverty-level threshold for a family of that size and ages of the family members.

Rent-income ratio. Gross rent as a percent of household income.

Renter-occupied housing. The percent of occupied housing units that are not owner-occupied.

Violent crime. The rate per 1,000 people who have been arrested for one of the following crimes: murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny-theft, or motor vehicle theft.

SOURCE: Violent crime is from the Uniform Crime Report, 2002. All other measures are from the 2000 Decennial Census Summary File 3.

Figure 1.2 Characteristics of Students

Total enrollment consists of all students enrolled in preschool through Grade 12, including students enrolled in Head Start and other private provider preschool programs that are under contract to the district as well as district programs. All other percentages shown in this table are of the number of students enrolled in district-run preschool programs and public Kindergarten through Grade 12.

Eligible for free-/reduced-price lunch. The percent of students whose families fall within 185 percent of the poverty level who are eligible for free- or reduced-price lunch during the school day under the National School Lunch Program.

Limited English Proficiency (LEP). The percent of students whose native language is not English and who have difficulty speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language as determined through a language proficiency test.

Data Sources and Definitions

Students with disabilities. The percent of students with an individualized education program (IEP), regardless of placement and program involvement. An IEP contains special instructional activities to meet the goals and objectives of the student.

Immigrant. The percent of students who were not born in any state and have not attended school in any state for more than three full academic years, as defined in Title I of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

Homeless. As defined in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act of 2001, the percent of students without a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.

Student mobility. The percent of students who entered or left school during the school year.

SOURCE: Free- and reduced-price lunch eligibility and race/ethnicity from the New Jersey Department of Education Fall Survey, 2003-04; Limited English Proficiency, disabilities, and mobility from the New Jersey School Report Card, 2002-03; Immigrant and homeless status from the Newark Board of Education, 2003-04.

2. The Preschool Program

Figure 2.1 Preschool Enrollment

SOURCE: New Jersey Department of Education, Office of Early Childhood Education, 2003 District and Provider budgets; New Jersey Department of Education, Office of School Funding, Preschool & Kindergarten Early Childhood Program Aid Enrollments, 1999-2004.

Figure 2.2 Preschool Population Served

Eligible preschool population. The number of eligible three- and four-year olds is estimated by the New Jersey Department of Education by doubling the number of students enrolled in the previous year in Grade 1 in a school district's public, charter, and nonpublic schools.

SOURCE: New Jersey Department of Education, Office of Early Childhood Education, 2003 District and Provider budgets; New Jersey Department of Education, Office of School Funding, Preschool & Kindergarten Early Childhood Program Aid Enrollments, 1999-2004.

Figure 2.3 Preschool Enrollment by Provider Type

In-district preschool. A preschool program housed in school district buildings.

Enhanced Head Start. The program under which existing Head Start seats are upgraded to meet Abbott standards funded with both state and federal money.

Expanded Head Start. The program serving children in Abbott districts that were not previously enrolled in Federal Head Start, funded entirely with state money.

Other private providers. Preschool programs run by private organizations (other than Head Start) under contract to the school district.

SOURCE: New Jersey Department of Education, Office of Early Childhood Education, 2003 District and Provider budgets; New Jersey Department of Education, Office of School Funding, Preschool & Kindergarten Early Childhood Program Aid Enrollments, 1999-2004.

Figures 2.4 and 2.5 Educational Environment of Preschoolers with Disabilities

Educational environment is determined by the level of inclusion in general education classrooms. The following are the settings where preschoolers with disabilities may be educated.

General education. An early childhood setting in a public preschool or Kindergarten, nonpublic nursery school, day care, or preschool with collaborative preschool services. This environment, which includes the general population of students, is regarded as the least restrictive environment under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004.

Special education. An early childhood setting with special education classes in buildings with general education students.

General/special education. Special education and related services are provided in both general education and special education settings.

Home. Special education and related services are provided at home.

Itinerant services. Students are “pulled out” of class to receive special education and related services for no more than three hours a week in a setting other than home.

Separate schools. Buildings without general education grades in private schools, educational services commissions, regional day schools, jointure commissions, or special services school districts.

Residential schools. A separate school in which students with disabilities live and for which the district pays both day and residential costs.

SOURCE: Newark Board of Education, Office of Early Childhood, 2004-05.

Figure 2.6 Preschool Classroom Environment (ECERS-R) Ratings.

Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale – Revised (ECERS-R). An instrument used to assess classroom quality on seven indicators: space and furnishings, personal care routines, language-reasoning, activities, interaction, program structure, and parents and staff.

SOURCE: Newark Board of Education, Office of Early Childhood, 2004-05.

Figure 2.7 Preschool Teachers

SOURCE: Newark Board of Education, Office of Early Childhood, 2004-05.

Figure 2.8 Preschool Teacher Educational Attainment

SOURCE: Newark Board of Education, Office of Early Childhood, 2004-05.

Data Sources and Definitions

Figure 2.9 Preschool Teacher Certification

Preschool to Grade 3 (P-3). A teaching credential required for any new preschool teacher in an Abbott district in either a district program or a community provider setting. With some exceptions, existing teachers must make progress toward attaining the P-3 endorsement by 2005.

Certification of Eligibility (CE). A provisional credential with lifetime validity issued to individuals who have completed the required degree, academic study, and applicable test requirements for certification. A CE permits individuals to seek and accept employment in a preschool program until they complete the additional requirements for the P-3 certificate.

Certification of Eligibility with Advanced Standing (CEAS). A provisional credential with lifetime validity issued to individuals who have completed the CE requirements plus traditional professional preparation programs. A CEAS permits individuals to seek and accept employment in a preschool program until they complete the additional requirements for the P-3 certificate.

Nursery or Elementary (N-8). Teachers who have a nursery school or K-8 certificate and two years teaching experience in an early childhood setting are also certified to teach in a preschool setting through a “grandfather clause” in the regulations.

SOURCE: Newark Board of Education, Office of Early Childhood, 2004-05.

Figure 2.10 Average Preschool Teacher Years as a Lead Teacher by Provider Type

Average years as a lead teacher. The average number of years a teacher has been qualified to direct the classroom.

SOURCE: Newark Board of Education, Office of Early Childhood, 2004-05.

Figure 2.11 Average Preschool Teacher Salary

Average preschool teacher salary. The total of preschool teacher salaries divided by the number of preschool teachers in each category.

SOURCE: Newark Board of Education, Office of Early Childhood, 2004-05.

Figure 2.12 Per Student Preschool Aid by Source

Early Childhood Program Aid (ECPA).

