

## FY17 Above and Below Adequacy Districts

Adequacy*	County	District	Adequacy	Spending as defined	Adequacy Gap	Percentage Over	Adequacy Gap Per Pupil
Above	Atlantic	Brigantine City	\$12,718,931	\$18,010,728	\$5,291,797	142%	\$7,094
		Buena Regional	\$30,417,491	\$32,261,146	\$1,843,655	106%	\$1,074
		Corbin City	\$1,122,023	\$1,150,099	\$28,076	103%	\$390
		Estell Manor City	\$2,980,704	\$4,385,243	\$1,404,539	147%	\$7,094
		Galloway Twp	\$54,566,380	\$54,585,481	\$19,101	100%	\$6
		Greater Egg Harbor Reg	\$58,584,300	\$61,958,201	\$3,373,901	106%	\$1,053
		Linwood City	\$10,721,880	\$13,225,416	\$2,503,536	123%	\$3,222
		Longport	\$723,923	\$1,107,044	\$383,121	153%	\$7,512
		Mainland Regional	\$22,174,987	\$25,350,568	\$3,175,581	114%	\$2,380
		Margate City	\$6,435,011	\$11,140,033	\$4,705,022	173%	\$10,645
		Northfield City	\$12,951,064	\$13,130,894	\$179,830	101%	\$204
		Pleasantville City	\$71,648,179	\$72,753,034	\$1,104,855	102%	\$313
		Port Republic City	\$2,702,120	\$2,760,485	\$58,365	102%	\$314
		Ventnor City	\$17,695,908	\$19,950,021	\$2,254,113	113%	\$2,326
		Weymouth Twp	\$3,531,736	\$4,374,219	\$842,483	124%	\$4,050
Below	Bergen	Allendale Boro	\$12,392,221	\$15,298,124	\$2,905,903	123%	\$3,272
		Alpine Boro	\$3,270,961	\$6,150,072	\$2,879,111	188%	\$12,739
		Bogota Boro	\$19,591,096	\$20,072,351	\$481,255	102%	\$429
		Carlstadt Boro	\$8,780,312	\$10,520,069	\$1,739,757	120%	\$3,228
		Carlstadt-East Rutherford	\$8,689,697	\$12,890,644	\$4,190,947	148%	\$8,365
		Closter Boro	\$15,503,778	\$18,447,023	\$2,943,245	119%	\$2,718
		Demarest Boro	\$9,535,425	\$12,808,239	\$3,272,814	134%	\$4,799
		Dumont Boro	\$38,024,515	\$42,914,492	\$4,889,977	113%	\$1,947
		East Rutherford Boro	\$13,534,980	\$14,519,567	\$984,587	107%	\$1,196
		Emerson Boro	\$17,038,437	\$19,187,950	\$2,149,513	113%	\$1,884
		Englewood City	\$59,595,385	\$59,740,948	\$145,563	100%	\$47
		Englewood Cliffs Boro	\$8,351,525	\$11,441,623	\$3,090,098	137%	\$5,291
		Fair Lawn Boro	\$72,269,891	\$84,308,730	\$12,038,839	117%	\$2,552
		Fort Lee Boro	\$59,932,020	\$60,329,965	\$397,945	101%	\$105
		Franklin Lakes Boro	\$15,160,680	\$25,895,770	\$10,735,090	171%	\$9,912
		Glen Rock Boro	\$35,577,630	\$43,229,847	\$7,652,217	122%	\$3,109
		Harrington Park Boro	\$9,075,723	\$11,341,954	\$2,266,231	125%	\$3,514
		Haworth Boro	\$5,826,661	\$8,591,883	\$2,765,222	147%	\$6,647
		Hillsdale Boro	\$16,495,997	\$20,660,259	\$4,164,262	125%	\$3,609
		Ho Ho Kus Boro	\$12,427,521	\$13,248,036	\$820,515	107%	\$949
		Leonia Boro	\$21,690,024	\$22,037,963	\$347,939	102%	\$248
		Mahwah Twp	\$44,146,250	\$60,421,384	\$16,275,134	137%	\$5,564
		Midland Park Boro	\$14,839,257	\$19,692,519	\$4,853,262	133%	\$4,815
		Montvale Boro	\$13,825,941	\$15,656,404	\$1,830,463	113%	\$1,872
		Moonachie Boro	\$7,246,922	\$7,662,632	\$415,710	106%	\$1,032
		New Milford Boro	\$30,600,733	\$32,882,556	\$2,281,823	107%	\$1,157
		Northern Highlands Reg	\$15,791,045	\$21,453,884	\$5,662,839	136%	\$5,563
		Northern Valley Regional	\$35,087,393	\$51,980,855	\$16,893,462	148%	\$7,515
		Northvale Boro	\$7,108,087	\$8,904,311	\$1,796,224	125%	\$3,592
		Norwood Boro	\$8,492,703	\$9,772,158	\$1,279,455	115%	\$2,125
		Oakland Boro	\$20,764,418	\$28,239,922	\$7,475,504	136%	\$5,127
		Old Tappan Boro	\$9,910,673	\$13,788,362	\$3,877,689	139%	\$5,492
		Oradell Boro	\$10,564,984	\$11,071,181	\$506,197	105%	\$676
		Paramus Boro	\$56,492,390	\$77,543,693	\$21,051,303	137%	\$5,569
		Park Ridge Boro	\$17,966,210	\$27,575,669	\$9,609,459	153%	\$7,968
		Pascack Valley Regional	\$32,217,746	\$46,317,281	\$14,099,535	144%	\$6,821
		Ramapo-Indian Hill Reg	\$36,229,682	\$49,293,171	\$13,063,489	136%	\$5,624
		Ramsey Boro	\$37,710,967	\$52,750,458	\$15,039,491	140%	\$5,881
		Ridgewood Village	\$80,914,376	\$91,765,483	\$10,851,107	113%	\$1,960
		River Dell Regional	\$24,241,161	\$29,555,926	\$5,314,765	122%	\$3,316
		River Vale Twp	\$16,230,448	\$21,460,431	\$5,229,983	132%	\$4,501
		Rochelle Park Twp	\$10,142,315	\$11,393,774	\$1,251,459	112%	\$1,931
		Rockleigh	\$560,579	\$794,534	\$233,955	142%	\$5,999
		Rutherford Boro	\$37,320,257	\$41,409,146	\$4,088,889	111%	\$1,603
		Saddle Brook Twp	\$26,557,571	\$30,378,814	\$3,821,243	114%	\$2,192
		Saddle River Boro	\$5,599,849	\$8,132,405	\$2,532,556	145%	\$6,561
		South Hackensack Twp	\$5,654,775	\$7,314,522	\$1,659,747	129%	\$4,999
		Teaneck Twp	\$64,997,906	\$89,053,724	\$24,055,818	137%	\$6,059
		Tenafly Boro	\$53,082,063	\$61,716,532	\$8,634,469	116%	\$2,408
		Upper Saddle River Boro	\$16,460,092	\$21,818,648	\$5,358,556	133%	\$4,549
		Waldwick Boro	\$22,770,085	\$28,683,363	\$5,913,278	126%	\$3,764
		Westwood Regional	\$41,400,836	\$51,030,755	\$9,629,920	123%	\$3,490
		Wood-Ridge Boro	\$16,823,481	\$16,951,357	\$127,876	101%	\$116
		Woodcliff Lake Boro	\$10,505,255	\$14,641,177	\$4,135,922	139%	\$5,464
		Wyckoff Twp	\$28,511,370	\$36,985,903	\$8,474,533	130%	\$4,152
Below	Burlington	Bass River Twp	\$1,608,479	\$2,316,323	\$707,844	144%	\$6,872
		Beverly City	\$5,576,899	\$6,431,968	\$855,069	115%	\$2,869
		Burlington City	\$24,722,651	\$27,723,288	\$3,000,637	112%	\$2,238
		Cinnaminson Twp	\$36,001,234	\$40,678,229	\$4,676,995	113%	\$1,952

## FY17 Above and Below Adequacy Districts

	Eastampton Twp	\$8,812,223	\$9,013,318	\$201,095	102%	\$341
	Evesham Twp	\$60,127,072	\$68,069,400	\$7,942,328	113%	\$1,880
	Hainesport Twp	\$8,552,771	\$8,928,980	\$376,209	104%	\$638
	Lenape Regional	\$107,604,854	\$137,838,962	\$30,234,108	128%	\$4,471
	Lumberton Twp	\$20,221,803	\$21,113,473	\$891,670	104%	\$661
	Mansfield Twp	\$8,527,209	\$10,307,923	\$1,780,714	121%	\$2,919
	Medford Twp	\$36,858,839	\$45,840,234	\$8,981,395	124%	\$3,403
	Moorestown Twp	\$54,785,145	\$62,484,193	\$7,698,048	114%	\$2,077
	Mount Holly Twp	\$16,763,701	\$17,566,567	\$802,866	105%	\$852
	Mount Laurel Twp	\$57,602,693	\$60,396,431	\$2,793,738	105%	\$703
	Pemberton Twp	\$76,973,878	\$94,335,600	\$17,361,722	123%	\$4,022
	Riverton	\$5,239,914	\$5,354,462	\$114,548	102%	\$318
	Shamong Twp	\$10,505,593	\$12,808,035	\$2,302,442	122%	\$3,103
	Southampton Twp	\$10,327,472	\$12,570,721	\$2,243,249	122%	\$3,228
	Springfield Twp	\$2,868,984	\$4,617,474	\$1,748,490	161%	\$8,742
	Tabernacle Twp	\$10,222,753	\$12,386,808	\$2,164,055	121%	\$3,027
	Washington Twp	\$1,509,531	\$2,039,296	\$529,765	135%	\$5,518
	Willingboro Twp	\$65,014,958	\$66,712,044	\$1,697,086	103%	\$461
	Woodland Twp	\$2,216,277	\$2,667,085	\$450,808	120%	\$2,966
Camden	Barrington Boro	\$12,774,116	\$13,069,100	\$294,984	102%	\$353
	Berlin Twp	\$13,688,008	\$13,954,832	\$266,824	102%	\$326
	Black Horse Pike Regional	\$64,746,288	\$65,020,223	\$273,935	100%	\$74
	Cherry Hill Twp	\$163,809,202	\$174,874,835	\$11,065,633	107%	\$1,028
	Cheshurst	\$2,720,172	\$3,182,330	\$462,158	117%	\$3,209
	Clementon Boro	\$9,880,580	\$10,510,336	\$629,756	106%	\$1,168
	Eastern Camden County Reg	\$32,167,526	\$33,117,963	\$950,437	103%	\$467
	Gibbsboro Boro	\$3,315,639	\$4,229,650	\$914,011	128%	\$3,957
	Gloucester Twp	\$96,735,470	\$96,764,410	\$28,940	100%	\$5
	Haddon Heights Boro	\$13,060,522	\$13,535,204	\$474,682	104%	\$526
	Haddon Twp	\$29,964,908	\$30,893,907	\$928,999	103%	\$466
	Lawnside Boro	\$7,442,846	\$7,983,609	\$540,763	107%	\$1,339
	Magnolia Boro	\$6,613,244	\$6,758,991	\$145,747	102%	\$360
	Oaklyn Boro	\$7,309,187	\$7,502,186	\$192,999	103%	\$421
	Voorhees Twp	\$39,208,889	\$49,799,569	\$10,590,680	127%	\$3,835
	Waterford Twp	\$24,774,586	\$25,771,633	\$997,047	104%	\$631
	Winslow Twp	\$81,079,077	\$89,820,874	\$8,741,797	111%	\$1,912
Cape May	Avalon Boro	\$546,722	\$3,186,280	\$2,639,558	583%	\$65,989
	Cape May Point	\$57,874	\$79,393	\$21,519	137%	\$5,380
	Dennis Twp	\$8,881,128	\$14,403,016	\$5,521,888	162%	\$9,127
	Lower Cape May Regional	\$23,188,276	\$28,746,195	\$5,557,919	124%	\$4,084
	Middle Twp	\$36,504,513	\$37,119,595	\$615,082	102%	\$273
	North Wildwood City	\$4,586,277	\$7,127,040	\$2,540,763	155%	\$9,139
	Ocean City	\$22,018,163	\$25,959,372	\$3,941,209	118%	\$2,724
	Sea Isle City	\$1,330,784	\$2,023,612	\$692,828	152%	\$8,347
	Stone Harbor Boro	\$415,823	\$2,478,612	\$2,062,789	596%	\$66,542
	Upper Twp	\$27,689,269	\$32,407,461	\$4,718,192	117%	\$2,430
	West Cape May Boro	\$997,558	\$1,623,237	\$625,679	163%	\$9,626
	West Wildwood	\$605,651	\$1,294,935	\$689,284	214%	\$18,629
	Wildwood City	\$14,914,245	\$16,067,853	\$1,153,608	108%	\$1,516
	Wildwood Crest Boro	\$4,312,335	\$7,535,703	\$3,223,368	175%	\$11,553
	Woodbine Boro	\$4,113,555	\$4,310,720	\$197,165	105%	\$861
Cumberland	Cumberland Co Vocational	\$5,515,076	\$6,172,676	\$657,600	112%	\$2,579
	Downe Twp	\$2,966,884	\$3,108,995	\$142,111	105%	\$772
	Greenwich Twp	\$799,826	\$1,245,419	\$445,593	156%	\$7,957
	Hopewell Twp	\$6,396,991	\$6,671,910	\$274,919	104%	\$638
Essex	Stow Creek Twp	\$1,685,063	\$1,833,498	\$148,435	109%	\$1,374
	Caldwell-West Caldwell	\$39,010,648	\$41,977,213	\$2,966,565	108%	\$1,149
	Cedar Grove Twp	\$24,501,946	\$26,445,095	\$1,943,149	108%	\$1,178
	Essex Fells Boro	\$2,505,722	\$4,503,199	\$1,997,477	180%	\$11,222
	Fairfield Twp	\$8,593,875	\$10,992,889	\$2,399,014	128%	\$3,985
	Glen Ridge Boro	\$27,038,335	\$29,020,042	\$1,981,707	107%	\$1,070
	Livingston Twp	\$88,759,265	\$101,833,070	\$13,073,805	115%	\$2,177
	Millburn Twp	\$72,594,112	\$80,954,825	\$8,360,713	112%	\$1,705
	Montclair Town	\$106,540,072	\$113,505,767	\$6,965,695	107%	\$1,027
	North Caldwell Boro	\$9,028,203	\$11,912,924	\$2,884,721	132%	\$4,486
	Roseland Boro	\$5,838,172	\$7,700,319	\$1,862,147	132%	\$4,587
	South Orange-Maplewood	\$112,861,098	\$115,301,220	\$2,440,122	102%	\$340
	Verona Boro	\$31,281,019	\$31,538,529	\$257,510	101%	\$121
	West Essex Regional	\$27,060,472	\$34,920,636	\$7,860,164	129%	\$4,502
	West Orange Town	\$120,485,598	\$135,376,471	\$14,890,873	112%	\$2,193
	Delsea Regional H.S. Dist.	\$24,027,929	\$28,514,637	\$4,486,708	119%	\$3,001
Gloucester	Elk Twp	\$4,659,534	\$5,234,103	\$574,569	112%	\$1,909
	Gateway Regional	\$16,425,745	\$17,103,856	\$678,111	104%	\$693
	Greenwich Twp	\$8,737,500	\$10,751,441	\$2,013,941	123%	\$3,655
	Logan Twp	\$15,877,794	\$16,934,473	\$1,056,679	107%	\$988
	Mantua Twp	\$15,403,041	\$18,764,080	\$3,361,039	122%	\$3,114