A state aid program for preschool in districts with high concentrations of low-income students including the Abbott districts and 102 other districts. Reported are the sum of ECPA funds over the total number of students enrolled in any given district grouping.

Preschool Expansion Aid (PSEA). A state aid program for preschool programs in Abbott districts to help cover costs associated with increased enrollment. Reported are the sum of PSEA funds over the total number of students enrolled in any given district grouping.

SOURCE: New Jersey Department of Education, Division of Finance, Office of School Funding, Advertised District Revenues, 2002-03 and 2003-04.

Figure 2.13 Per Student Preschool Aid

Per student preschool aid. The total state aid received for early childhood programs divided by the actual preschool enrollment.

SOURCE: New Jersey Department of Education, Division of Finance, Office of School Funding, Advertised District Revenues, 2002-03 and 2003-04.

3. K-12 Education

Figure 3.1 Newark Whole School Reform Models

Whole School Reform model. An all-around approach to improve student learning and achievement by: 1) giving decision-making authority to school-based teams that are representative of the district and the neighborhood; 2) providing help and training to schools by external experts; and 3) specifying supports for teachers, students, and parents, including what the district can do to lead school improvement efforts.

SOURCE: Newark Board of Education, 2003-04.

Figure 3.2 Average Class Size by Grade

Figure 3.3 Elementary School Average Class Size

Figure 3.5 High School Average Class Size

Figure 3.8 Kindergarten Average Class Size

Average class size. For the elementary grades, average class size is the number of students assigned to regular homerooms over the total number of homerooms. For the high schools, the average is calculated by the number of students assigned to an English class divided by the total number of English classes.

SOURCE: New Jersey Department of Education, School Report Card, 1994-95 to 2002-03.

Data Sources and Definitions

Figure 3.4 Elementary School Enrollment

Figure 3.6 High School Enrollment

SOURCE: New Jersey Department of Education, School Report Card, 1994-95 to 2002-03.

Figure 3.7 Educational Environment of Students with Disabilities Ages 6 to 21

Educational environment. The level of inclusion in general education classrooms: 1) 80% or more inclusion: students with disabilities spend 80 percent or more of their school day in a general education classroom; 2) 40-79% inclusion: students with disabilities attend general education classrooms between 40 and 79 percent of the school day; and 3) Less than 40% inclusion: students with disabilities spend less than 40 percent of the school day in a general education classroom.

SOURCE: New Jersey Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, Number of Public Students with Disabilities Ages 6-21 by Placement in Districts and Charter Schools, 2003-04.

Figure 3.9 Cumulative Percent Change in Kindergarten Enrollment

SOURCE: New Jersey Department of Education, School Report Card, 1999-00 to 2002-03; New Jersey Department of Education, Fall Survey, 2003-04.

Figure 3.10 Student-Computer Ratio

Student-computer ratio. The total number of students divided by the number of multi-media-capable computers that are accessible to students for instruction.

SOURCE: New Jersey Department of Education, School Report Card, 1994-95 to 2001-02; 2002-03.

Figure 3.11 Student-Teacher Ratio

Student-teacher ratio. The number of students divided by the combined full-time equivalents of classroom teachers and support services staff (e.g. guidance counselors, librarians, etc).

SOURCE: New Jersey Department of Education, School Report Card, 1994-95 to 2002-03.

Figure 3.12 Faculty Attendance

Faculty attendance. The average daily attendance of the faculty (teachers and support services staff) of the school. Attendance is the total number days faculty is present divided by the total number of contracted days excluding approved professional days, personal days, and extended leaves.

SOURCE: New Jersey Department of Education, School Report Card, 1994-95 to 2002-03.

Figure 3.13 Highly Qualified Teachers, Elementary Schools

Figure 3.14 Highly Qualified Teachers, High Schools

Highly qualified teachers. The percent of teachers that have obtained full State certification or passed the State teacher licensing examination, and hold a license to teach. New teachers must hold at least a bachelor's degree and have demonstrated, by passing a State test, subject knowledge and teaching skills in the core content areas: English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, world languages, civics and government, economics, arts (music, theatre, and art), history, and geography.

SOURCE: New Jersey Department of Education, Highly Qualified Teacher Survey, 2003-04

Figure 3.15 Percent of Schools with Abbott Required Staff in Positions

Instructional facilitator. Staff member required in schools serving students in Kindergarten through Grade 6 to assist in the implementation of Whole School Reform.

Teacher tutor. Staff member required in schools serving students in Grades 1 through 6 to provide one-to-one or small-group tutoring to students reading below grade level.

Social worker. Required staff member of the Family Support Team in schools serving students in Kindergarten through Grade 6.

Attendance/dropout prevention officer. Required staff member in schools serving students in Grades 6 through 12 to assist students at risk of dropout.

Health-social service coordinator. Required staff member responsible for the coordination of and referral of students for health and social services in schools serving students in Grades 6 through 12.

Family liaison (parent-community coordinator). Required staff member in all schools to coordinate family education and encourage the involvement of parents in the daily school activities and decision-making. The family liaison is also a member of the Family Support team.

Nurse/health specialist. Staff member required in all schools as a member of the Family Support Team.

Guidance counselor. Staff member required in all schools as a member of the Family Support Team.

Tech coordinator. Required staff member in all schools to assist in the implementation of educational technology throughout schools.

Librarian/media specialist. Required staff member in all schools to ensure that classrooms and libraries have appropriate materials to assist students in mastering the curriculum.

Data Sources and Definitions

Security officer. Required staff member in all schools as needed to provide school security and address student disruptions and violence.

SOURCE: New Jersey Department of Education, Office of Fiscal Policy and Planning, DOENET Abbott School-Based Budget Staffing Tables, 2002-03 and 2003-04.

Figure 3.16 Average Property Value per Student

Figure 3.17 Average Equalized Tax Rate

Figure 3.20 Average School Tax Rate

Average property value per student. The equalized, assessed value of property within a district divided by the total resident enrollment.

Average equalized school tax rates.

The portion of local tax revenues used to support public education as expressed as a dollar amount for \$100 of equalized, assessed property value.

SOURCE: New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, Division of Local Government Services, 1998-2003.

Figure 3.18 General Education Funding by Source

Figure 3.19 Per Student General Education Funding

Figure 3.21 Per Student Supplemental Program Aid by Source

Figure 3.22 Per Student Supplemental Program Aid

General education funding. Local and state revenues intended for the support of general education. The following revenue sources were used to determine the general education revenue totals: local tax levy, Core Curriculum Standards Aid (CCS), Supplemental CCS, stabilization aid, and Abbott parity aid. (Abbott Parity Aid is known as Educational Opportunity Aid, or EOA as of 2004-05.) Reported are the sum of these revenues. The per student funding is the sum of these revenues divided by the total resident enrollment in any given district grouping.

Total requested budget. The total budget amount requested by a district for the upcoming fiscal year in its initial budget submission to the New Jersey Department of Education.

Total approved budget. The total budget amount approved by the New Jersey Department of Education for a district in the upcoming fiscal year.

Supplemental program aid. The state and federal revenue intended to support health, nutrition, and social services in schools. "Title I," is federal funding under the No Child Left Behind Act used to support high-poverty districts and schools. Demonstrably Effective Program Aid (DEPA) is state aid provided to schools with low-income students. Additional Abbott Aid is state aid for required programs in Abbott districts in addition to other approved programs, such as on-site clinics, that the Abbott district must prove are necessary. Reported are the sum of these revenues over the total residential enrollment in any given district grouping.

SOURCE: New Jersey Department of Education, Division of Finance, Office of School Funding, Advertised District Revenues, 2002-03 to 2003-04.

Figure 3.23 Student Attendance, Elementary Schools

Figure 3.24 Student Attendance, High Schools

Student attendance. The percent of students who are present at school each day on average. Attendance is calculated by dividing the sum of days present over the sum of all possible school days for all students.

SOURCE: New Jersey Department of Education, School Report Card, 1994-95 to 2002-03.

Figure 3.25 Child and Youth Well-Being Indicators

Child death rate. The number of deaths to children between ages 1 and 14, from all causes, per 1,000 children in this age range.

Teen death rate. The number of deaths from accidents, homicides, and suicides to teens between ages 15 and 19, per 1,000 teens in this age group.

Teen birth rate. The number of births to teenagers between ages 10-14 and 15-19 per 1,000 females in these age groups, respectively.

Child abuse and neglect—substantiated cases. The number of child abuse and/or neglect cases for children ages 17 and under per 1,000 children ages 0 to 17 that have been verified by the New Jersey Department of Human Services, Division of Youth and Family Services.

SOURCE: Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2004 Kids Count; Association for Children of New Jersey, Kids Count, 1997-2002; New Jersey Center for Health Statistics; Table N21. Live Births by Age of Mother for Selected Municipalities of Residence: New Jersey, 1997-2002; and 2000 US Census, Population by Age.

Data Sources and Definitions

Figure 3.26 Category A Offenses, Elementary Schools

Figure 3.27 Category A Offenses, High Schools

Figure 3.28 NCLB (Category B) Index, Elementary Schools

Figure 3.29 NCLB (Category B) Index, High Schools

Category A offenses. The total number of the following types of offenses: (1) firearm offenses; (2) aggravated assaults on another student; (3) assaults with a weapon on another student; and (4) assaults on a school district staff member.

NCLB index. The rate of Category B offenses adjusted for enrollment: (1) simple assaults; (2) weapons possession or sales (other than a firearm); (3) gang fights; (4) robbery or extortion incidents; (5) sex offenses; (6) terroristic threats; (7) arsons; (8) sales or distribution of drugs; and (9) harassment and bullying incidents.

SOURCE: New Jersey Department of Education: Office of Program Support Services, Division of Student Services. Electronic Violence and Vandalism Reporting System, 1999-2003.

Figure 3.30 Suspension Rate, Elementary Schools

Figure 3.31 Suspension Rate, High Schools

Suspension rate. The percent of students who were suspended – in-school or out-of-school – at least once during the school year. Students suspended more than one time are counted once.

SOURCE: New Jersey Department of Education, School Report Card, 1994-95 to 2001-02; 2002-03.

Figure 3.32 New Jersey's Adequate Yearly Progress Targets for Language Arts Literacy

Figure 3.33 New Jersey's Adequate Yearly Progress Targets for Math

Adequate yearly progress targets for language arts literacy provide the percent of students that should pass the language arts literacy section of the ASK4, GEPA, and HSPA in 2002-03, 2004-05, 2007-08, 2010-11, and 2013-14. By 2013-14, 100% of all students should pass the language arts literacy exam.

Adequate yearly progress targets for math provide the percent of students that should pass the math section of the ASK4, GEPA, and HSPA in 2002-03, 2004-05, 2007-08, 2010-11, and 2013-14. By 2013-14, 100% of all students should pass the math exam.

SOURCE: New Jersey Department of Education: Office of Title I Program Planning and Accountability, 2004.

Figure 3.34 Categories and Action Steps for Schools Not Making Adequate Yearly Progress

Categories and actions steps for schools not making adequate yearly progress include:

Early warning. The first year of missing one or more AYP threshold. No actions are required under NCLB, but schools and districts should identify areas that need to be improved.

School improvement. The second and third consecutive year missing AYP threshold. In the second year, parents are notified and given the option to transfer their children to a school that made AYP. Schools must identify areas needing improvement and work with parents, teachers, and outside experts to develop a plan. In the third year, tutoring and other supplemental services must be made available.

Corrective action. The fourth and fifth consecutive year missing AYP threshold. In the fourth year, school choice and supplemental services are still available. In addition, schools must undertake at least one of a series of corrective actions, including: staff replacement; curriculum adoption; decreased school authority; external consultant to advise the school; extended school day or year; and/or reorganize school governance. In the fifth year, the school must develop a plan for alternate school governance. Choice, supplemental services, and other corrective actions still required.

Restructuring. The sixth consecutive year of missing AYP threshold. Schools must implement alternate school governance developed in year five.

SOURCE: New Jersey Department of Education: Office of Title I Program Planning and Accountability, 2004.

Figure 3.35 Grade 4 Language Arts Literacy Average Score

Figure 3.38 Grade 4 Math Average Score

Figure 3.42 Grade 8 Language Arts Literacy Average Score

Figure 3.45 Grade 8 Math Average Score

Figure 3.49 Grade 11 (HSPT) Reading Average Score

Figure 3.51 Grade 11 (HSPA) Language Arts Literacy Average Score

Figure 3.54 Grade 11 (HSPT) Math Average Score

Figure 3.56 Grade 11 (HSPA) Math Average Score

Data Sources and Definitions

Average scores. The weighted mean scores on the Grade 4, 8, and 11 assessment in language arts literacy and math. School-level results are weighted by the number of students taking the test prior to averaging across schools in a district grouping.

SOURCE: New Jersey Department of Education: Office of Assessment & Evaluation, 1997-98 to 2002-03; New Jersey Department of Education, School Report Card, 1999-00 to 2002-03.