## FY17 Above and Below Adequacy Districts

	National Park Boro	\$3,956,851	\$4,014,992	\$58,141	101%	\$239
	Pitman Boro	\$19,554,592	\$22,782,317	\$3,227,725	117%	\$2,476
	Washington Twp	\$107,766,810	\$130,247,777	\$22,480,967	121%	\$3,194
	Wenonah Boro	\$2,407,292	\$3,098,578	\$691,286	129%	\$3,819
	Woodbury Heights Boro	\$3,288,735	\$3,584,313	\$295,578	109%	\$1,308
Hudson	Hoboken City	\$46,554,108	\$52,382,826	\$5,828,718	113%	\$2,245
Hunterdon	Alexandria Twp	\$6,357,363	\$9,365,650	\$3,008,287	147%	\$6,715
	Bethlehem Twp	\$5,115,067	\$8,643,616	\$3,528,549	169%	\$9,721
	Bloomsbury Boro	\$2,559,058	\$2,991,486	\$432,428	117%	\$2,574
	Califon Boro	\$1,270,050	\$2,468,485	\$1,198,435	194%	\$13,170
	Clinton Town	\$4,536,169	\$7,892,179	\$3,356,010	174%	\$10,654
	Clinton Twp	\$18,042,952	\$25,531,057	\$7,488,105	142%	\$5,873
	Delaware Twp	\$5,409,176	\$8,481,937	\$3,072,761	157%	\$8,216
	Delaware Valley Regional	\$13,182,719	\$17,948,897	\$4,766,178	136%	\$5,805
	East Amwell Twp	\$4,771,303	\$7,577,227	\$2,805,924	159%	\$8,880
	Flemington-Raritan Reg	\$45,585,672	\$54,966,864	\$9,381,192	121%	\$3,059
	Franklin Twp	\$4,182,293	\$5,742,500	\$1,560,207	137%	\$5,253
	Frenchtown Boro	\$1,863,868	\$2,616,345	\$752,477	140%	\$6,068
	Hampton Boro	\$1,700,735	\$2,576,451	\$875,716	151%	\$8,936
	High Bridge Boro	\$5,226,572	\$6,967,337	\$1,740,765	133%	\$4,862
	Holland Twp	\$7,369,108	\$10,691,816	\$3,322,708	145%	\$6,439
	Hunterdon Central Reg	\$47,748,429	\$55,957,047	\$8,208,618	117%	\$2,754
	Kingwood Twp	\$4,548,183	\$6,626,360	\$2,078,177	146%	\$6,577
	Lebanon Boro	\$1,851,560	\$2,605,353	\$753,793	141%	\$6,030
	Lebanon Twp	\$8,920,761	\$11,753,578	\$2,832,817	132%	\$4,554
	Milford Boro	\$1,143,467	\$2,188,100	\$1,044,633	191%	\$13,745
	N Hunt/Voorhees Regional	\$42,662,863	\$53,261,590	\$10,598,727	125%	\$3,910
	Readington Twp	\$22,947,089	\$28,421,084	\$5,473,995	124%	\$3,426
	South-Hunterdon	\$15,471,726	\$19,009,777	\$3,538,051	123%	\$3,581
	Tewksbury Twp	\$8,104,778	\$12,397,461	\$4,292,683	153%	\$7,453
	Union Twp	\$6,166,022	\$8,261,429	\$2,095,407	134%	\$4,845
Mercer	Ewing Twp	\$62,103,769	\$62,804,176	\$700,407	101%	\$198
	Hopewell Valley Regional	\$52,843,221	\$72,666,856	\$19,823,635	138%	\$5,525
	Lawrence Twp	\$61,695,511	\$66,319,186	\$4,623,675	107%	\$1,183
	Princeton	\$55,004,233	\$72,245,727	\$17,241,494	131%	\$4,815
	W Windsor-Plainsboro Reg	\$139,619,222	\$161,663,078	\$22,043,856	116%	\$2,348
Middlesex	Cranbury Twp	\$10,891,575	\$16,212,542	\$5,320,967	149%	\$7,220
	East Brunswick Twp	\$126,480,339	\$139,238,701	\$12,758,362	110%	\$1,554
	Highland Park Boro	\$27,734,361	\$28,292,434	\$558,073	102%	\$338
	Metuchen Boro	\$32,874,480	\$34,495,370	\$1,620,890	105%	\$736
	Milltown Boro	\$14,806,446	\$15,370,303	\$563,857	104%	\$564
	Monroe Twp	\$92,450,996	\$96,416,279	\$3,965,283	104%	\$634
	South Plainfield Boro	\$54,020,545	\$54,920,028	\$899,483	102%	\$267
	Spotswood	\$18,353,864	\$21,198,134	\$2,844,270	115%	\$2,390
Monmouth	Allenhurst	\$94,115	\$221,159	\$127,044	235%	\$21,174
	Asbury Park City	\$48,187,338	\$61,817,659	\$13,630,321	128%	\$5,965
	Atlantic Highlands Boro	\$4,184,498	\$4,508,742	\$324,244	108%	\$1,095
	Avon Boro	\$2,324,521	\$3,530,392	\$1,205,871	152%	\$7,681
	Brielle Boro	\$11,324,180	\$13,159,765	\$1,835,585	116%	\$2,353
	Colts Neck Twp	\$12,016,111	\$21,481,313	\$9,465,202	179%	\$11,006
	Deal Boro	\$2,827,303	\$4,077,919	\$1,250,616	144%	\$6,480
	Fair Haven Boro	\$13,076,142	\$13,836,726	\$760,584	106%	\$803
	Farmingdale Boro	\$2,477,583	\$2,496,577	\$18,994	101%	\$120
	Freehold Regional	\$175,884,684	\$178,601,234	\$2,716,550	102%	\$247
	Freehold Twp	\$53,216,942	\$67,979,501	\$14,762,559	128%	\$4,002
	Hazlet Twp	\$44,267,632	\$50,148,477	\$5,880,845	113%	\$2,033
	Henry Hudson Regional	\$4,748,232	\$8,016,059	\$3,267,827	169%	\$11,713
	Highlands Boro	\$2,947,560	\$3,724,593	\$777,033	126%	\$4,571
	Holmdel Twp	\$41,405,519	\$53,222,530	\$11,817,011	129%	\$4,146
	Howell Twp	\$85,268,643	\$102,780,710	\$17,512,067	121%	\$3,019
	Interlaken	\$566,180	\$866,946	\$320,766	157%	\$8,019
	Keansburg Boro	\$25,999,344	\$32,069,279	\$6,069,935	123%	\$4,560
	Lake Como	\$2,988,383	\$3,605,877	\$617,494	121%	\$3,720
	Little Silver Boro	\$11,612,394	\$12,112,907	\$500,513	104%	\$595
	Manalapan-Englishtown Reg	\$70,809,180	\$75,450,134	\$4,640,954	107%	\$937
	Marlboro Twp	\$66,632,465	\$80,581,700	\$13,949,235	121%	\$2,927
	Matawan-Aberdeen Regional	\$59,959,596	\$61,083,384	\$1,123,788	102%	\$299
	Middletown Twp	\$141,036,663	\$148,920,870	\$7,884,207	106%	\$835
	Millstone Twp	\$24,909,815	\$31,856,447	\$6,946,632	128%	\$4,113
	Monmouth Beach Boro	\$3,694,719	\$4,318,588	\$623,869	117%	\$2,319
	Monmouth Regional	\$17,052,907	\$23,491,594	\$6,438,687	138%	\$6,445
	Neptune Twp	\$68,138,013	\$68,139,365	\$1,352	100%	\$0
	Ocean Twp	\$57,876,142	\$67,860,308	\$9,984,166	117%	\$2,767
	Oceanport Boro	\$7,212,733	\$9,540,145	\$2,327,412	132%	\$4,582
	Red Bank Regional	\$16,599,340	\$21,794,007	\$5,194,667	131%	\$5,411
	Roosevelt Boro	\$1,680,977	\$2,529,890	\$848,913	151%	\$7,382

## FY17 Above and Below Adequacy Districts

	Rumson Boro	\$12,894,051	\$14,959,359	\$2,065,308	116%	\$2,202
	Rumson-Fair Haven Reg	\$15,298,483	\$17,598,518	\$2,300,035	115%	\$2,309
	Sea Girt Boro	\$2,589,973	\$4,530,311	\$1,940,338	175%	\$10,661
	Shore Regional	\$9,358,351	\$14,524,328	\$5,165,977	155%	\$8,624
	Shrewsbury Boro	\$6,896,392	\$7,634,956	\$738,564	111%	\$1,477
	Spring Lake Boro	\$3,366,454	\$6,559,086	\$3,192,632	195%	\$13,471
	Spring Lake Heights Boro	\$6,591,223	\$8,144,540	\$1,553,317	124%	\$3,522
	Tinton Falls	\$22,421,298	\$23,992,704	\$1,571,406	107%	\$1,050
	Union Beach	\$13,224,625	\$14,306,271	\$1,081,646	108%	\$1,371
	Upper Freehold Regional	\$24,841,512	\$26,612,053	\$1,770,541	107%	\$1,074
	Wall Twp	\$52,725,471	\$65,011,445	\$12,285,974	123%	\$3,500
	West Long Branch Boro	\$8,077,800	\$9,734,855	\$1,657,055	121%	\$3,018
Morris	Boonton Town	\$17,801,560	\$18,811,344	\$1,009,784	106%	\$939
	Boonton Twp	\$10,469,235	\$13,120,020	\$2,650,785	125%	\$3,744
	Butler Boro	\$15,263,727	\$17,832,198	\$2,568,471	117%	\$2,673
	Chester Twp	\$15,547,054	\$21,112,797	\$5,565,743	136%	\$5,182
	Denville Twp	\$22,559,129	\$28,904,720	\$6,345,591	128%	\$4,019
	East Hanover Twp	\$12,617,943	\$18,380,686	\$5,762,743	146%	\$6,534
	Florham Park Boro	\$13,384,152	\$17,196,012	\$3,811,860	128%	\$4,029
	Hanover Park Regional	\$25,696,906	\$30,168,827	\$4,471,921	117%	\$2,769
	Hanover Twp	\$20,844,455	\$25,269,540	\$4,425,085	121%	\$3,025
	Harding Township	\$5,921,560	\$9,855,764	\$3,934,204	166%	\$9,738
	Jefferson Twp	\$46,806,626	\$55,631,029	\$8,824,403	119%	\$2,871
	Kinnelon Boro	\$28,695,692	\$35,341,502	\$6,645,810	123%	\$3,438
	Long Hill Twp	\$11,584,903	\$15,241,588	\$3,656,685	132%	\$4,554
	Madison Boro	\$36,263,568	\$39,677,514	\$3,413,946	109%	\$1,408
	Mendham Boro	\$7,784,849	\$10,124,339	\$2,339,490	130%	\$4,261
	Mendham Twp	\$9,112,938	\$15,028,369	\$5,915,431	165%	\$9,157
	Mine Hill Twp	\$8,296,832	\$9,398,582	\$1,101,750	113%	\$2,173
	Montville Twp	\$54,904,282	\$67,832,458	\$12,928,176	124%	\$3,493
	Morris Hills Regional	\$47,577,297	\$62,764,188	\$15,186,891	132%	\$5,321
	Morris Plains Boro	\$12,403,542	\$15,701,803	\$3,298,261	127%	\$3,922
	Morris School District	\$87,287,150	\$92,169,955	\$4,882,805	106%	\$949
	Mount Arlington Boro	\$7,363,335	\$10,339,433	\$2,976,098	140%	\$6,226
	Mount Olive Twp	\$68,663,682	\$78,060,449	\$9,396,767	114%	\$2,135
	Mountain Lakes Boro	\$16,355,428	\$20,456,644	\$4,101,216	125%	\$3,691
	Parsippany-Troy Hills Twp	\$108,226,295	\$132,470,042	\$24,243,747	122%	\$3,490
	Pequanock Twp	\$31,820,576	\$35,126,896	\$3,306,320	110%	\$1,545
	Randolph Twp	\$71,494,676	\$83,714,763	\$12,220,087	117%	\$2,586
	Riverdale Boro	\$7,165,047	\$7,656,853	\$491,806	107%	\$1,051
	Rockaway Twp	\$34,632,044	\$46,099,127	\$11,467,083	133%	\$4,903
	Roxbury Twp	\$53,479,794	\$66,296,041	\$12,816,247	124%	\$3,718
	Sch Dist Of The Chathams	\$59,691,628	\$61,774,932	\$2,083,304	103%	\$512
	Washington Twp	\$30,552,244	\$39,955,783	\$9,403,539	131%	\$4,419
	West Morris Regional	\$41,281,630	\$45,556,226	\$4,274,596	110%	\$1,631
Ocean	Bay Head Boro	\$1,294,779	\$3,074,437	\$1,779,658	237%	\$19,136
	Beach Haven Boro	\$642,093	\$1,934,453	\$1,292,360	301%	\$27,497
	Eagleswood Twp	\$2,146,977	\$2,507,171	\$360,194	117%	\$2,708
	Island Heights Boro	\$1,603,244	\$2,166,037	\$562,793	135%	\$4,852
	Lacey Twp	\$63,232,871	\$64,227,702	\$994,831	102%	\$244
	Lavallette Boro	\$1,825,011	\$3,647,709	\$1,822,698	200%	\$14,819
	Long Beach Island	\$3,140,634	\$5,831,634	\$2,691,000	186%	\$12,693
	Manchester Twp	\$43,752,883	\$46,507,787	\$2,754,904	108%	\$1,001
	Ocean Gate Boro	\$2,109,531	\$2,526,287	\$416,756	120%	\$3,416
	Ocean Twp	\$14,364,208	\$17,056,954	\$2,692,746	119%	\$3,015
	Pinelands Regional	\$26,093,881	\$29,651,637	\$3,557,756	114%	\$2,312
	Plumsted Twp	\$19,612,347	\$22,158,148	\$2,545,801	113%	\$1,946
	Point Pleasant Beach	\$10,268,441	\$12,637,938	\$2,369,497	123%	\$3,526
	Seaside Heights Boro	\$3,767,207	\$3,810,067	\$42,860	101%	\$219
	Seaside Park Boro	\$643,979	\$749,817	\$105,838	116%	\$2,714
	Southern Regional	\$38,896,624	\$46,462,273	\$7,565,649	119%	\$3,080
	Stafford Twp	\$29,733,409	\$34,593,921	\$4,860,512	116%	\$2,400
	Tuckerton Boro	\$4,788,483	\$4,914,599	\$126,116	103%	\$419
Passaic	Bloomington Boro	\$13,144,430	\$18,195,203	\$5,050,773	138%	\$5,866
	Hawthorne Boro	\$36,429,640	\$37,866,085	\$1,436,445	104%	\$618
	Lakeland Regional	\$15,204,784	\$21,591,229	\$6,386,445	142%	\$6,744
	Little Falls Twp	\$13,240,011	\$14,446,341	\$1,206,330	109%	\$1,372
	Passaic Valley Regional	\$23,438,372	\$25,426,520	\$1,988,148	108%	\$1,484
	Pompton Lakes Boro	\$23,885,820	\$27,579,061	\$3,693,241	115%	\$2,398
	Ringwood Boro	\$16,747,408	\$19,981,664	\$3,234,256	119%	\$2,739
	Wanaque Boro	\$13,721,329	\$15,972,785	\$2,251,456	116%	\$2,439
	Wayne Twp	\$114,087,245	\$144,168,819	\$30,081,574	126%	\$3,913
	West Milford Twp	\$51,442,083	\$67,588,705	\$16,144,622	131%	\$4,682
Salem	Alloway Twp	\$7,024,849	\$7,206,081	\$181,232	103%	\$377
	Lower Alloways Creek	\$2,398,584	\$4,125,066	\$1,726,482	172%	\$10,723
	Mannington Twp	\$2,585,945	\$3,119,121	\$533,176	121%	\$3,193