Figure 3.36 Grade 4 Language Arts Literacy Proficiency

Figure 3.39 Grade 4 Math Proficiency

Figure 3.43 Grade 8 Language Arts Literacy Proficiency

Figure 3.46 Grade 8 Math Proficiency

Figure 3.50 Grade 11 (HSPT) Reading Proficiency

Figure 3.52 Grade 11 (HSPA) Language Arts Literacy Proficiency

Figure 3.55 Grade 11 (HSPT) Math Proficiency

Figure 3.57 Grade 11 (HSPA) Math Proficiency

Proficiency. The percent of students falling within the following proficiency thresholds on the Grade 4, 8, and 11 language arts literacy and math exams: partially proficient, proficient, and advanced proficient. School-level results are weighted by the number of students taking the test prior to averaging across schools in a district grouping. The HSPT had a passing threshold of 300 with a range of scores from 100 to 500. The following are the proficiency cut points for the ESPA/NJASK, GEPA, and HSPA.

	Partially Proficient	Proficient	Advanced Proficient
Beginning Cut Point	100	200	250
Ending Cut Point	199	249	300

SOURCE: New Jersey Department of Education: Office of Assessment & Evaluation, 1997-98 to 2002-03; New Jersey Department of Education, School Report Card, 1998-99 to 2002-03.

Figure 3.37 Grade 4 Language Arts Literacy Proficiency by Subgroup

Figure 3.40 Grade 4 Math Proficiency by Subgroup

Figure 3.44 Grade 8 Language Arts Literacy Proficiency by Subgroup

Figure 3.47 Grade 8 Math Proficiency by Subgroup

Figure 3.53 Grade 11 (HSPA) Language Arts Literacy Proficiency by Subgroup

Figure 3.58 Grade 11 (HSPA) Math Proficiency by Subgroup

Proficiency by subgroup is the percent of white, Black, Hispanic, economically disadvantaged, special education, or limited English proficiency students that pass the Grade 4, 8 and 11 language arts literacy and math exams. Reported are those subgroups with at least 20 students taking the exam, except for students with disabilities, where at least 35 students had to take the test to be included in the analysis. School-level results are weighted by the number of students taking the test in each subgroup prior to averaging across schools in a district grouping.

SOURCE: New Jersey Department of Education: Office of Assessment & Evaluation, 2002-03; New Jersey Department of Education, Fall Survey, 2002-03.

Figure 3.41 Schools Not Making Adequate Yearly Progress: Grade 4

Figure 3.48 Schools Not Making Adequate Yearly Progress: Grade 8

Figure 3.59 Schools Not Making Adequate Yearly Progress: Grade 11

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). The measure set by each state to assess performance of all students including students with disabilities, students with limited English proficiency, migrant students, students eligible for free/reduced lunch, and white, Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Native American students. By 2013-14, all students in all subgroups must reach the proficiency level set by the state.

Grade 4. In 2003-04, 68 percent of Grade 4 students had to pass the language arts literacy exam in order to meet the AYP standard; 53% of Grade 4 students had to make a proficient score on the math exam in order to meet the 2003-04 AYP standard.

Grade 8. In 2003-04, 58 percent of Grade 8 students had to pass the language arts literacy exam in order to meet the AYP standard; 39% of Grade 4 students had to make a proficient score on the math exam in order to meet the 2003-04 AYP standard.

Grade 11. In 2003-04, 73 percent of Grade 11 students had to pass the language arts literacy exam in order to meet the AYP standard; 55 percent of Grade 11 students had to make a proficient score on the math exam in order to meet the 2003-04 AYP standard.

SOURCE: New Jersey Department of Education: Office of Title I Program Planning and Accountability, 2004.

Data Sources and Definitions

Figure 3.60 Cumulative Promotion Index

Cumulative promotion index. An estimate that a ninth grader will graduate within four years. The estimate is calculated by multiplying the grade-to-grade promotion rate over a two-year period by the percent of 12th graders who graduated in the current year. The CPI is calculated through 2001-02 because the New Jersey Report Card changed the way it measured graduation in 2002-03.

SOURCE: New Jersey Department of Education, School Report Card, 1994-95 to 2002-03.

Figure 3.61 Graduation by Traditional (HSPT/HSPA) Grade 11 Exam

Figure 3.62 Graduation by Alternative (SRA) Grade 11 Exam

Graduation by HSPT/HSPA. The percent of students graduating from high school by passing the Grade 11 exam.

Graduation by SRA. The percent of students graduating from high school by taking the Special Review Assessment (SRA). The SRA is the alternative assessment to the HSPA.

SOURCE: New Jersey Department of Education, School Report Card, 1994-95 to 2002-03.

Figure 3.63 SAT Participation

Figure 3.64 SAT Verbal Average Score

Figure 3.65 SAT Math Average Score

SAT participation. The percent of twelfth graders taking the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT).

Average scores are the weighted mean scores on the verbal and math sections of the Scholastic Aptitude Test. School-level results are weighted by the number of students taking the test prior to averaging across schools in a district grouping.

SOURCE: New Jersey Department of Education, School Report Card, 1994-95 to 2002-03.

4. School Facilities Construction

Figure 4.1 Newark's First-Round Facilities Plan Overview

The first-round facilities plan was the initial plan for a district's school construction.

SOURCE: Education Law Center communications with the New Jersey Schools Construction Corporation, New Jersey Department of Education and individual districts.

Figure 4.2 Overview of Newark's Current Projects

SOURCE: Education Law Center communications with the New Jersey Schools Construction Corporation, New Jersey Department of Education, and individual districts.

Figure 4.3 Status of Facilities Projects: Newark and All Other Abbott Districts

SOURCE: Education Law Center communications with the New Jersey Schools Construction Corporation, New Jersey Department of Education, and individual districts.

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Abbott Advisory Council. A steering committee composed of district and community representatives that are responsible for the review of district policies and procedures as they relate to Abbott program implementation.

Abbott district. One of New Jersey's 31 poor urban school districts. Abbott districts: 1) receive state aid that ensures that they have the same per student funding as the wealthiest suburbs in the state; 2) offer full-day, full-year preschool on-demand to all eligible three- and four-year-olds; 3) implement school reforms to ensure that students learn the knowledge and skills required to master the state's Core Curriculum Content Standards; 4) offer programs and services designed to help low-income children come to school ready to learn; and 5) have 100% state-financed school facilities construction. The students of 28 districts were plaintiffs in the original Abbott v. Burke case decided by the New Jersey Supreme Court. The students of Neptune and Plainfield were added in 1999; students in Salem City were added in 2004. In the analyses that appear throughout

this report, Salem City is not included among the Abbott districts. The Abbott districts are listed in another Appendix to this report.

Abbott Parity Aid. The per student foundational funding level for the 31 Abbott districts that is equal to, or at parity with, the wealthiest suburban districts in New Jersey, also known as the I & J districts. Abbott parity aid is now known as Education Opportunity Aid.

Accelerated Schools. A Whole School Reform model that improves learning for at-risk K-8 students through acceleration of instruction rather than remediation; by improving school climate; and through school organizational changes based on a participatory process of decision-making.

Additional Abbott Aid. The per student supplemental funding intended to address the unique needs of urban students. Programs such as full-day kindergarten and health and social services referral and coordination are required in all Abbott schools, however schools can receive funding for other programs intended to assist students' needs

if the need is demonstrated to the New Jersey Department of Education (now known as Discretionary Educational Opportunity Aid).

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). The measure set by each state to assess performance of all students including students with disabilities, students with limited English proficiency, migrant students, students eligible for free/reduced lunch, and white, Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Native American students. By 2013-14, all students in all subgroups must reach the proficiency level set by the state.

Alternate Proficiency Assessment (APA). The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act mandates the participation of all students with disabilities in statewide assessments. States must develop and conduct alternate assessments for students who cannot participate in the general statewide testing program. As a result, the Alternate Proficiency Assessments are used as the statewide test for students with severe disabilities.

Alternate route. An alternate certification process adopted in 1985 that permits qualified individuals lacking education credentials to earn them in the public schools under a mentoring program and become licensed teachers. It allows people to enter teaching after they have worked in other careers.

Application for State School Aid (ASSA). The data collection document submitted by districts for the purpose of calculating most state school aid.

Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (ASK₄). The state assessment administered in Grade 4 to determine achievement of the Core Curriculum Content Standards. Prior to 2002-03, the test was known as the Elementary School Proficiency Assessment (ESPA).

Attendance/dropout prevention officer. Required staff member in schools serving students in Grades 6 through 12 to assist students at risk of dropout.

Benchmark. A standard against which performance may be judged.

Brigance Screen. An assessment published by Curriculum Associates, Inc., that screens key developmental and early academic skills.

Category A offenses. The total number of the following types of offenses: (1) firearm offenses; (2) aggravated assaults on another student; (3) assaults with a weapon on another student; and (4) assaults on a school district staff member.

Certification of Eligibility (CE). A provisional credential with lifetime validity issued to individuals who have completed the required degree, academic study, and applicable test requirements for certification. A CE permits individuals to seek and accept employment in a preschool program while they complete the additional requirements for the P-3 certificate.

Certification of Eligibility with Advanced Standing (CEAS). A provisional credential with lifetime validity issued to individuals who have completed the CE requirements plus traditional professional preparation programs. A CEAS permits individuals to

seek and accept employment in a preschool program while they complete the additional requirements for the P-3 certificate.

Child study team (CST). Consists of a school psychologist, a learning disabilities teacher/consultant, and school social worker who are employees of the school district responsible for conducting evaluations to determine eligibility for special education and related services for students with disabilities.

Coalition of Essential Schools. A Whole School Reform model that focuses on redesigning instruction in an entire high school so that the students acquire thinking skills that enable them to question and reason. The model uses personalized instruction and is based on nine common principles on which teachers must reach consensus and then decide how to apply them to instruction.

Comer School Development Program. A Whole School Reform model that focuses on bridging the gap between home and school by identifying and addressing the underlying problems that students and their

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families may have that interfere with the child's progress in school. It is designed to involve all school staff, community agencies, and parents in solving the problems that have been identified. Comer has three components: a School Planning and Management Team, a Student and Staff Support Team, and a Parent Involvement Team.

Community for Learning/Adaptive Learning Environments Model (CFL/ALEM).

A Whole School Reform model that focuses on high academic achievement and positive student self-perception. Each school must create its own planning and implementation framework that incorporates a school-wide organizational structure and a coordinated system of instruction and related services delivery. This model is designed to break down artificial barriers within the school and among the many agencies that provide services.

Comprehensive Educational Improvement and Financing Act (CEIFA). A law passed in 1996 to establish a definition of the constitutional guarantee to a thorough and effi-

cient system of public education through the establishment of Core Curriculum Content Standards and efficiency standards. CEIFA guarantees a level of funding known as the T & E (thorough and efficient) amount. The state's definition of the T & E amount was found unconstitutional under Abbott.

Core Curriculum Content Standards

(CCCS). Standards adopted by the State Board of Education in 1996 to establish expectations for students to meet in seven academic and five workplace readiness areas. They outline the common expectations for student achievement throughout the 13 years of public education in the following subject areas: visual and performing arts, comprehensive health/physical education, language arts literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, and world languages. The five cross-content areas for workplace readiness encompass career planning; use of technology information and other tools; critical thinking/decision-making/problem-solving; self-management; and safety principles.

Core Curriculum Standards Aid (CCSA).

The amount of state aid that is distributed to all school districts for general fund expenses to ensure that each district can provide a thorough and efficient system of education consistent with the CCCS.

Corrective action. The fourth and fifth consecutive year missing AYP threshold. In the fourth year, school choice and supplemental services are still available. In addition, schools must undertake at least one of a series of corrective actions, including: staff replacement; curriculum adoption; decreased school authority; external consultant to advise the school; extended school day or year; and/or reorganize school governance. In the fifth year, the school must develop a plan for alternate school governance. Choice, supplemental services, and other corrective actions still required.

Creative Curriculum. An early childhood education curriculum developed by Teaching Strategies that applies child development and learning theories to an education environ-

ment that focuses planning around indoor and outdoor interest areas.

Cumulative promotion index. An estimate that a ninth grader will graduate within four years used in the absence of reliable graduation rates.

Curiosity Corner. An early childhood education curriculum developed by the Success For All Foundation that fosters cognitive, linguistic, social, physical, and emotional development of three- and four-year-olds.

Demonstrably Effective Program Aid (DEPA). State aid that is allocated to schools with low-income pupils to provide effective programs that have been shown to enhance the teaching/learning process, improve school governance, and provide students with collaborative learning environments and health and social service programs.

Demonstration Project. A school facilities project selected by the State Treasurer for construction by a redevelopment agency.

Department of Human Services (DHS).

A partner with the New Jersey Department of Education in implementing the Abbott early childhood education program. DHS is responsible for licensing community childcare providers and funding wrap-around services in those providers.

Discretionary Education Opportunity Aid (DEOA). The per student supplemental funding intended to address the unique needs of urban students. Programs such as full-day kindergarten and health and social services referral and coordination are required in all Abbott schools, however schools can receive funding for other programs intended to assist students' needs if the need is demonstrated to the New Jersey Department of Education (formerly known as Additional Abbott v. Burke Aid).