## FY17 Above and Below Adequacy Districts

Somerset	Pennsville	\$26,629,948	\$28,815,290	\$2,185,342	108%	\$1,303
	Salem City	\$17,165,299	\$18,681,892	\$1,516,593	109%	\$1,588
	Upper Pittsgrove Twp	\$6,758,588	\$7,313,479	\$554,881	108%	\$1,261
	Bedminster Twp	\$12,213,979	\$16,255,305	\$4,041,326	133%	\$5,155
	Bernards Twp	\$84,638,948	\$84,920,922	\$281,974	100%	\$50
	Branchburg Twp	\$33,155,759	\$41,289,012	\$8,133,253	125%	\$3,738
	Bridgewater-Raritan Reg	\$129,331,286	\$138,365,061	\$9,033,775	107%	\$1,089
	Franklin Twp	\$138,592,637	\$142,222,468	\$3,629,831	103%	\$466
	Green Brook Twp	\$20,320,264	\$21,294,867	\$974,603	105%	\$733
	Hillsborough Twp	\$107,649,969	\$113,270,703	\$5,620,734	105%	\$807
	Montgomery Twp	\$68,474,025	\$74,581,582	\$6,107,557	109%	\$1,360
	Somerset Co Vocational	\$9,677,026	\$13,304,177	\$3,627,151	137%	\$7,851
	Somerset Hills Regional	\$27,436,837	\$30,877,729	\$3,440,892	113%	\$1,965
	Warren Twp	\$24,806,835	\$40,882,283	\$16,075,448	165%	\$9,384
	Watchung Boro	\$9,691,614	\$11,056,566	\$1,364,952	114%	\$2,025
	Watchung Hills Regional	\$28,102,604	\$30,107,561	\$2,004,957	107%	\$1,144
Sussex	Andover Reg	\$10,638,660	\$14,661,840	\$4,023,180	138%	\$5,619
	Byram Twp	\$11,915,688	\$14,599,275	\$2,683,587	123%	\$3,146
	Frankford Twp	\$6,078,101	\$10,380,196	\$4,302,095	171%	\$10,028
	Franklin Boro	\$7,457,862	\$8,327,580	\$869,718	112%	\$1,870
	Fredon Twp	\$3,111,625	\$5,081,454	\$1,969,829	163%	\$8,954
	Green Twp	\$9,984,588	\$10,929,960	\$945,372	109%	\$1,368
	Hamburg Boro	\$3,671,510	\$5,562,835	\$1,891,325	152%	\$7,720
	Hampton Twp	\$4,115,790	\$6,325,370	\$2,209,580	154%	\$7,672
	Hardyston Twp	\$10,575,188	\$11,171,078	\$595,890	106%	\$800
	High Point Regional	\$14,918,525	\$21,585,994	\$6,667,469	145%	\$7,255
	Hopatcong	\$24,839,266	\$35,609,089	\$10,769,823	143%	\$6,842
	Kittatinny Regional	\$16,090,275	\$19,358,029	\$3,267,754	120%	\$3,136
	Lafayette Twp	\$3,364,688	\$4,594,701	\$1,230,013	137%	\$5,212
	Lenape Valley Regional	\$13,149,920	\$14,952,124	\$1,802,204	114%	\$2,164
	Montague Twp	\$5,867,099	\$8,200,122	\$2,333,023	140%	\$6,743
	Ogdensburg Boro	\$3,692,859	\$4,670,096	\$977,237	126%	\$3,909
	Sandyston-Walpack Twp	\$2,102,686	\$2,609,438	\$506,752	124%	\$3,378
	Sparta Twp	\$46,232,801	\$59,405,900	\$13,173,099	128%	\$4,119
	Stanhope Boro	\$4,463,449	\$5,454,735	\$991,286	122%	\$3,239
	Stillwater Twp	\$4,243,742	\$5,780,040	\$1,536,298	136%	\$5,316
Union	Sussex-Wantage Regional	\$15,706,823	\$22,933,370	\$7,226,547	146%	\$6,922
	Vernon Twp	\$46,878,738	\$63,226,158	\$16,347,420	135%	\$5,330
	Walkkill Valley Regional	\$11,001,509	\$13,962,210	\$2,960,701	127%	\$4,373
	Berkeley Heights Twp	\$32,800,311	\$40,290,623	\$7,490,312	123%	\$3,361
	Cranford Twp	\$54,641,400	\$55,285,511	\$644,111	101%	\$174
	Garwood Boro	\$7,490,410	\$7,969,041	\$478,631	106%	\$989
	Kenilworth Boro	\$22,127,911	\$22,827,648	\$699,737	103%	\$512
	Linden City	\$107,017,539	\$109,220,007	\$2,202,468	102%	\$380
	Mountainside Boro	\$15,153,727	\$15,838,997	\$685,270	105%	\$661
	Scotch Plains-Fanwood Reg	\$79,134,891	\$86,345,822	\$7,210,931	109%	\$1,362
	Springfield Twp	\$34,128,589	\$38,648,713	\$4,520,124	113%	\$2,011
	Summit City	\$62,032,513	\$64,621,926	\$2,589,413	104%	\$649
	Westfield Town	\$91,160,298	\$96,521,984	\$5,361,686	106%	\$865
	Winfield Twp	\$2,600,750	\$3,201,194	\$600,444	123%	\$3,617
Warren	Allamuchy Twp	\$8,555,582	\$8,852,331	\$296,749	103%	\$496
	Alpha Boro	\$4,449,090	\$5,062,344	\$613,254	114%	\$2,144
	Belvidere Town	\$5,781,235	\$6,534,428	\$753,193	113%	\$1,946
	Blairstown Twp	\$6,014,954	\$8,558,498	\$2,543,544	142%	\$5,901
	Franklin Twp	\$2,834,349	\$4,515,958	\$1,681,609	159%	\$8,243
	Frelinghuysen Twp	\$2,014,363	\$2,518,065	\$503,702	125%	\$3,450
	Great Meadows Regional	\$15,509,204	\$19,132,034	\$3,622,830	123%	\$3,364
	Greenwich Twp	\$14,532,403	\$15,385,863	\$853,460	106%	\$836
	Harmony Twp	\$4,901,644	\$6,578,040	\$1,676,396	134%	\$4,989
	Hope Twp	\$3,329,114	\$4,589,155	\$1,260,041	138%	\$5,526
	Knowlton Twp	\$2,689,049	\$4,066,579	\$1,377,530	151%	\$7,366
	North Warren Regional	\$13,441,968	\$16,428,540	\$2,986,572	122%	\$3,333
	Oxford Twp	\$5,590,085	\$6,135,806	\$545,721	110%	\$1,421
	Phillipsburg Town	\$47,194,647	\$48,240,824	\$1,046,177	102%	\$414
	Pohatcong Twp	\$6,111,323	\$7,055,876	\$944,553	115%	\$2,260
	Warren Hills Regional	\$28,807,669	\$30,638,950	\$1,831,281	106%	\$1,001
	Washington Twp	\$6,424,344	\$8,339,996	\$1,915,652	130%	\$4,238
	White Twp	\$6,369,696	\$8,512,155	\$2,142,459	134%	\$4,959
						\$1,525,161,573

\*Adequacy as calculated on the DOE's FY17 Informational State Aid Notices comparing adequacy "as defined" (adequacy, special education, security) to the prebudget year spending "as defined" (equalization aid, special education, security, adjustment aid, supplemental enrollment growth, under adequacy, PARCC, per pupil growth, additional adjustment aid, local levy).

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION -- OFFICE OF SCHOOL FINANCE  
2016-17 K-12 PROJECTED STATE SCHOOL AID  
EXCLUDING DEBT SERVICE

COUNTY	DISTRICT NAME	ADJUSTMENT AID
HUDSON	JERSEY CITY	114,452,158
CAMDEN	CAMDEN CITY	45,048,515
CUMBERLAND	VINELAND CITY	33,614,591
ESSEX	EAST ORANGE	32,347,230
BURLINGTON	PEMBERTON TWP	32,240,480
MONMOUTH	ASBURY PARK CITY	24,422,872
ESSEX	IRVINGTON TOWNSHIP	22,051,380
MERCER	TRENTON CITY	20,438,575
OCEAN	BRICK TWP	14,934,026
ATLANTIC	PLEASANTVILLE CITY	13,872,424
ESSEX	NEWARK CITY	12,840,459
CUMBERLAND	MILLVILLE CITY	12,298,063
OCEAN	TOMS RIVER REGIONAL	11,788,519
WARREN	PHILLIPSBURG TOWN	9,777,099
CAMDEN	GLOUCESTER CITY	9,195,313
MONMOUTH	KEANSBURG BORO	8,642,285
ATLANTIC	ATLANTIC CITY	7,518,761
MONMOUTH	MIDDLETOWN TWP	6,694,364
CAPE MAY	LOWER CAPE MAY REGIONAL	6,528,949
OCEAN	OCEAN TWP	5,948,204
HUDSON	HOBOKEN CITY	5,362,105
SUSSEX	VERNON TWP	5,263,253
BERGEN	BERGEN COUNTY VOCATIONAL	4,194,257
SUSSEX	HOPATCONG	4,126,103
CAPE MAY	DENNIS TWP	3,819,316
CAPE MAY	MIDDLE TWP	3,724,488
GLOUCESTER	WASHINGTON TWP	3,559,441
CAPE MAY	WILDWOOD CITY	3,525,216
MONMOUTH	OCEAN TWP	3,426,175
OCEAN	OCEAN COUNTY VOCATIONAL	2,686,465
CAPE MAY	UPPER TWP	2,640,282
MONMOUTH	MONMOUTH CO VOCATIONAL	2,565,835

COUNTY	DISTRICT NAME	ADJUSTMENT AID
MONMOUTH	NEPTUNE TWP	2,234,768
SALEM	SALEM CITY	2,168,350
CAPE MAY	LOWER TWP	2,030,412
MONMOUTH	EATONTOWN BORO	1,949,536
MONMOUTH	MONMOUTH REGIONAL	1,703,247
GLOUCESTER	PITMAN BORO	1,605,865
MONMOUTH	TINTON FALLS	1,596,766
OCEAN	MANCHESTER TWP	1,531,444
HUDSON	WEEHAWKEN TWP	1,441,112
OCEAN	LITTLE EGG HARBOR TWP	1,427,520
MONMOUTH	MANALAPAN-ENGLISHTOWN REG	1,407,425
BURLINGTON	BURLINGTON CITY	1,394,126
SUSSEX	FRANKFORD TWP	1,346,220
SUSSEX	SUSSEX COUNTY VOCATIONAL	1,314,347
BERGEN	ENGLEWOOD CITY	1,257,860
SUSSEX	ANDOVER REG	1,182,448
BURLINGTON	TABERNACLE TWP	1,177,271
SUSSEX	HARDYSTON TWP	1,162,080
ATLANTIC	BRIGANTINE CITY	1,059,602
SUSSEX	KITTATINNY REGIONAL	1,053,290
CAMDEN	COLLINGSWOOD BORO	1,044,170
BURLINGTON	MOUNT HOLLY TWP	1,025,803
CAPE MAY	CAPE MAY CO VOCATIONAL	952,562
BURLINGTON	BEVERLY CITY	840,178
BURLINGTON	SOUTHAMPTON TWP	793,866
OCEAN	PINELANDS REGIONAL	784,462
ATLANTIC	LINWOOD CITY	773,175
CAPE MAY	WOODBINE BORO	756,649
SUSSEX	WALLKILL VALLEY REGIONAL	716,221
ATLANTIC	VENTNOR CITY	700,622
MORRIS	WEST MORRIS REGIONAL	695,639
CAMDEN	CHESILHURST	691,027
MONMOUTH	BRADLEY BEACH BORO	674,206
SUSSEX	HAMBURG BORO	646,919
SUSSEX	HIGH POINT REGIONAL	623,958

COUNTY	DISTRICT NAME	ADJUSTMENT AID
MORRIS	MORRIS COUNTY VOCATIONAL	561,578
WARREN	WHITE TWP	540,496
ATLANTIC	MULLICA TWP	534,788
MONMOUTH	MARLBORO TWP	532,737
CAMDEN	AUDUBON BORO	530,136
HUNTERDON	HUNTERDON CO VOCATIONAL	529,253
ATLANTIC	PORT REPUBLIC CITY	478,202
SUSSEX	OGDENSBURG BORO	463,801
SUSSEX	GREEN TWP	421,916
GLOUCESTER	GREENWICH TWP	410,720
BURLINGTON	NORTH HANOVER TWP	403,273
OCEAN	SEASIDE HEIGHTS BORO	397,376
MONMOUTH	BELMAR BORO	396,805
CAPE MAY	NORTH WILDWOOD CITY	396,411
HUNTERDON	DELAWARE TWP	392,423
SUSSEX	STILLWATER TWP	384,085
CAMDEN	GIBBSBORO BORO	374,002
SOMERSET	SOMERSET CO VOCATIONAL	366,426
MONMOUTH	HIGHLANDS BORO	364,545
SUSSEX	SUSSEX-WANTAGE REGIONAL	337,885
ESSEX	MONTCLAIR TOWN	322,539
MONMOUTH	HENRY HUDSON REGIONAL	313,845
HUNTERDON	KINGWOOD TWP	301,310
HUNTERDON	CLINTON TOWN	292,658
WARREN	WASHINGTON TWP	286,365
BURLINGTON	WASHINGTON TWP	283,400
SALEM	MANNINGTON TWP	274,086
CAPE MAY	CAPE MAY CITY	273,558
BURLINGTON	RANOCAS VALLEY REGIONAL	268,619
MORRIS	MORRIS SCHOOL DISTRICT	252,972
SALEM	WOODSTOWN-PILES GROVE REG	251,966
CAPE MAY	WILDWOOD CREST BORO	249,420
SALEM	OLDMANS TWP	246,964
CUMBERLAND	FAIRFIELD TWP	244,271
ATLANTIC	WEYMOUTH TWP	241,451