District factor grouping (DFG). A system used by the New Jersey Department of Education to rank local school districts according to socio-economic status. DFGs are based on information available from the Census:

educational attainment of the adults in the community, employment rates, occupations, population density, and income/poverty. There are eight DFGs starting with A which designates the lowest socio-economic level and also include B, CD, DE, FG, GH, I, and J. The DFGs were recalculated in 2004 based on 2000 Census information. 1990 DFGs are used throughout this report.

Early Childhood Education Advisory Council (ECEAC). Community stakeholders who are responsible for the review the school district's progress towards full implementation of high-quality preschool programs in addition to participating in program planning, budget development, and early childhood facilities planning. Early Childhood Education Program Expectations: Standards of Quality. A document containing guidelines for creating developmentally appropriate preschool learning environments that promote early literacy and other important goals. The guidelines support and prepare young children to meet New Jersey's Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS) when they enter Kindergarten.

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Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale–Revised (ECERS–R). A program quality assessment used in early childhood settings.

Early Childhood Program Aid (ECPA).

A state aid program for preschool and support services in districts with high concentrations of low-income students including the Abbott districts and 102 other districts. Previously, ECPA funds used to support the “second half-day” of Kindergarten, required under Abbott. Now, it is funded through Discretionary Educational Opportunity Aid.

Early Language Assessment System (ELAS).

Assessment of preschool students intended to help preschool teachers tailor instruction to meet children’s needs.

Early warning. The first year of missing one or more AYP threshold(s). No actions are required under NCLB, but schools and districts should identify areas that need to be improved.

Education Opportunity Aid (EOA). The per student foundational funding level for the 31 Abbott districts that is equal to, or at parity with, the wealthiest suburban districts in New Jersey, also known as the I & J districts. Abbott parity aid is now known as Education Opportunity Aid.

Educational Facilities Construction and Financing Act (EFCFA).

Passed in July 2000 to initiate the state’s school construction program.

Elementary School Proficiency Assessment (ESPA).

The former state assessment administered in Grade 4 to determine achievement of the Core Curriculum Content Standards. Updated in 2002–03 and now known as the ASK4.

Eligible preschool population. The number of eligible three- and four-year olds for preschool estimated by the New Jersey Department of Education by doubling the number of students enrolled in the previous year in Kindergarten and Grade 1 in a school district’s public, charter, and nonpublic schools.

English as a Second Language (ESL). Programs in K–12 education that require a daily developmental second language program of up to two periods of instruction based on student needs. The programs offer listening comprehension, speaking, reading and writing in English using second-language teaching techniques. The teachers also incorporate the cultural aspects of the students’ experiences into their ESL instruction.

English language learner (ELL). Students whose native language is other than English and who have difficulty speaking, reading, writing or understanding the English language as measured by an English language proficiency test. ELL students, also known as Limited English Proficient students (LEP), require bilingual or English as a Second Language (ESL) programs to learn successfully in classrooms where the language of instruction is English.

Enhanced Head Start. The program under which existing Head Start seats are upgraded to meet Abbott standards funded with both state and federal money.

Equalized. An adjustment made to property values by the New Jersey Department of Treasury to enable comparisons across municipalities regardless of the year in which the most current property assessment was made.

Expanded Head Start. The program serving children in Abbott districts that were not previously enrolled in Federal Head Start, funded entirely with state money.

Facilities Advisory Board (FAB). An advisory board composed of parents, teachers, principals, community representatives, an architect, an engineer, and a staff person from the New Jersey Department of Education. The board was designed to guide the development of the Long Range Facilities Plan.

Facilities Efficiency Standards (FES). Developed by the Commissioner of Education for elementary, middle, and high schools. These standards determine the extent to which a district's construction project qualifies for state aid. They were intended to represent the standard of instructional and administrative spaces to be considered educationally adequate to support the achievement of the Core Curriculum Content Standards.

Facilities Management Plan (FMP). The original term used to describe the Long-Range Facilities Plan (LRFP). The FMP is a plan developed by a district for repairing physical infrastructure deficiencies, educational adequacy deficiencies, and capacity deficits of the district's school buildings. All Abbott districts were required to develop comprehensive five-year facilities management plans.

Fall Survey. A report prepared by each district on a form provided by the Commissioner providing enrollment counts and selected demographic characteristics of the student enrollment.

Family liaison (parent-community coordinator). Required staff member in all schools to coordinate family education and encourage the involvement of parents in the daily school activities and decision-making. The family liaison is also a member of the Family Support team.

Family worker. A position required in every Abbott early childhood education program in a community provider setting. There must be one family worker for every 40 children and their families being served by the center. The family worker works with the center and the parents to ensure that the parents and their children obtain necessary health and social services.

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Feasibility study. A pre-construction evaluation undertaken by a district to determine if – because of health and safety or efficiency – it would be more feasible to replace or renovate a school facility.

Full-day/full-year. Under Abbott, pre-school programs must be made available for ten hours a day, 245 days a year. For a minimum of 180 school calendar days, a program must include at least a six-hour educational component meeting Department of Education requirements and a four-hour wrap-around services component meeting Department of Human Services (DHS) licensing requirements. The remaining 65 days must meet DHS requirements for the ten hours of service.

General education funding. Local and state revenues intended for the support of general education. The following revenue sources were used to determine the general education revenue totals: local tax levy, Core Curriculum Standards Aid (CCSA), Supplemental CCSA, Stabilization Aid, and Abbott Parity Aid. (Abbott Parity Aid is known as Educational Opportunity Aid, or EOA as of 2004-05.)

Grade Eight Proficiency Assessment (GEPA). The Grade 8 test that replaced the Early Warning Test in 1999. The GEPA is intended to provide information about student progress toward mastery of the skills specified by the Core Curriculum Content Standards.

Guidance counselor. Staff member required in all schools as a member of the Family Support Team.

Health-social service coordinator. Required staff member responsible for the coordination of and referral of students for health and social services in schools serving students in Grades 6 through 12.

High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA). The Grade 11 test that replaced the HSPT in 2001-02 used to determine student achievement of the knowledge and skills specified by all areas of the Core Curriculum Content Standards and Workplace Readiness Standards. Passing all sections of the HSPA or the Special Review Assessment (SRA) is a requirement for receiving a high school diploma.

High School Proficiency Test (HSPT). The Grade 11 test formerly administered in the fall of the junior year, consisting of three sections: reading, mathematics, and writing. The HSPT was replaced by the HSPA in 2001-02.

High/Scope. An early childhood education curriculum developed by the High/Scope Educational Research Foundation that encourages children to make choices about materials and activities throughout the day. As they pursue their choices and plans, children explore, ask and answer questions, solve problems, and interact with classmates and adults, engaging in activities that foster developmentally important skills and abilities.

Highest educational attainment. The percent of adults ages 25 and over by the highest level of school completed.

Highly qualified teachers (HQT). The percent of teachers that have obtained full State certification or passed the State teacher licensing examination, and hold a license to teach. New teachers must hold at least a bachelor's degree and have demonstrated, by

passing a State test, subject knowledge and teaching skills in the core content areas: English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, world languages, civics and government, economics, arts (music, theatre, and art), history, and geography.

In-district preschool. A preschool program housed in school district buildings.

Individualized Education Program (IEP). A written plan developed at a meeting that includes appropriate school staff and parents or guardians. It determines the special education program for a student with disabilities through individually designed instructional activities constructed to meet goals and objectives established for the student. It establishes the rationale for the students' placement, which should be in the "least restrictive environment."

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The federal statute that mandates a free, appropriate public education for students with disabilities. In New Jersey, that includes students ages three to twenty one.

Instructional facilitator. Staff member required in schools serving students in Kindergarten through Grade 6 to assist in the implementation of Whole School Reform.

Intervention and referral services (I&RS). A team case management strategy for identifying and helping students at risk for behavioral problems.

Least restrictive environment. The standard that, to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities should be educated with children who do not have disabilities. It means that special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment should occur only when the severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be adequately provided in a general education environment.

Librarian/media specialist. Required staff member in all schools to ensure that classrooms and libraries have appropriate materials to assist students in mastering the curriculum.

Local tax levy. The amount of funding that a local school district can raise based on property wealth and income levels. The local tax share of educational costs is used to determine the amount of Core Curriculum Standards Aid that a district will receive, if any.

Long Range Facilities Plan (LRFP). The name now used to describe the Facilities Management Plans (FMP). It is a plan developed by a district to outline repairs to physical infrastructure deficiencies, educational adequacy deficiencies, and capacity deficits of the district's school buildings. All Abbott districts were required to develop comprehensive five-year facilities management plans.

Master teacher. A position required in every Abbott early childhood education program. There must be one master teacher for every 20 early childhood education classrooms to coordinate early childhood education programs and assist in the provision of early childhood education professional development. The official position title for master preschool teachers in districts with collective bargaining

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agreements with a local affiliate of the New Jersey Education Association is “education program specialist.”

Modern Red Schoolhouse. A Whole School Reform Model that strives to help all students master subject matter through the construction of a standards-driven curriculum, flexibility in organizing instruction and deploying resources, and the use of advanced technology in learning and management.

National Assessment of Educational Progress. An effort by the U.S. Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics to measure educational achievement of American students in reading, math, and science and the changes in that achievement over time. The program also provides scores for subpopulations defined by demographic characteristics and by specific background characteristics and experiences.

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). A professional organization for early childhood educators and others dedicated to improving the quality of programs for children from birth through Grade 3.

NCLB index. The rate of Category B offenses adjusted for enrollment: (1) simple assaults; (2) weapons possession or sales (other than a firearm); (3) gang fights; (4) robbery or extortion incidents; (5) sex offenses; (6) terroristic threats; (7) arsons; (8) sales or distribution of drugs; and (9) harassment and bullying incidents.

New Jersey School Report Card. Prepared and disseminated annually to parents and other interested taxpayers within each local school district. It also is accessible on the NJDOE Web site. The report card for each school building in the state contains information about student enrollment, test scores, attendance, and graduation rates, as well as information about teaching and administrative staff.

No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). The 2001 reauthorization of the federal program, Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

Nurse/health specialist. Staff member required in all schools as a member of the Family Support Team.

Nursery or elementary certification (N-8). Teachers who have a nursery school or K-8 certificate and two years teaching experience in an early childhood setting are certified to teach in a preschool setting.

Other private providers. Preschool programs run by private organizations (other than Head Start) under contract to the school district.

Parents as Teachers (PAT). Program run by the Department of Human Services aimed at supporting the development of preschool students by giving parents information on topics such as child development and growth, literacy, and positive discipline.

Persistently dangerous schools. The No Child Left Behind Act specifies a standard of safety beyond which schools are defined as “persistently dangerous.” Under the “Unsafe School Choice Option,” the law provides that families of children who are victims of violence or who go to a persistently dangerous school may choose to send their child to another public school in the district or a charter school in the same city. A school is called persistently dangerous if it meets either one of the two following conditions for three consecutive years: 1) Seven or more of the following types of serious incidents, known as Category A offenses: firearm offenses; aggravated assaults on another student; assaults with a weapon on another student; and assaults on a school district staff member. 2) An indexing of 1 or more (calculated by a ratio of the sum of the following incidents over the square root of the enrollment): simple assault; weapons possession or sales (other than a firearm); gang fight; robbery or extortion; sex offense; terroristic threat; arson; sales or distribution of drugs; and harassment and bullying.

Preschool Expansion Aid (PSEA). A state aid program for preschool programs in Abbott districts to help cover costs associated with increased enrollment.

Preschool Mathematics Inventory (PCMI). Assessment of the materials and teaching strategies used to support and enhance children’s math skills.

Preschool through Grade 3 certification (P-3). A teaching credential required for any new preschool teacher in an Abbott district in either a district program or a community provider setting. With some exceptions, existing teachers must make progress toward attaining the P-3 endorsement by 2004.

Proficiency. The percent of students passing a state administered exam aimed at measuring a student’s mastery of the Core Curriculum Content Standards.

Resident enrollment. The number of students other than preschoolers, postgraduate pupils, or postsecondary vocational pupils, who, on the last school day prior to October 16 of the current year, are residents of the district.

Restructuring. The sixth consecutive year of missing AYP threshold. Schools must implement alternate school governance developed in year five.

School-Based Youth Services Program. A program of student prevention, intervention, and treatment services funded by the New Jersey Department of Human Services.

School improvement. The second and third consecutive year missing AYP threshold. In the second year, parents are notified and given the option to transfer their children to a school that made AYP. Schools must identify areas needing improvement and work with parents, teachers, and outside experts to develop a plan. In the third year, tutoring and other supplemental services must be made available.

School Leadership Councils (SLC). A volunteer group composed of the principal, teachers, non-instructional staff, parents, community representatives, and the Whole School Reform facilitator that represents school staff and the neighborhood; their primary purpose is to help improve teaching and

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learning by participating in program planning and decision-making and encouraging broad participation by school staff and neighborhood stakeholders.

Schools Construction Corporation (SCC).

State agency created under former Governor McGreevey to oversee the completion of the Long Range Facilities Plan.