COUNTY	DISTRICT NAME	ADJUSTMENT AID
CUMBERLAND	HOPEWELL TWP	235,680
GLOUCESTER	LOGAN TWP	220,299
CAMDEN	WINSLOW TWP	209,733
CUMBERLAND	DOWNE TWP	199,790
SUSSEX	FRANKLIN BORO	199,026
SALEM	LOWER ALLOWAYS CREEK	196,496
CAMDEN	HADDON HEIGHTS BORO	192,447
ATLANTIC	CORBIN CITY	178,364
CUMBERLAND	GREENWICH TWP	175,587
SUSSEX	HAMPTON TWP	174,490
MONMOUTH	FARMINGDALE BORO	174,253
SUSSEX	LAFAYETTE TWP	172,037
MONMOUTH	LAKE COMO	166,400
PASSAIC	RINGWOOD BORO	159,299
WARREN	FRELINGHUYSEN TWP	142,159
OCEAN	CENTRAL REGIONAL	137,823
BURLINGTON	NEW HANOVER TWP	135,141
MORRIS	LINCOLN PARK BORO	134,141
BURLINGTON	BASS RIVER TWP	129,586
HUNTERDON	LEBANON TWP	126,718
CUMBERLAND	STOW CREEK TWP	121,527
HUNTERDON	HIGH BRIDGE BORO	119,023
WARREN	BLAIRSTOWN TWP	115,626
OCEAN	SEASIDE PARK BORO	110,351
MERCER	PRINCETON	107,606
MERCER	MERCER COUNTY VOCATIONAL	103,021
BURLINGTON	PALMYRA BORO	102,575
BURLINGTON	SPRINGFIELD TWP	100,078
OCEAN	POINT PLEASANT BORO	98,493
HUNTERDON	EAST AMWELL TWP	98,275
BURLINGTON	HAINESPORT TWP	96,002
MONMOUTH	ROOSEVELT BORO	86,214
SALEM	EL SINBORO TWP	80,596
MONMOUTH	UNION BEACH	73,023
OCEAN	LACEY TWP	71,943

COUNTY	DISTRICT NAME	ADJUSTMENT AID
OCEAN	BERKELEY TWP	71,463
SUSSEX	STANHOPE BORO	66,645
WARREN	NORTH WARREN REGIONAL	66,201
OCEAN	EAGLESWOOD TWP	58,181
BURLINGTON	EASTAMPTON TWP	56,982
ATLANTIC	MARGATE CITY	45,463
CAPE MAY	SEA ISLE CITY	44,536
BURLINGTON	WOODLAND TWP	40,035
GLOUCESTER	ELK TWP	38,757
OCEAN	ISLAND HEIGHTS BORO	35,537
UNION	WINFIELD TWP	32,874
ATLANTIC	LONGPORT	32,446
WARREN	GREAT MEADOWS REGIONAL	32,369
BURLINGTON	LUMBERTON TWP	31,980
SALEM	ALLOWAY TWP	29,304
OCEAN	LAKEHURST BORO	28,730
MONMOUTH	ALLENHURST	27,815
SUSSEX	MONTAGUE TWP	26,780
MONMOUTH	OCEANPORT BORO	26,714
MONMOUTH	MANASQUAN BORO	20,596
PASSAIC	WEST MILFORD TWP	20,389
MONMOUTH	RED BANK REGIONAL	20,284
CAPE MAY	CAPE MAY POINT	20,226
ATLANTIC	ESTELL MANOR CITY	19,046
MONMOUTH	INTERLAKEN	16,821
BERGEN	MOONACHIE BORO	16,590
HUNTERDON	ALEXANDRIA TWP	16,472
HUNTERDON	UNION TWP	14,726
SALEM	PITTSRGROVE TWP	12,502
BERGEN	PALISADES PARK	10,133
CUMBERLAND	CUMBERLAND REGIONAL	9,083
HUNTERDON	HAMPTON BORO	5,089
OCEAN	LAVALLETTE BORO	4,798
UNION	GARWOOD BORO	3,963
CAPE MAY	STONE HARBOR BORO	3,705

*m*

COUNTY	DISTRICT NAME	ADJUSTMENT AID
OCEAN	BARNEGAT TWP	2,039
MORRIS	PEQUANNOCK TWP	1,380
WARREN	KNOWLTON TWP	1,145
CAMDEN	HADDONFIELD	243
OCEAN	POINT PLEASANT BEACH	221
		550,186,716



# NEW JERSEY SENATE & GENERAL ASSEMBLY

FIFTH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

SENATOR NILSA I. CRUZ PEREZ  
SenCruzPerez@njleg.org

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PATRICIA EGAN JONES  
AswJones@njleg.org

January 2, 2017

Honorable Stephen M. Sweeney  
President of the New Jersey Senate  
935 Kings Highway  
Suite 400  
West Deptford, NJ 08086

Honorable Vincent Prieto  
Speaker of the New Jersey General Assembly  
1 Harmon Plaza  
Suite 205  
Secaucus, NJ 07094

Dear Senate President Sweeney and Assembly Speaker Prieto:

As you know, the dramatic disparity in state school funding is a critical issue in New Jersey. Jersey City is the most egregious example of a municipality that has manipulated its tax base to receive excess state school funding. By granting huge tax breaks and other special favors to developers, Jersey City grossly inflates its need for state educational aid. In fact, **Jersey City is overfunded by a whopping \$122 million**—all while Jersey City's tax abatements and PILOT programs in 2014 alone shelled out more than \$80 million to wealthy real estate developers. This is why we respectfully request hearings in the State Senate, General Assembly, or a Special Joint Committee on this issue.

In addition to its tax abatement and PILOT programs, Jersey City officials fought tooth and nail against a citywide property revaluation until a court order forced them to do so. Their failure to reevaluate led to an artificial need for more state aid. It also forced poor and minority homeowners to subsidize much wealthier newcomers who haven't been paying their fair share in local property taxes.

Here are but a few examples of how the current state funding system hurts children in districts throughout New Jersey:

Municipality (County) and Amount Underfunded			
Newark (Essex)	-\$90,341,626	Linden (Union)	-\$27,205,480
Elizabeth (Union)	-\$74,246,246	West Orange (Essex)	-\$25,747,871
Woodbridge (Middlesex)	-\$60,836,125	Sayreville (Middlesex)	-\$22,704,862
Bayonne (Hudson)	-\$49,443,950	Bridgeton (Cumberland)	-\$21,453,861
Clifton (Essex)	-\$49,173,139	Hackensack (Bergen)	-\$21,427,944
Atlantic City (Atlantic)	-\$46,012,848	Passaic City (Passaic)	-\$20,697,156

□ 231 Market Street  
Camden, NJ 08102  
P: 856-541-1251 • F: 856-541-3415

□ Audubon Savings Bank  
515 S. White Horse Pike  
Audubon, NJ 08106  
P: 856-547-4800 • F: 856-547-5496

□ 114 North Broad Street  
Woodbury, NJ 08096  
P: 856-853-2960 • F: 856-853-2



Plainfield (Union)	-\$40,401,035	Trenton (Mercer)	-\$19,195,536
Paterson (Passaic)	-\$35,653,714	North Bergen (Hudson)	-\$17,996,007
North Brunswick (Middlesex)	-\$33,341,639	Orange (Essex)	-\$16,024,847
Kearny (Hudson)	-\$33,166,312	Lindenwold (Camden)	-\$15,776,669
Bloomfield (Essex)	-\$32,696,307	Pennsauken (Camden)	-\$14,504,357
New Brunswick (Middlesex)	-\$29,460,040	East Brunswick (Middlesex)	-\$14,498,103
Union City (Hudson)	-\$28,382,836	Perth Amboy (Middlesex)	-\$8,256,427

Again, while Jersey City is overfunded by an astonishing \$122 million, in our region of the state some examples of districts that are severely underfunded include: Atlantic City (-\$46,012,848); Egg Harbor Township (-\$26,826,531); Bridgeton (-\$21,453,861); Lindenwold (-\$15,776,669); Pennsauken (-\$14,504,357); and Deptford (-\$9,891,499). This onerous arrangement, in essence, allows special interests to profit on the backs of school children in Paterson, Woodbridge, Atlantic City, Elizabeth, Union City, and many other communities throughout our state.

As you can see, the system is seriously flawed and has created a crisis exacting a heavy toll on our children and taxpayers throughout the state. Garden State taxpayers should no longer be expected to prop up the bottom lines of tycoons at the expense of a fair and equitable public education for our children.

It is in the spirit of bringing equity and fairness in state funding for our schools that we ask for this public debate. All of our children, regardless of where they live, deserve a fair shot at the best possible education we can offer them. Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,



**Nilsa I. Cruz Perez**  
Member of the New Jersey State Senate  
5<sup>th</sup> Legislative District



**Patricia Egan Jones**  
Member of the New Jersey General Assembly  
5<sup>th</sup> Legislative District

Cc: Honorable Loretta Weinberg, Senate Majority Leader  
Honorable Louis D. Greenwald, Assembly Majority Leader  
Honorable Paul A. Sarlo, Chairman, Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee  
Honorable Gary S. Schaer, Chairman, Assembly Budget Committee  
Members of the New Jersey State Senate  
Members of the New Jersey General Assembly

**From:** David Sciarra <DSciarra@EdlawCenter.org>

**Date:** January 5, 2017 at 10:34:06 AM EST

**To:** <aswcruz-perez@njleg.org>, <aswjones@njleg.org>

**Cc:** Sharon Kregel <SKregel@EdlawCenter.org>, <Asmgreenwald@njleg.org>, <asmPrieto@njleg.org>, <ASMSchaer@njleg.org>, Kevin Drennan <kdrennan@njleg.org>, Mary Messenger

<MMessenger@njleg.org>, <sensarlo@njleg.org>, <SenSweeney@njleg.org>, <senweinberg@njleg.org>

**Subject:** Jersey City School Funding

Dear Assemblywomen:

I have reviewed your letter dated January 2, 2017 to Senate President Sweeney and Assembly Speaker Prieto concerning current levels of funding of the Jersey City Public Schools under the School Funding Reform Act (SFRA).

I write to advise that your statement that Jersey City schools are "overfunded by a whopping \$122 million" is incorrect. In fact, Jersey City is currently spending \$99 million **under** its SFRA adequacy budget, which is the spending level determined by the formula to support a thorough and efficient education for all Jersey City public school children.

In addition, Jersey City has increased its local levy or property tax contribution towards the district's adequacy budget by 28% since 2009. As you may know, Jersey City, like all other districts, is subject to the 2% annual cap or limit on increasing the local levy under the SFRA statute.

I understand your concern for the many "under adequacy" districts -- including Jersey City -- across the state where current levels of state and local revenue are below the levels prescribed for their students by the SFRA formula. I'm sure you'll agree on the need to have correct and accurate information as the Legislature considers how best to address those concerns.

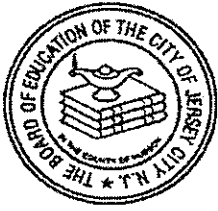
I would welcome the opportunity to discuss issues related to school funding in Jersey City and all districts statewide. Please contact Sharon Kregel in my office if you'd like to schedule a time to talk further.

Regards, David

David G. Sciarra, Executive Director  
Education Law Center  
60 Park Place, Suite 300  
Newark, NJ 07102  
973-624-1815, ext. 16  
973-624-7339 (fax)  
www.edlawcenter.org

#### CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE

The information in this email may be confidential and /or privileged. This email is intended to be viewed only by the individual or organization named above. If you are not the intended recipient or an authorized representative of the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any review, dissemination or copying of this email and its attachments, if any, or the information contained herein, is prohibited. If you have received this email in error, please immediately notify the sender by return email and delete this email from your system. Thank you.



**The Jersey City Public Schools**  
346 CLAREMONT AVENUE  
JERSEY CITY, NEW JERSEY 07305  
Telephone 201 915-6000



## **TESTIMONY REGARDING SCHOOL FUNDING**

**SENATE SELECT COMMITTEE ON SCHOOL FUNDING FAIRNESS  
FEBRUARY 21, 2017**

Good Morning President Sweeny, Senator Cunningham and Members of the Senate Select Committee on School Funding Fairness. My name is Hope Blackburn., General Counsel for the Jersey City Public Schools. I am speaking with you today on behalf of the District and Superintendent Marcia Lyles who unfortunately was not able to be here today.

Much has been said and written about the current funding of the Jersey City Public Schools, the second largest school district in the State and a district under partial State operation, and under all or partial State operation for the past 27 years. But significantly much has been left unsaid. The Jersey City Public School funding is \$172 Million below Adequacy. With the additional Adjustment Aid received, the District's funding gap is reduced to between \$57 and \$85 Million.

Adequacy funding is the amount the State determines is necessary to provide a thorough and efficient education for our students. The Adequacy calculation was developed by State Professional Judgment Panels, adopted by the Legislature and upheld by the New Jersey Supreme Court, albeit reluctantly, based, in large part, on the State's express representations to fully fund this formula. Far from meeting that promise and mandate, Jersey City school funding not only fails to comport with the formula, but more astoundingly, the massive adequacy deficiency exists even with the addition of the stop-gap \$114 Million in Adjustment Aid provided by the State.

**THE JERSEY CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS – AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER**  
Envision Excellence and Equity Everywhere

Our District is charged with the responsibility of educating approximately 28,000 students. Our student enrollment is more than that in Hunterdon and Sussex Counties, respectively. It is also more than the combined total enrollment in all Salem and Warren County school districts.

The enrollment number consists of 3,500 students with limited English proficiency; and approximately 21,200 “at-risk” students.

Were the approximately 4,600 special education students in a stand-alone school district, it would be categorized among the largest school districts in the State, roughly the enrollment size of Mt. Olive Township.

Our students are truly diverse, symbolically reflecting our geographical proximity to the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island. 44 different languages are spoken resulting in significant expenditures to address the cultural and multilingual needs for our students and our families required by federal civil rights laws and the United States Constitution. 38% of the students are Latino, 29% are African American, 18% are Asian/Pacific Islander and 13% are white.

Our 40 buildings are old, expensive to operate and in significant need of major capital repairs. 13 of our buildings are over 100 years old, another 13 are more than 80 years old. Classes are held in scores of trailers throughout the District.

The District’s budget is on the brink of collapse. To paraphrase the Supreme Court, this \$57 to \$85 Million gap results not in some “minor infringement of the constitutional right but a real, substantial, and consequential blow to the achievement of a thorough and efficient” education for the children of Jersey City. It is imperative that the current level of funding be maintained.

2/22/17 ---- Senate Select Committee on School Funding Fairness Hearing in Newark

Douglas W. Boydston  
220 Fairview Avenue  
Prospect Park, NJ 07508  
973-865-3995 Cell

John Vander Molen  
257 Brown Avenue  
Prospect, Park, NJ 07508  
973-495-3095 Cell

Taxpayers in Prospect Park, NJ and Board of Ed Members at Manchester Regional High School in Haledon, NJ. We have four points with regard to school funding that we would like to share with you today.