Security officer. Required staff member in all schools as needed to provide school security and address student disruptions and violence.

Self-Assessment Validation System (SAVS).

Self-evaluation created by the Office of Early Childhood Education at the New Jersey Department of Education; the evaluation is intended for use in planning the district's programs.

Social worker. Required staff member of the Family Support Team in schools serving students in Kindergarten through Grade 6.

Special Review Assessment (SRA). An alternative assessment that provides students with the opportunity to exhibit their understanding and mastery of the HSPA skills in contexts that are familiar and related to their experiences. The SRA content is linked to the HSPT/HSPA test specifications. This is necessary in order to ensure that students who are certified through the SRA have demonstrated the same skills and competencies at comparable levels as students who pass the written test.

Standardized test. An assessment that is administered and scored in exactly the same way for all students. Traditional standardized tests are typically mass-produced and machine-scored; they are designed to measure skills and knowledge that are thought to be taught to all students in a fairly standardized way. Performance assessments also can be standardized if they are administered and scored in the same way for all students.

Student mobility. The percent of students who entered or left school during the school year. Districts may or may not report a single child who leaves and enters school multiple times throughout the school year as multiple incidents.

Students with disabilities. The percent of students with an individualized education program (IEP), regardless of placement and program involvement. An IEP contains special instructional activities to meet the goals and objectives of the student.

Success for All/Roots and Wings. Under Abbott, the presumptive Whole School Reform Model for elementary schools. Success for All is a reading program that helps students read on grade level by third grade. The model focuses on reading and language arts and includes a family support team. Roots & Wings expands Success for All in other major subject areas, such as math, social studies, and science.

Supplemental Core Curriculum Standards Aid (SCCS). The state aid for low-income districts that supplements CCSA to lessen the impact on the local tax rate.

Supplemental program aid. The state and federal revenue intended to support health, nutrition, and social services in schools. "Title I," is federal funding under the No Child Left Behind Act used to support high-poverty districts and schools. Demonstrably Effective Program Aid (DEPA) is state aid provided to schools with low-income students. Additional Abbott Aid is state aid for required programs in Abbott districts in addition to other approved programs, such as on-site clinics, that the Abbott district must prove are necessary. (As of 2004, Additional Abbott Aid is known as Discretionary Education Opportunity Aid or DEOA).

Supports for Early Literacy Assessment (SELA). Assessment of the classroom practices used to support children's early language and literacy skills.

Teacher tutor. Staff member required in schools serving students in Grades 1 through 6 to provide one-to-one or small-group tutoring to students reading below grade level.

Technology coordinator. Required staff member in all schools to assist in the implementation of educational technology throughout schools.

TerraNova. A standardized test used to assess performance in Kindergarten through Grade 2.

Thorough and Efficient (T&E). Refers to New Jersey's constitutional provision that all children have a right to a "thorough and efficient system of free public schools."

Whole School Reform (WSR). A complete restructuring of an entire school, putting in place a series of programs and strategies that have been proven by research to be effective. To succeed, this restructuring requires the support and participation of those who must carry it out, including principals, teachers, support staff, parents, and community mem-

bers. The WSR initiative is systemic in nature, unlike previous generations of reforms that were incremental and piecemeal.

Wrap-around services. Services required in Abbott early childhood education programs. They consist of activities held during the four hours before and/or after the required six-hour educational component during the ten-hour full-day program. They also are provided through the summer program.

Zero-based budgeting. A type of budgeting procedure that analyzes and justifies costs from a base of zero, rather than the previous year's balance, in order to improve fiscal efficiency.

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School District Information, Interviews, and Access

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Report Reviewers

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The Education Law Center (ELC) was established in 1973 to advocate on behalf of New Jersey's public school children for access to an equal and adequate education under state and federal laws. ELC works to improve educational opportunities for low-income students and students with disabilities through public education, policy initiatives, research, communications and, when necessary, legal action.

ELC serves as counsel to the plaintiffs in the Abbott v. Burke case – more than 300,000 preschool and school-age children in 31 urban school districts throughout New Jersey. Through the Abbott decisions, the New Jersey Supreme Court has established an unprecedented legal framework of remedial measures to assure the rights of urban public school children to an adequate education. The remedies ordered by the Court include

standards-based education and reform supported by foundational funding equal to New Jersey's most affluent suburbs; supplemental funding for programs that address the social and health needs of students, whole school reform; school based management; high quality preschool for all three and four year olds; and safe and educationally adequate school facilities. ELC's successes in Abbott have resulted in an additional \$800 million in foundational state aid each year for the Abbott districts and schools, \$300 million in preschool aid, and \$6 billion in school construction funds. The New York Times editorialized that Abbott represents "the most important equal education ruling since Brown v. Board of Education" (April 30, 2002).

ELC also operates the Student Rights Project (SRP) to protect the educational rights of all students, focusing on students with disabilities. SRP is the only non-profit, legal assistance program in New Jersey that

specializes in education law and provides free legal representation to income-eligible parents, guardians and caregivers of students in disputes involving K-12 public education. Because demand for SRP's services far exceeds attorney resources, SRP gives priority to low-income students who attend school in poor urban or rural districts

About the Authors

Erain Applewhite-Coney is co-director of the Abbott Indicators Project at the Education Law Center (ELC) in Newark, New Jersey. As a licensed psychologist and certified school psychologist, Dr. Applewhite-Coney has worked in various capacities within schools, including counseling, teacher and parent consultation, assessment, and work in the implementation of prevention programs. In addition, she has provided consultation to school faculty and administration to assist them with the process of accreditation and strategic action planning. Dr. Applewhite-Coney also has experience conducting therapy with children and adolescents in hospital and community-based settings.

Prior to coming to ELC, Dr. Applewhite-Coney was a postdoctoral fellow at The Consultation Center of Yale University School of Medicine. There, she worked as part of the local evaluation team conducting an assessment of school needs for the Partnership for Kids Project, an initiative funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to introduce a behavioral system of care for students and families in Bridgeport, CT schools. She also served on the local evaluation team for

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Lesley Hirsch, co-director of the Abbott Indicators Project, has 15 years experience working in technical, advisory, and management capacities on research, evaluation, and technical assistance projects related to education and other human services, and urban development. Before joining ELC, she conducted “communities of interest” analyses for the New York City Districting Commission and research on the political participation of subsidized housing residents at the CUNY Center for Urban Research. She was the project director of the New Jersey Safe and Drug-Free Schools Data Project at the Violence Institute of New Jersey, helping school districts and community partners to assess their needs and establish an effective program of drug and violence prevention. From 1989 to 1998, at the Academy for Educational

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