1. The SFRA formula in general works very well to balance funding between districts based on need. The problem is that it is not fully funded so therefore not fully tested. Throwing it out without fully funding it first or analyzing its positive impacts would be a mistake. One size fits all formulas will not work. I am not sure if the Abbott vs. Burke rulings need to be looked at but I have heard that there are Abbott districts still being funded on the original formula when the district's financial resources have increased dramatically. See attachment # 1. Manchester Regional HS tops the list of the most underfunded districts by the States own criterion for adequacy.
2. The SFRA formula does not work so well for regional districts due to shifts in property valuations and shifts in the ratios of students in elementary vs. HS as well as the numbers of students going to charter Schools or Votech Schools and creates tension between more wealthy towns and towns with less resources. The 2% cap doesn't apply in tax allocation issues between towns in regional districts. The two poorer towns in our regional district have been hit with 10% increases in school taxes year over year for many years.
3. Further complicating things is county funding in Passaic for our Votech school. The county does not pay a very large share (9%) and most of the cost is passed along to districts (51%) that send the most students. Guess which towns send the most students in our county? The ones who can least afford the tuition.

We really need Passaic County Technical Institute (PCTI) to be funded by the county to a greater percentage. We advocate for an increase from 9% by county taxes to at least 30% with a corresponding reduction in tuition to sending districts to start. This would spread some of the burden over the entire county instead of punishing the districts who send the most kids from the poorest communities.

4. In 2015, Prospect Park was hit with another c.10% school tax increase for Manchester Regional HS. c. \$275.00 per avg. household. We were shocked when we found out, as we had suffered several years of double digit increases due to shift in tax allocation formula between the three towns in the regional district to 50% based on property values and 50% based on student enrollment in Manchester.

When we took a look we realized that while we endured the change to the 50/50 formula over the past few years another impact on tax allocation between the three towns was being overlooked.

Since the students going to PCTI are not counted in the SFRA funding allocation formula in essence an increase in students going from North Haledon has the impact of shifting the cost of paying for those students to the other two towns.

17x

We are not asking for more state funding! We are asking for equity in tax allocation between the three towns which must include the PCTI Tuition cost.

Manchester is unique because we send more than 25+% of students to our county VoTech School and therefore 25% of Manchester budget goes to PCTI (since 51% of the cost per student at PCTI is almost the same as 100% of the cost per student at Manchester the drain on our budget is significant). See attachment #2 for % of students going to PCTI from the top sending districts and the cost to each district in tuition.

Since we are under the 50/50 formula for tax allocation across the three towns we are radically impacted by not counting the students who attend PCTI in the tax allocation formula.

To emphasize this point consider if N. Haledon continued to send less and less kids to Manchester and more and more to PCTI (which is the trend of the past few years) to the point where their regional enrollment is "0". See attachment #3.

N. Haledon would not pay for students who don't go to Manchester (according to the 50% based on enrollment part of the formula) but they would also pay no tax at all because of the structure of the SFRA formula being based on a ratio of Elem. to HS enrollment.

I don't pretend to understand this formula but something is radically wrong with it when applied to a regional district whose towns send a large % of kids to a county VoTech.

This is killing Prospect Park and Haledon now and will result in destroying the regional district in two more years if this trend continues. It will be impossible to raise taxes high enough to cover even basic services at Manchester.

See attachment #4 which is an article in the paper that openly confirms that N. Haledon has shifted 10M to the two poorer partners in the district and that if they were a sending district it would cost them dearly. They even conclude that the trend will continue thus shifting more of the cost to run Manchester to the two poorer towns in the district.

In conclusion, Manchester is already running a very lean operation. We made the top of the list of "The top 50 underfunded schools in NJ". Our cost per student is one of the lowest in the State and almost half of the cost per student at PCTI. We do this by taking advantage of shared services and due to the Choice Program which has worked our very well in our district. We would love to expand choice. We are also looking into taking in international students to balance the budget. Our BA, John Serapiglia and Super Dr. Hernandez, are doing a phenomenal job offering a top notch education to our kids on a very tight budget.

We need help and we need it now if Manchester Regional HS is to survive much longer.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with Department of State Education to address our unique situation and we would look forward to any opportunity to share how we have been able to run a terrific HS on one of the lowest cost per student budgets in the State.

We appreciate your time today and welcome any input you have for us going forward.

18x

①

# THE 50 MOST UNDERFUNDED SCHOOL DISTRICTS

District	County	Free & Reduced Lunch	English Language Learners	Special Education	Enrollment	Percentage of Funding Received	Total Funding Gap	Funding Gap Per Pupil
★ Manchester Regional	Passaic	78%	3%	17%	885	39%	(\$10.3M)	(\$11,587)
Bound Brook Boro	Somerset	73%	12%	13%	1,666	33%	(\$16.5M)	(\$9,927)
Fairview Boro	Bergen	81%	16%	19%	1,665	32%	(\$15.8M)	(\$9,460)
East Newark Boro	Hudson	84%	15%	12%	395	48%	(\$3.6M)	(\$9,132)
Freehold Boro	Monmouth	73%	20%	19%	1,536	42%	(\$13.4M)	(\$8,212)
Guttenberg Town	Hudson	78%	13%	9%	1,297	38%	(\$8.2M)	(\$6,287)
Lodi Borough	Bergen	61%	5%	15%	3,382	40%	(\$21.2M)	(\$6,266)
Manville Boro	Somerset	48%	4%	21%	1,443	37%	(\$9.0M)	(\$6,223)
North Plainfield Boro	Somerset	68%	8%	17%	3,294	55%	(\$20.4M)	(\$6,185)
Elmwood Park	Bergen	46%	3%	19%	2,622	16%	(\$15.9M)	(\$6,046)
Haledon Boro	Passaic	69%	6%	14%	1,018	53%	(\$6.0M)	(\$5,877)
Woodlynne Boro	Camden	91%	9%	24%	578	67%	(\$3.4M)	(\$5,858)
Lindenwold Boro	Camden	76%	13%	14%	2,627	61%	(\$15.4M)	(\$5,857)
Ridgefield Park Twp	Bergen	40%	5%	12%	2,058	30%	(\$11.7M)	(\$5,693)
Dunellen Boro	Middlesex	45%	5%	12%	1,127	46%	(\$5.3M)	(\$5,608)
Prospect Park Boro	Passaic	71%	4%	18%	878	62%	(\$4.9M)	(\$5,601)
Bayonne City	Hudson	65%	4%	15%	9,251	51%	(\$50.6M)	(\$5,467)
Dover Town	Morris	78%	7%	12%	2,774	62%	(\$15.2M)	(\$5,464)
Wharton Boro	Morris	54%	6%	20%	791	48%	(\$4.3M)	(\$5,446)
Belleville Town	Essex	59%	5%	14%	4,596	51%	(\$24.9M)	(\$5,412)
Plainfield City	Union	83%	32%	14%	9,181	71%	(\$49.3M)	(\$5,371)
Hammonton Town	Atlantic	40%	6%	17%	2,704	52%	(\$14.3M)	(\$5,300)
Kearny Town	Hudson	58%	4%	15%	5,818	50%	(\$30.8M)	(\$5,294)
Linden City	Union	58%	9%	17%	5,796	41%	(\$30.6M)	(\$5,287)
Bellmawr Boro	Camden	54%	5%	11%	1,094	48%	(\$5.7M)	(\$5,167)
Clayton Boro	Gloucester	56%	4%	21%	1,361	59%	(\$6.8M)	(\$5,005)
Jamesburg Boro	Middlesex	48%	8%	11%	907	53%	(\$4.5M)	(\$4,915)
North Brunswick Twp	Middlesex	37%	4%	12%	6,175	28%	(\$30.0M)	(\$4,864)
Red Bank Boro	Monmouth	90%	33%	13%	1,346	32%	(\$6.5M)	(\$4,825)
Bridgeton City	Cumberland	12%	20%	10%	5,555	75%	(\$26.3M)	(\$4,729)
Atlantic City	Atlantic	77%	16%	14%	6,696	36%	(\$31.6M)	(\$4,719)
Laurel Springs Boro	Camden	36%	1%	19%	327	56%	(\$1.5M)	(\$4,657)
Hackensack City	Bergen	63%	8%	18%	5,279	34%	(\$24.5M)	(\$4,637)
Carteret Boro	Middlesex	67%	11%	12%	3,671	61%	(\$16.8M)	(\$4,579)
Bloomfield Twp	Essex	44%	4%	16%	6,384	42%	(\$29.0M)	(\$4,542)
City Of Orange Twp	Essex	81%	12%	16%	5,121	76%	(\$23.2M)	(\$4,532)
Riverside Twp	Burlington	56%	5%	19%	1,250	66%	(\$5.6M)	(\$4,508)
Netcong Boro	Morris	38%	4%	22%	275	50%	(\$1.2M)	(\$4,429)
Clifton City	Passaic	57%	6%	16%	11,071	35%	(\$48.9M)	(\$4,418)
Chesterfield Twp	Burlington	6%	0%	12%	747	11%	(\$3.3M)	(\$4,394)
Wallington Boro	Bergen	33%	5%	14%	1,356	34%	(\$5.9M)	(\$4,384)
Little Ferry Boro	Bergen	19%	8%	9%	1,329	20%	(\$5.7M)	(\$4,321)
South River Boro	Middlesex	48%	6%	18%	2,243	58%	(\$9.4M)	(\$4,201)
Penns Grv-Carney's Pt Reg	Salem	65%	10%	21%	2,044	71%	(\$8.6M)	(\$4,194)
Kingsway Regional	Gloucester	12%	0%	17%	2,352	47%	(\$9.8M)	(\$4,164)
Newton Town	Sussex	35%	2%	18%	1,099	56%	(\$4.5M)	(\$4,129)
Roselle Boro	Union	68%	11%	14%	2,698	68%	(\$11.1M)	(\$4,101)
Maple Shade Twp	Burlington	47%	3%	23%	2,207	49%	(\$9.1M)	(\$4,101)
New Brunswick City	Middlesex	88%	16%	14%	9,276	76%	(\$37.8M)	(\$4,077)
Westville Boro	Gloucester	52%	2%	20%	317	66%	(\$1.3M)	(\$4,019)

22

PASSAIC COUNTY LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT - COMPARISON										
(\$000 omitted)										
	PCTI	MANCH	CLIFTON	PATERSON	PASSAIC	WAYNE	HAWTH			
TOTAL # OF Students / HS STUDENTS	3,398	949	11,399 / 3,100	31,112 / 5,653	15,450/2595	8,363/1500	2,382 / 670			POMP LKS
STUDENTS @ PCTI	3,398	330	510	1950	474	54	64			1684/632
TUITION COST (not including busing)	38,994	3,721	5,692	22,542	5,406	649	730			10
COUNTY CONTRIBUTION	7,044	0	0	0	0	0	0			254
LOCAL TAX REVENUE	46,950	11,014	126,651	42,466	17,738	138,869	35,247			25,414
SPECIAL ED AID	2,005	513	6,592	15,681	7,822	3,303	1,475			941
EQUALIZATION AID	17,510	4,371	17,685	369,021	192,254		333			2,761
TOTAL - STATE AID	19,044	6,486	26,839	402,196	27,329	5,994	2,414			4,343
TITLE I, II, III AID	1,765	178	2,608	23,985	7,889	75	157			181
TOTAL - FEDERAL AIDE	3,084	414	8,561	33,076	12,995	449	676			615
GRANTS AND ENTITLEMENTS		971	9,328	89,458	43,558					746
TOTAL - BUDGET	76,374	19,376	170,618	565,924	322,524	154,894	39,806			31,596
AVG. COST PER STUDENT	22,476	20,417	14,968	18,189	20,875	18,510	16,711			17,379
VS. PCTI		-2,059	-7,508	-4,287	-1,601	-3,966	-5,765			-5,097
Cost per child taking out PCTI tuition	22,476	16,496	14,468	17,465	20,525	18,444	16,405			18,612
VS PCTI		-5,980	-8,008	-5,011	-1,951	-4,032	-6,071			-3,864
HIGHLIGHTED - EXPENDITURES:										
ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS	5,502	974	9,882	12,350	10,391	8,666	2,127			2,705
% OF TOTAL BUDGET	7.20%	5.00%	5.80%	2.20%	3.20%	5.60%	5.30%			8.50%
CUSTODIAL, MAINTENANCE, GROUNDS	8,931	1,048	9,264	41,995	26,242	13,780	3,010			3,064
BENEFITS	10,735	2,140	31,492	30,986	20,769	32,350	7,587			5,096
EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES	893	102	530	44	25	749	127			190
ATHLETICS	1,273	347	1,364		1,517	2,374	471			447



3 400

2016-17 - if OOD students counted

	Equalize value of town	Elementary Enrollment	Regional enrollment	Elementary Percentage	Regional Percentage	Elem Equal Value	Regional Equalized
Haledon	521,853,916	1018	366	73.55%	26.45%	383,849,195	138,004,721
North Haledon	1,294,034,658	702	702	100.00%	0.00%	1,294,034,658	-
Prospect Park	273,213,165	878	342	71.97%	28.03%	196,623,901	76,589,264
	2,089,101,739		708				214,593,985

\* Elementary percentage based on taking elementary enrollment and dividing by total students (elementary + regional enrollment)

\*\* Regional Enrollment percentage based on taking regional enrollment and dividing by total students (elementary + regional enrollment)

Calculations	Equal Value for Regional	Share of Enrollment	50% of Eq Value	50.00% Enrollment	2016-17 % Share	Current % share	Difference
Haledon	0.643095873	0.5169492	0.3215484	0.2584746	58.002301%	44.48%	13.521129%
North Haledon	0	0.0000000	0.0000000	0.0000000	0.000000%	22.12%	-22.116911%
Prospect Park	0.356903127	0.4830508	0.1784516	0.2415254	41.997699%	33.40%	8.595782%

Testimony: Fairness Formula  
Senate Hearing February 9, 2017  
Mrs. Kathleen Witcher

Good Day,

I am a grandparent and relative of public school children, a retired educator and an advocate for quality education for more than forty years.

I am a member of the NAACP's Education Committee, a chair of the NJ PTA, an officer of the Essex County PTA, a member of the Our Children/Our Schools campaign and hold a legacy of decades of supporters including my parents who worked to ensure quality education and thorough and efficient education, the guarantee of all schoolchildren in this state.

I worked in the Newark schools my entire career. I stayed vigilant when there were numerous complaints by people from outside of the /Abbott 31 who complained that there was no progress and that money was wasted. I realized the opportunities that were afforded to schoolchildren, to school teachers and to the districts struggling with many more students and many more socio-economic conditions than those of the I and J districts in New Jersey.

As a retired teacher, I sat in the lower (state) court in Hackensack in 2008 for the trial and heard testimonies about the plight of middle districts, like Woodbridge, that scrapped school librarian positions, annual school plays, and courtesy busing because of short funds in their school budgets. Municipalities faced increased property taxes to makeup for lost state aid. And, I was there in the New Jersey Supreme Court on the day that Abbott was struck down. I wondered about children yet to be enrolled in school who would not see the benefits of early childhood programs as they had been with the provisions supporting teacher preparation and licensing for teachers; and about the progress demonstrated by children through the fourth grade who were afforded extra supports under Abbott. I pondered about the children who would go to high school and not receive the tutorials, the precollege opportunities, as well as the supports for children who are bilingual and those needing resources because of learning impairments and disabilities.


And now I watch the schools of Newark, Irvington, East Orange and Paterson and think that there is little effort placed in maintaining the high caliber of teaching and learning that used to come from the state. Newark's schools, for example, are crawling along with major school budget deficits, funds not accounted for after the abrupt departure of the previous superintendent of schools; without the college partnerships, lacking the afterschool tutorials, wanting for vocational and job and skills training, needing social workers and Child Study Team workers and others following the layoffs of hundreds of staff; and in dire need of provisions for ESL and disabled schoolchildren. Perhaps thousands of dollars were spent to bus children across the city when neighborhood schools were right there and even young elementary children were forced to leave their home schools because of the failed attempt to promote the One Newark Enrolls/Universal Enrollment debacle.

What does the state offer the children now?

We may never know if the proposed governor's \$6599 per pupil spending or some pseudo plan is placed. The funding of millions of dollars for thousands of New Jersey's schoolchildren demands the work of professionals who can pinpoint and project where and how much the education of the children exactly costs and the resources needed to ensure the needs of the districts that certainly have changed in demographics even in the short years since the SFRA School Funding Reform Act of 2008 was struck by the New Jersey Supreme Court. We must demand that experts and not legislators do the work of providing for thorough and efficient education as guaranteed by state constitution. There cannot be a chance that new funding plans for public schools is botched. It is unacceptable that the plans to improve educational quality in our state is compromised by political intervention.

We demand that this state operate in such a way that all of the schoolchildren in its public schools are given the promised opportunities that they all deserve.

Thank you for the opportunity to weigh in on such a critical issue.

(Mrs.) Kathleen Witcher   
kwitcher2000@yahoo.com



Giving Every Child A Chance

TO: Senate Select Committee on School Funding  
FROM: Cecilia Zalkind, President, Advocates for Children of New Jersey (ACNJ)  
DATE: February 22, 2017  
RE: **ACNJ Testimony on School Funding**

I have already testified before this committee and will briefly summarize the three points that I made:

- Funding for high-quality preschool programs for 3- and 4-year-old children must remain in the school funding formula. It has a proven track record of success in ensuring that children are reading on grade level in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, a key indicator of future school success.
- Current preschool programs must be fully funded to continue to provide the level of quality that produces those positive outcomes. Flat funding has begun to erode these programs.
- Preschool must be expanded to benefit more children in economically disadvantaged communities, as intended in the School Funding Reform Act (SFRA).

What I do want to talk about are the reasons why the SFRA was enacted and why preschool was included. The fact that this hearing is being held here in Newark presents an opportunity to remind us that not all children start school with the same advantages.

Each year, ACNJ produces the Newark Kids Count report, providing data on the well-being of children in the city. While there has been progress in many areas, the economic conditions for children in Newark remain shocking:

- 18 percent of Newark children – almost 20,000 – live in extreme poverty with family incomes of less than \$11,925 per year for a family of 4.
- 40 percent of Newark children live in families with incomes at or below the federal poverty level - \$23,000 per year for a family of 4 - compared to 16 percent of children statewide.
- 69 percent of Newark children – 2 out of every 3 – are considered low-income, with family incomes of 200 percent of the federal poverty level or \$46,000 a year for a family of 4. Statewide, 32 percent of children are considered low-income – still too high, but nowhere near the numbers in Newark.
- The median income of families with children in New Jersey is \$89,000/year. The median income of families with children in Newark is \$31,329.

I hope you find this data as sobering as I do. To me, it makes the case, better than anything else I can say about why educating children in low-income communities like Newark requires more resources, just to level the playing field, and why state-funded, high-quality preschool is so important to their future educational success. Without this program, they would not have access to high-quality early learning experiences at such a critically important time in their brain and overall development.

This is about opportunity. James Heckman, the Nobel Laureate economist, describes it as “winning or losing the lottery of birth.” While we cannot fully change the many influences that shape a child’s life, we can ensure that our schools have sufficient resources to give children in Newark and other disadvantaged communities across the state the opportunity to learn.

That is why we cannot have a “one size fits all” approach to education funding. It is why the SFRA appropriately bases funding on need and must be fully funded. And it is why preschool must be expanded to more low-income communities, as intended in the SFRA. All children deserve an equal opportunity to reach their full potential to become productive members of society.

22 February 2017  
New Jersey Senate Education Committee  
Hearing on School Funding

Thank you to Chairwoman Ruiz and to the entire Committee for taking the time to go around the state to engage with stakeholders on the issue of public school funding. My name is Julie Borst. I am a parent of a student with a disability, a special education parent advocate, and an organizer/member of Save Our Schools NJ. My testimony today is my own

I echo the majority of testimony provided to the Assembly Education Committee, and to the Joint Committee on the Public Schools, at hearings held on January 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>; SFRA needs to be funded. In the testimony provided by the Education Law Center (ELC), we are down \$8 billion since the inception of SFRA. That is completely unacceptable – not only for the former Abbott districts, but for all public school districts. SFRA is a national model for funding equity and fairness. It is not something we should abandon, or declare a failure, when it has yet to be fully funded. The bottom line here is money does matter. At the end of this testimony, I have provided a link to a report on funding by Bruce Baker for the Albert Shanker Institute, which goes into depth about why money matters. I hope you will find it helpful in framing whatever steps this Committee deems necessary.

Special Education, as always, is the fleeting thought in any discussion about education and in funding. I think it's important to understand not only how special education funding works in New Jersey, but also to understand the history of Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA) and its funding. And, because special education funding is so fleeting, it is incredibly important to make sure those dollars are spent well. By that I mean districts must be flexible to the needs of their students as they move through the school system – what works well one year may not a couple of years later. We need administrators who understand this and have the ability to lead their district accordingly.

New Jersey special education funding is a census-based formula. It is the total district enrollment x 14.78% x another formula that adjusts for the wealth of the district. My home district loses about 2/3 based on that last multiplier. So, even though our classification rate is lower than 14.78%, we are funding not only general education, but special education, largely through our local tax dollars. In districts like Paterson and Newark, classification rates are higher than the 14.78%. So, even though they don't lose money with the last multiplier, they don't get what they need because their classification rates are up around 18%. Extraordinary aid, for student placements that exceed \$40,000 a year, is dropping. Again, districts are left to make up the differences. Your takeaway here should be that no district is actually getting what they need – and the deficits are exacerbated by SFRA not being fully funded.

That brings me to IDEA. Obviously, this is a historic and groundbreaking civil rights law. PL 94-142 (now known as IDEA) was signed into law by President Ford in 1975. It has likely saved millions of students and their families from untold hardships because it protects their rights to be educated just like everyone else. The problem with the law has been the lack of funding attached to it. When it was passed the goal was to fund the law at 40%. So, from the very start, it has essentially been underfunded. Since its passage, it has only been funded at about 17%, leaving the states and Local Education Agencies (LEA) to find the funding.

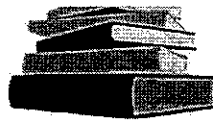
There was testimony on January 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> from superintendents and school business administrators about the financial strain special education places on districts. There was even a superintendent who states that his district does not provide services based on lack of money. Besides flirting with non-compliance of federal law, it is also unacceptable for students whose rights may have been violated, and perhaps, most fundamentally, are being denied the education they need.

This issue of funding is very complicated. As a special ed parent, I am used to the grumbling complaints I hear from superintendents and business administrators when annual budgets are presented. What I would like to see is them appearing regularly, and publicly, to ask that these funding issues be addressed – both a fairer special education formula, and that it and SFRA be fully funded.

I leave you with the link to *Does Money Matter in Education? Second Edition* by Bruce Baker: <http://www.shankerinstitute.org/resource/does-money-matter-second-edition> A quote from the Executive Summary: “*In short, money matters, resources that cost money matter, and a more equitable distribution of school funding can improve outcomes. Policymakers would be well-advised to rely on high-quality research to guide the critical choices they make regarding school finance.*” I echo this statement and thank you, again, for your diligence in this matter.

With respect,  
Julie Borst





**TESTIMONY OF RICK PRESSLER  
DIRECTOR OF SCHOOL SERVICES  
NJ CHARTER SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION**

**SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
HEARING ON SCHOOL FUNDING FAIRNESS  
February 22, 2017**

Good afternoon members of the Education Committee. My name is Rick Pressler, and I am Director of School Services for the NJ Charter Schools Association. I have also been a charter school founder, trustee, leader, and parent, as well as most recently a member of the Roosevelt, NJ, Board of Education. I appreciate this opportunity to testify on behalf of the 88 public charter schools in New Jersey, the nearly 50,000 students attending those schools, and the many thousands of households currently on waiting lists for public charter schools.

I also deeply appreciate the challenge of this Committee's task—to reimagine public education funding in a more equitable and efficient way. Short of fully funding the formula, there seems no way to satisfy the competing needs.

Several worthy ideas have emerged over the course of the public dialogue regarding funding, especially for the more equitable distribution (or elimination) of some adjustment aid, and for focusing on districts that are well below adequacy, in spite of their best efforts to generate revenue through the local levy. While these proposals address only a portion of the funding shortfall, they represent a reasonable start.

**Two Priorities to Guide Reconsideration of School Funding**

In the absence of any easy solutions, I would like to highlight **two critical priorities** for allocating state aid that speak to the needs of a broad range of public school students, especially those coming from economically disadvantaged households. These priorities also speak to the New Jersey Charter Schools Association's commitment to the students from these families who comprise the vast majority of charter school students.

**We believe our first priority guiding the reconsideration of school funding is to preserve and expand access to quality public school options for all students,** especially those whose families do not have the means to simply move to a high performing school district and who may not qualify for admission to selective district or county magnet schools. For these students, the realistic alternatives are limited to:

- Interdistrict Choice Schools
- Charter schools
- County high schools with relatively open enrollment policies

For families seeking alternatives, especially in grades K through 8, charters and choice district schools, in spite of the uncertainty of the lottery process in both cases, can be the only alternatives to an assigned district school. New Jersey is often identified as a national leader in public education, but for families who feel they lack good choices for their children, the national stature of the state as a whole offers little consolation.

When viewed in their entirety, these options, along with Renaissance schools, selective district and county magnet schools, and schools that offer programs for students with special needs, define a valuable array of choices for New Jersey's students. But our ongoing challenge is to ensure that it's not only the wealthiest or most academically successful students who have options.

Preserving educational options presents an inherent tension as we balance the needs of families who utilize all the different types of public schools. This cannot be an either/or proposition between districts and alternatives—we have seen significant gains for all students wherever choice is available, especially for disadvantaged urban students. To ensure that our public education system offers effective options that meet diverse student needs we must embrace the support of all public schools.

**Our second priority guiding the reconsideration of state education funding should be to identify those districts and charters in New Jersey with the most severe gap as per adequacy funding.** There are any number of districts and charters that stand out—Freehold, Bound Brook, Little Ferry, Elmwood Park are among a number of school districts making due with particularly inadequate state support; Jersey City charter schools survive on less than 50% of the per pupil funding available to schools in the district. These are extreme examples, but a reallocation of state funding that addresses the most egregious inequities would help provide stability and reassurance in those districts and schools where it must feel like the survival of the program is in doubt.

Funding reallocations are politically difficult, especially when viewed in terms of “winners” and “losers.” If we focus our attention on the wellbeing of all students and do our best to ensure that student needs and aspirations are made the top priority, we will come closer to the best possible solution. When we remember that economically disadvantaged students and their families—without the option to move to more affluent or higher performing districts—are especially dependent on public school options, we see that we can serve them best by ensuring there is a diversity of opportunities to accommodate the diversity of their needs.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify and for your consideration.



Good afternoon, and thank you for having us today. My name is Dawn Fantasia, and I am the Chief Communications Officer and Director of Visual and Performing Arts at iLearn Schools, which oversees four charter school districts – Bergen, Passaic, Paterson, and Hudson Arts and Science Charter Schools in Northern NJ. I am a certified teacher and administrator, and I have been with our schools for nine years in multiple teaching and administrative roles. Prior to my tenure here, I worked in a wonderful district public school in Sussex County. I am also a charter school parent. Today, I am speaking to you on behalf of iLearn Schools, and the roughly 3,000 current students who attend our “Arts and Science” charter schools.

	Year Opened	Grades Served	Number of Students	Number of Campuses	Districts of Residence
Bergen ASCS	2007-2008	K-12	1140	3	Garfield, Lodi, Hackensack
Passaic ASCS	2011-2012	K-10	865	3	Passaic City
Paterson ASCS	2013-2014	K-8	565	1	Paterson City
Hudson ASCS	2016-2017	K-5	380	1	Kearny, Jersey City
Union ASCS	Sept. 2017	K-2	180	1	Linden, Elizabeth

I’d like to first broach the issue of the SFRA, which at its core attempts to establish an equitable funding formula, but has two glaring problems: 1) it is underfunding by approximately \$1.4 billion, and 2) the funds are not equitably distributed. Compounding the distribution problem is the issue that adjustment aid has not been phased out as originally intended, and now, the public is coming to you. Educators from traditional public schools, public charter schools, parents, advocates, homeowners - all taxpayers – all coming before you, saying “PLEASE, FIX THIS”.

We don’t have the luxury of time, because while the adults debate the intricacies of school funding, the clock is ticking for the children who will only be five years old once, will only be 15 years old once – and then, that school year is over. The longer we wait, cities like Jersey City delay property revaluations for 25-plus years, all the while collecting disproportionate adjustment aid for which public charter schools are not the beneficiary of, causing a discrepancy where charter schools in Jersey City receive roughly 60% of the per-pupil dollar amount sent to traditional public schools. In fact, joint testimony presented by Superintendents Dr. G. Kennedy Greene and Mr. Patrick Fletcher on the 17<sup>th</sup> of January included the fact that **212 NJ school districts receive more than 100% of the aid they should according to the funding formula**. Conversely, three of our schools’ districts of residence – Paterson, Passaic City, and Garfield- formerly labeled Abbott districts - are currently underfunded based upon this formula. And where is the damage felt? Not only in the classroom, but also in the media, where public charter schools are frequently misrepresented and challenged at every turn.

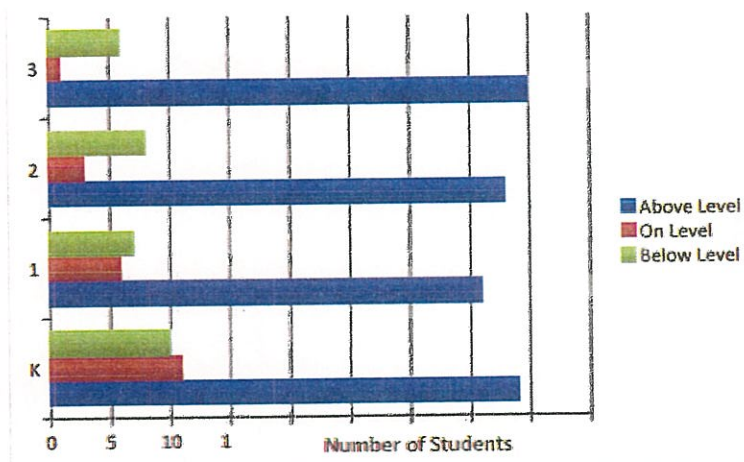
I’d like to share with you my personal experience of teaching in a public charter school. In 2008, I met my first group of charter school students: the sixth grade, comprised of 57 students in total, divided into three class sections. Nine were classified with special education needs, four were identified as English-Language Learners (ELL). Roughly half were classified as economically disadvantaged (FRLP), mirroring our collective resident districts of Garfield, Lodi, and Hackensack that year. The very first time I assessed the reading levels of the students, I was disheartened to find many with reading levels in the third and fourth grade range. Half of these students did not score “proficient” on the NJASK exams in the prior year.



Being a charter school, the teachers were given great flexibility to design curriculum that would best suit the students. Working with teachers of general education, special education, and English language learners, and under the guidance and support of amazing education professionals with both public district and public charter experience, we developed curricula aligned to the NJCCCS (since revised to the Common Core, and then to the NJ Student Learning Standards). By the end of that school year, 78% of my sixth grade students passed the NJASK English exam. Before state test scores were shared with us by the DOE, I decided to pitch an idea to my administration. Since students across the English department were showing steady growth, I asked permission to “loop” with my students, subsequently teaching them in the seventh grade. 86% of grade seven students passed the NJASK, with a handful of students scoring in the “advanced proficient” range.

By that point, together we had built solid relationships and proved serious growth. I again asked my administration to loop, and my colleague one grade behind me looped with her students as well. Grade eight – 96.5% passed the NJASK- and 25% of my eighth grade students scored “advanced proficient”. This was so very bittersweet because we lost twelve students at the end of the school year – no, not to expulsion – **you see, in ten years, no charter district of ours has ever expelled a single student.** We lost twelve students when they applied to prestigious and competitive Bergen County public high schools and parochial schools, including Bergen Academies, Academies at Englewood, Bergen Tech, and Paramus Catholic. The students who stayed with us, and the new students who enrolled to take the place of those who left, made up our first high school graduating class, achieving a 98% graduation rate. My English department colleague behind me who looped with her students? Her class was the only public high school graduating class of 2016 in Bergen County to achieve a 100% graduation rate, with 100% acceptance to post-secondary schools!

Here is another example: a significant number of our elementary school students of Paterson ASCS came to us in 2013, reading and writing significantly below grade level. So again, being a charter school and having the flexibility, both I and a fellow administrator made the decision to go into the classrooms and co-teach alongside the teachers to help our students. Much greater than that effort, the school implemented a balanced literacy program and trained every single teacher on best practices and implementation, which included early reading intervention under the guidance of a brilliant educator, Dr. Lynette Tannis, with these notable results:



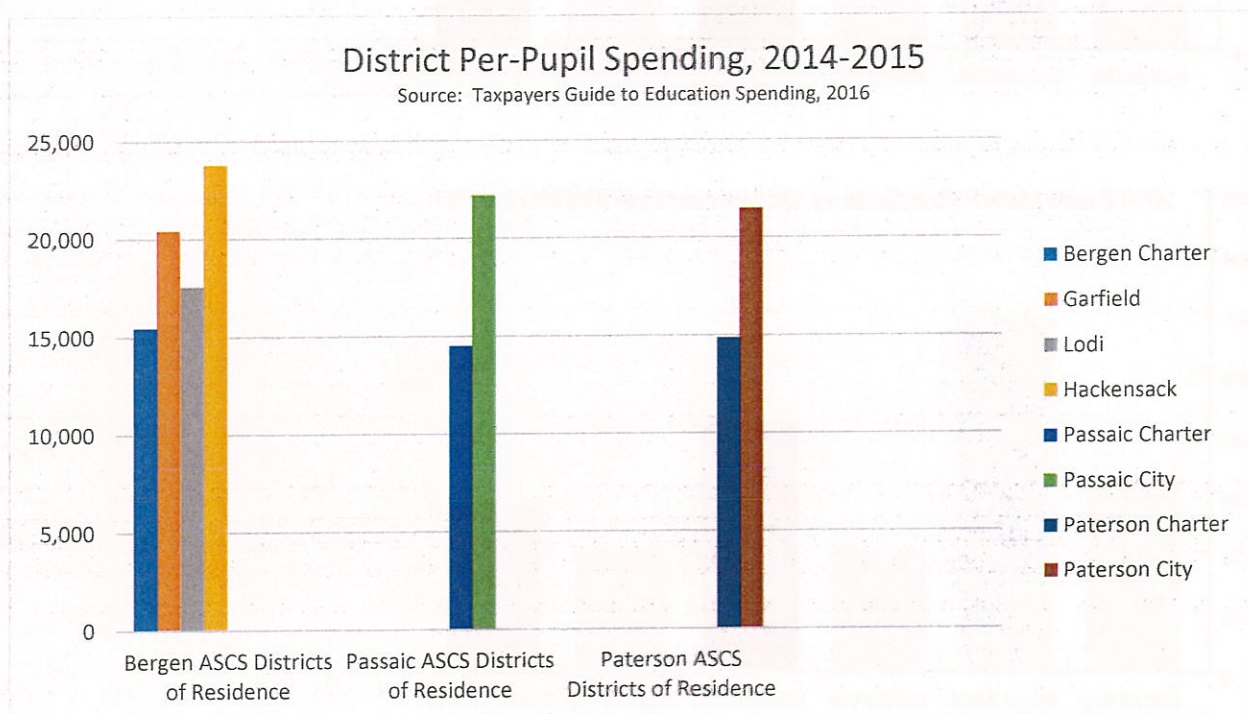
As indicated in the chart above, from a total of 205 students, 31 students did not meet the grade-level expectation.

85% of students in grades K-3 are reading at or above grade level.

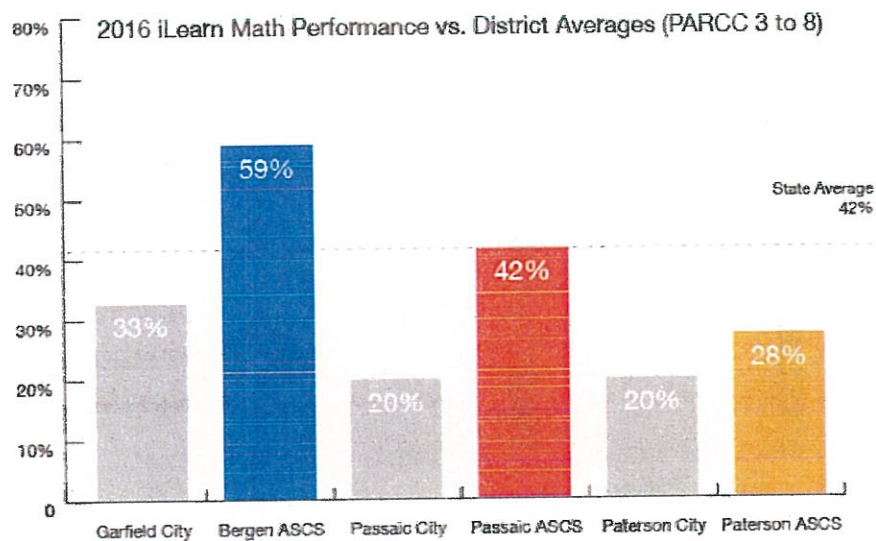
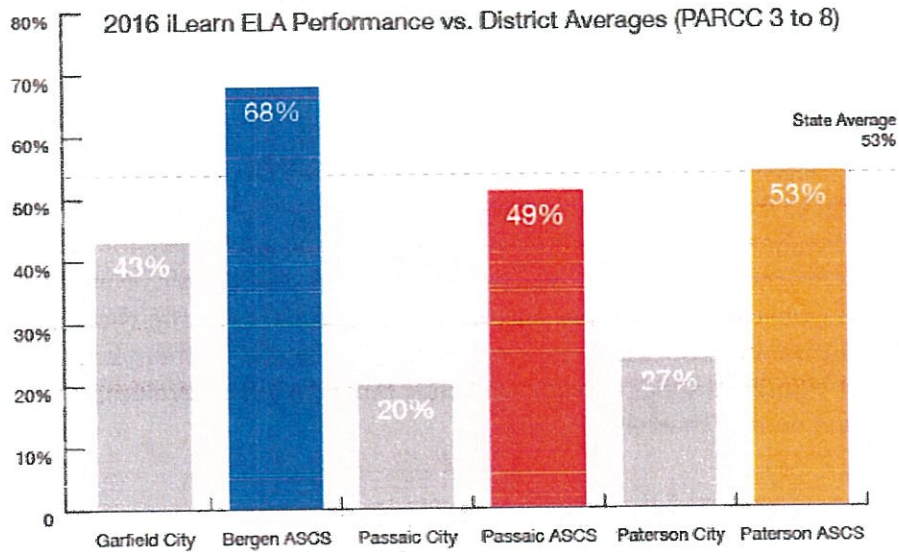
Additionally, 153 students (75%) are reading above grade level.



Public charter school students are not “cherry-picked”. These students enroll in our schools with the same challenges and struggles, and from the same homes across the same cities we serve, and we do the best that we can with the limited resources we are given, and educators and families and students work together so that students can reach their full potential. In fact, Paterson Arts and Science Charter School students have been displaced and relocated three times in four years. However, examining their academic outcomes shows not only logistical resilience, but also solid growth and comparative achievement. And this year, in order to manage budget constraints, Bergen and Passaic ASCS charters did not hire teachers for specific content areas, eliminated planned courses, reduced funding for educational trips for students who may rarely leave their own neighborhood, and reduced co-curricular offerings. **To compound the strain, public charter schools, including the top districts in the charter sector - rated Tier 1 by the Department of Education - receive no money for capital costs, and not one penny of the \$600 million in adjustment aid, either; redirecting those funds to equalization aid translates into more equitable treatment of charter schools.**



Yet still we hear lingering discussion of a charter moratorium, as if a freeze on the expansion of charter schools is an answer to the school funding issue. **A moratorium is not the answer if the question is “what works for our kids?”** We can't have a conversation about school funding unless we can link it to student outcomes. **Standardized tests are not the sole, concrete measure to determine student success.** But when our students succeed on the SATS, score 4's and 5's on College Board AP exams, achieve 100% acceptance rates into post-secondary institutions, and our student was one of two from the state of NJ selected for the NJ Senate Youth Program – we are doing something right, and we are replicating this success in Paterson, and Passaic, and Kearny, and Jersey City.



Name of School	ELA Growth Score Percentile Rank	Math Growth Score Percentile Rank
Bergen Arts and Science CS	78	93
Passaic Arts and Science CS	97	90
Paterson Arts and Science CS	82	56

In 2015, iLearn Schools had some of the **strongest growth scores** in the state, ranking in the top quartile in five of six state-tested subject areas.

Make no mistake: there are effective, successful district public schools that public charter schools can learn from, and public charter schools do not want to see district schools fail; to the contrary, we wish to see each and every child succeed and for parents without big wallets to still have quality choices.

Now what if part of our "fix this" plea was reversed, and you placed some responsibility on the shoulders of the very stream of passionate advocates that you will hear from in the upcoming months? For district and charter school leaders who are truly committed to students first, the question isn't "should we collaborate?" it's "how can we collaborate?". Why not establish connections between our schools? When they lose funding, we lose funding. This isn't about who is offering a better education or a superior program. **It's about offering valid choices in communities that are traditionally limited in options because of financial and circumstantial constraints.** We cannot label ANY public school as ineffective when we are expected to succeed with lack of adequate and equitable funding. We cannot deem teachers ineffective with one hand tied behind their backs. There does exist failing traditional public schools that are both overfunded and underfunded, with little remedy in place for the children. There are failing public charter schools that have had their charters revoked and their doors closed. The definition of insanity is doing exactly the same thing we have done before, and then being surprised when we achieve the same results. **There must be public school choice and there must be meaningful change, and a cap on charter school growth is not the answer.**

I invite you to review the attached report released in January by the Center for Reinventing Public Education (CRPE) entitled "Bridging the District-Charter Divide to Help More Students Succeed". The report provides an analysis of established district-charter compacts across the United States, and identifies successful partnerships and barriers to collective collaboration.

<http://www.crpe.org/sites/default/files/crpe-bridging-district-charter-divide.pdf>

Just as we are holding our legislators accountable, the public must hold ALL public schools accountable for academic outcomes and to work together to find creative ways to pool resources. Necessity is the mother of invention. Charter schools were intended to be innovative think-tanks to move education forward. We should be sharing initiatives, resources, and building each other up. It's about our students, and I challenge each and every one of you to come visit our schools, and for traditional public schools to invite us to their schools. It is hard to hate close up. This divide is wrong, and it's costing us money, and putting further strain on the limited budgets we have. **We are on the same team – the team that fights for fair and equitable school funding for all students in the state.**

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Dawn Fantasia, M.S.Ed.  
Chief Communications Officer/Director of Visual and Performing Arts  
iLearn Schools, Inc.  
465 Boulevard, Elmwood Park, NJ, 07407  
(201) 773-9140 ext. 121 (Phone) | (201) 773-9141 (Fax) | [www.ilearnschools.org](http://www.ilearnschools.org)



## Bridging the District-Charter Divide to Help More Students Succeed

Robin Lake  
Sarah Yatsko  
Sean Gill  
Alice Opalka

January 2017

# About This Report

## Acknowledgments

As of this writing, district and charter leaders in 23 cities have signed *District-Charter Collaboration Compacts*. Each of these cities has received a \$100,000 grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation as a signing incentive. Since 2011, just a few months after the first Compacts were signed, the Gates Foundation has funded our work monitoring, supporting, and analyzing the cross-sector collaborative work undertaken in Compact cities. This report is a summary of what CRPE researchers have learned through this work. We thank the Gates Foundation for its support but acknowledge that the findings and conclusions presented in this report are those of the authors alone and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Foundation.

We are deeply appreciative of the time, thoughtfulness, and honesty that over 100 district and charter leaders from cities that are pursuing collaboration have shared with us. Over the past three years, these leaders helped CRPE researchers to understand the successes, challenges, priorities, and realities of collaborating over the long term across often contentious divisions. This insight informs each finding and recommendation in this report. The authors would also like to acknowledge the contributions made by the editors and reviewers of this report, including Bryan Hassel and James Merriman. Their expertise and insights helped us to sharpen our findings and think more deeply about the work of district-charter collaboration.

## About the Center on Reinventing Public Education

Through research and policy analysis, CRPE seeks ways to make public education more effective, especially for America's disadvantaged students. We help redesign governance, oversight, and dynamic education delivery systems to make it possible for great educators to do their best work with students and to create a wide range of high-quality public school options for families. Our work emphasizes evidence over posture and confronts hard truths. We search outside the traditional boundaries of public education to find pragmatic, equitable, and promising approaches to address the complex challenges facing public education. Our goal is to create new possibilities for the parents, educators, and public officials who strive to improve America's schools. CRPE is a nonpartisan, self-sustaining organization affiliated with the University of Washington Bothell. Our work is funded through philanthropy, federal grants, and contracts.

## CRPE Quality Assurance Process

Independent peer review is an integral part of all CRPE research projects. Prior to publication, this document was subjected to a quality assurance process to ensure that: the problem is well formulated; the research approach is well designed and well executed; the data and assumptions are sound; the findings are useful and advance knowledge; the implications and recommendations follow logically from the findings and are explained thoroughly; the documentation is accurate, understandable, cogent, and balanced in tone; the research demonstrates understanding of related previous studies; and the research is relevant, objective, and independent. Peer review was conducted by research or policy professionals who were not members of the project team.



# Contents

Executive Summary	1
Introduction	4
Cooperation Is a Necessity, Not a Nicety	8
Cross-Sector Cooperation Arises in Cities Large and Small	13
Cooperation Has Not Progressed Steadily	16
Choosing the Right Focus for Cooperation Can Make Time and Efforts Worthwhile	18
Cooperation Succeeds or Fails Based on Commitment, Structure, and Accountability	23
Recommendations for District and Charter Leaders, States, and Funders to Realize the Opportunities of Cooperation	27
Conclusion	32
Endnotes	34



# Executive Summary

In cities where public charter schools serve a large share of students, the costs of ongoing sector divisions and hostility across district and charter lines fall squarely on students and families. Exercising choice and accessing good schools in “high-choice cities” can be difficult for many families, especially some of the most vulnerable, like parents of children who have special needs or are English language learners. Families often find that, despite a rise in the number of high-quality charter schools in a given city, they face:

- Inconsistent approaches to suspension or expulsion.
- Neighborhood “quality deserts” where there is no alternative to unsafe and ineffective neighborhood schools.
- Hostility between district and charter schools that prevents educators from learning from one another and improving.
- Barriers to accessing and judging all the different types of public schools in the city.

In a rising number of cities with these kinds of challenges, cooperative action between districts and charter schools is a necessity, not a nicety.

*For district and charter leaders genuinely committed to meeting children's educational needs across a city, the question isn't whether to cooperate, but how.*

While animosity among education competitors remains the norm in too many communities, a growing number of districts and charter schools are realizing that they must work together for the benefit of students and families. In at least 35 urban school districts with significant numbers of charter schools, efforts are underway to jointly improve instruction, align policies, address inequities, or find operational efficiencies. About a dozen of these districts are working even more actively with charter schools to share resources, ideas, strategies, and responsibilities. For

leaders genuinely committed to meeting children's educational needs across a city, the question isn't whether to cooperate, but how. This report helps explain why and offers concrete recommendations on the how.

Based on research by the Center on Reinventing Public Education (CRPE), this report dives deeply to answer leaders' critical questions about district-charter cooperation, or collaboration. What is the payback that makes it worthwhile? What are the tangible impacts and results? For charter school or district leaders considering anything from coordinated activities to shared resources and responsibilities, what types of partnerships are most effective? For state policy and philanthropic leaders, are partnerships worth supporting?

Since 2011, CRPE researchers have conducted hundreds of phone and field interviews with district, charter, and community leaders in 23 cities that have formalized their partnerships by signing District-Charter Collaboration Compacts supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. In



addition, we have tracked cooperative efforts across the nation as part of our nearly decade-long work with portfolio cities, where charter schools are part of the strategy for ensuring every child in every neighborhood has access to a great school.<sup>1</sup>

Successful collaboration can take many forms, focusing on systems to improve special education services for students or information for families, peer learning networks, co-locations of charter and district schools, shared central services, fairer funding formulas, and joint advocacy efforts. Cooperation between districts and charter schools can deliver tangible benefits, including:

FOR COMMUNITIES		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More high-quality seats available for students</li> <li>• Higher-quality options available for English language learners and special education students</li> <li>• More streamlined information and systems</li> </ul>		
FOR SCHOOL DISTRICTS	FOR CHARTER SCHOOLS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A partner in the work of ensuring high-quality schools in every neighborhood</li> <li>• Sharing burdens like talent pipeline and professional development</li> <li>• Access to charter innovation, professional development, and expertise</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved access to facilities, funding, and families</li> <li>• Reduced political tensions</li> <li>• Exposure to district expertise</li> <li>• Increased reach and impact</li> </ul>	

These partnerships have resulted in significant policy “wins” for students and families, including:

- Replacing chronically struggling neighborhood schools with high-performing charter schools.
- Citywide common enrollment systems to address some of the burdens of choice.
- More equitable and transparent discipline practices in both sectors.
- Coordinated cost-sharing systems to provide students with special needs greater access to choice and innovative practices.
- Common accountability tools that allow families as well as district and charter administrators to track school performance across a city regardless of who governs that school.

*When we look across the formalized efforts to date, a concerning disconnect emerges between the stark need for cross-sector cooperation and what has actually been accomplished.*

The successes described in this report show what is possible when competitors also become collaborators. But when we look across the formalized efforts to date, a concerning disconnect emerges between the stark need for cross-sector cooperation and what has actually been accomplished.

Lack of commitment, strategy, resources, and legal frameworks to support cooperation all contribute to the limited success. Worse, they contribute to the many cities that are backsliding on progress. It is past time for leaders to accelerate this work.

To support districts and charter schools in this often difficult, politically divisive work, we recommend that:

- **District and charter leaders** start by focusing on how cooperation can address their most timely and pressing needs, move toward adopting a clear philosophy on cooperation's role in their city to help others understand and support it, build broad coalitions to push collaborative initiatives, develop targeted partnerships while maintaining momentum toward systemic efforts, and create clear governance structures to move the work forward.
- **State Education Agencies** consider ways to support cross-sector partnerships through financial incentives, accountability systems that put district and charter schools on an even playing field, and scalable family-friendly policies around areas like enrollment, accessible and transparent school information, and transportation to school.
- **Funders** support the work cities want to do and help them build the coalitions and support networks they need to sustain long-term, cross-sector partnerships.

Both districts and charter schools fail to engage at their own peril. Charter schools will not continue to grow apace without access to the funding or facilities districts control. Districts will not be able to use charter schools' flexibilities to their advantage and stabilize enrollment losses without substantive partnerships with charter schools. Most importantly, families and students will continue to pay the price for isolated, self-interested action. By identifying ways to level the playing field on school competition, developing common strategies to make school choice more user-friendly and fair for all families, and looking for opportunities to leverage complementary organizational assets and advantages for greater impact on students and classrooms, the sum of district-charter cooperation will indeed be greater than its sector-specific parts.



# Introduction

When Superintendent Fran Gallo took the helm of Central Falls Public Schools in 2007, she easily could have fought area charter schools. Instead, she decided to partner with them.

Central Falls, Rhode Island, is a small, densely populated city where a third of its residents live in poverty. Some 90 percent of students in the struggling local school district qualify for free or reduced-price school meals. In 2011 the city was so strapped for cash, it filed for bankruptcy.<sup>2</sup>

Superintendent Gallo knew surrounding districts saw charter schools as the enemy, but a round of home visits to families convinced her to think differently. Gallo visited a mother overjoyed by the news that her child had landed a spot in The Learning Community School, a charter school. Gallo visited the school to find out why. While the charter school drew from the same population as the district, it had more success teaching elementary students to read at or above grade level. Gallo was so impressed that she asked the school to partner with the district and share what was working.

The move strained Gallo's relationships with educators around the state, but she persevered. Though bumpy at first, the partnership improved reading outcomes at the district schools, confirming Gallo's hopes. Emboldened, Gallo pursued partnerships with other area charter schools. In 2011, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation recognized her work, including Central Falls with 15 other cities like Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Denver in the Foundation's first round of grants designed to spur or expand district-charter collaboration.

Fast forward to 2016: Central Falls Public Schools has a new superintendent, but the district-charter partnerships continue to deepen, benefiting children and families from both types of schools. One charter school has improved its services for students with disabilities thanks to high-caliber district expertise. Two high schools—one district, one charter—are partnering to cultivate high expectations and a college-going culture. District and charter elementary schools are working together to adopt and hone a new math curriculum. And teachers from district and charter schools have collaborated to smooth their transitions to Common Core State Standards. Former *New York Times* columnist Joe Nocero wrote of the initial district-charter partnership in Central Falls: "I haven't seen anything that makes more sense."<sup>3</sup>

Cooperation doesn't just make sense; in some cases, it is vital to ensuring that every child in every neighborhood has access to a great school in cities where charter schools are serving a critical mass of students. But animosity between school districts and charter schools has been the norm since the nation's first charter school opened in 1992. Part of the premise in the fledgling charter movement was that charter schools would both pressure districts to compete *and* serve as laboratories for public education. With few exceptions, however, districts reacted to new charter schools with open hostility, resentment, and disdain, rather than looking for opportunities to learn from successes and working together to address problems.

That is now starting to change in some cities. In at least 35 urban school districts with significant numbers of charter schools, efforts are under way to jointly improve instruction, align policies, address inequities, or garner efficiencies. About a dozen of these districts—like Denver, Boston,



*Some communities are seeing cooperation become the “new normal.” But the far more common scenario has charter and district leaders at loggerheads, preventing joint work.*

Indianapolis, and Cleveland—are using cooperation, also commonly referred to as district-charter collaboration or partnerships, to drive decisions and address systemic challenges, including tracking school performance, student enrollment, and school closure. For some, the partnership developed out of a common desire to work together on behalf of students. For others, the partnership is more of a quid pro quo, with each side holding something the other needs. Regardless of what first drew the two sectors to the table, some communities are seeing cooperation become the “new normal.”

This cooperation resulted in significant policy “wins” for students and families:

- In Philadelphia, charter schools have partnered with Philadelphia Public Schools to **replace some of the district’s worst neighborhood schools** with high-performing charter schools that accept the same neighborhood students.
- Cities including Denver, New Orleans, and Camden (and others) have implemented common enrollment systems for citywide district and charter schools. Early analysis by CRPE researchers in these three cities shows that **common enrollment systems** have reduced inequities in the enrollment processes by eliminating opportunities for assertive or well-connected parents to enroll their students outside the official mechanisms, and by improving parent information.
- New Orleans and Washington, D.C., have significantly moved the needle on equity and transparency for students and families in **discipline practices** in both sectors through collaborative efforts.
- Along with their centralized system for expulsion, New Orleans has also developed a collaborative way to help all schools serve students with special needs through a **coordinated cost-sharing system**.
- Several cities, including Chicago, Denver, and New Orleans, have created a common accountability tool that allows families, as well as district and charter administrators, to track school performance across a city regardless of who governs that school.

Despite these successes, the far more common scenario has charter and district leaders at loggerheads, preventing joint work. Some education leaders from both sectors question whether cooperation is worth the effort. Charter school advocates question the wisdom of using their resources to help a district school instead of simply opening more charter schools for more students. They fear that close partnerships with districts might erode their own autonomies and effectiveness. District leaders worry that cooperation will cost them too much in political capital, with their teachers unions, community advocates, or school boards seeing them as too “charter-friendly.”

Given these concerns, it is reasonable to ask: Why are education leaders spending time on cooperation? What is the payback that makes it worthwhile? Are they accomplishing something real or is it just empty, feel-good public relations? For charter school and district leaders considering cooperation, what kinds of partnerships are most effective? For state policy and philanthropic leaders, are efforts worth supporting?

This report helps answer these questions and builds on prior research from CRPE. CRPE, with support from the Gates Foundation, has tracked cooperation efforts across the nation as part of our nearly decade-long work with portfolio cities, where charter schools are part of the strategy for ensuring every child in every neighborhood attends a great school. We have conducted hundreds of



phone and field interviews on cooperation with district, charter, and community leaders in the cities that, like Central Falls, have formalized their partnerships by signing *District-Charter Collaboration Compacts* supported by the Gates Foundation. More recently, we have been working with the Florida Department of Education to monitor and support work in two school districts that competed for and were awarded a collaboration grant that was also partially funded through the Gates Foundation.

Our work has surfaced some fundamentals about the promises and challenges faced when long-time competitors try to work together:

**In cities with sizeable charter school student populations, cross-sector policy coordination is a necessity, not a nicety.** Done well, the efforts solve critical problems for both charter and district schools, and most importantly, for students and families—in areas like school discipline, enrollment, transportation, and special education services. Cooperation is not about a Pollyanna desire to get along. Cooperation can benefit students and families; its absence can hurt them.

But despite the urgent need, **cooperation is too often treated as a time-limited, forced marriage rather than a sustained effort and long-term relationship.** One district official recently told CRPE that the city's cooperation “had expired” because the grant that supported it had ended. Effective cooperation is a long-term commitment, not a project with a due date.

**Some cooperation efforts are simply not worth the effort.** In many cities, district-charter cooperation has not survived leadership transitions or shifts in politics; the partnerships have petered out, wasting education leaders' time and even leading to increased mistrust between the sectors. In particular, cooperation does not seem worthwhile if there is only weak commitment on both sides, and if no clear incentives or evidence-based strategies exist to support initiatives. In these situations, cooperation is less of a necessity and more of a nicety.

**The cities logging serious progress are addressing chronic challenges and common goals for improving quality and equity, rather than getting mired in a litany of short-term tasks.** As the district superintendent in a city that continues to successfully sustain cooperation said, “We know the things we have in common are far stronger than the things that divide us.”<sup>4</sup>

**Top officials must commit to cooperation and ensure that their entire organization follows suit.** Too often, cooperation efforts are plagued by hostile political forces, inattention from key decision makers, or failure by those leaders to ensure cooperation takes root and is supported at all levels of the district or charter organization. If, as we argue, cooperation is essential to the growth and effectiveness of high-quality public schools in cities that offer choice, more supports and interventions are needed from local and state leaders, among others.

CRPE has identified the most promising opportunities for these supports and interventions:

- **District and charter leaders** can start by prioritizing the most timely and pressing needs that could be met through cooperation, moving toward adopting a clear philosophy on cooperation's role in their city to help others understand and support it, building broad coalitions to push collaborative initiatives, developing targeted partnerships while maintaining momentum toward systemic efforts, and creating clear governance structures to move the work forward.
- **State education agencies** can consider ways to support local cooperation through financial incentives, accountability systems that put district and charter schools on an even playing field, and scalable family-friendly policies around enrollment, accessible and transparent school information, and transportation to school.
- **Funders** can support the work cities want to do and help them build the coalitions and support networks needed to sustain long-term, cross-sector cooperation.

43x



This report elucidates these findings and recommendations by exploring these questions:

- ▶ Should cooperation be considered a necessity, rather than a nicety?
- ▶ Where are cross-sector cooperation efforts happening?
- ▶ What is the progress of cooperation to date?
- ▶ What types of cooperation are most worth the effort?
- ▶ What makes cooperation succeed or fail?
- ▶ What are the implications and recommendations for district and charter leaders, states, and funders interested in supporting these kinds of partnerships?

## DISTRICT-CHARTER COLLABORATION COMPACT FAST FACTS

Currently, 23 districts have signed *District-Charter Collaboration Compacts* with charter partners. Sponsored and funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, these Compacts outline cross-sector goals and projects and are intended to bring together the often-divisive district and charter sectors in a city to better serve students. Each city received \$100,000 to support the work, though seven cities were awarded more significant funding. In addition, two Florida counties have developed district-charter collaborations in response to an initiative by the Florida Department of Education, which has a statewide Gates Foundation-supported Compact.

### Signed in 2010:

- Baltimore, MD<sup>P</sup>
- Denver, CO<sup>\*P</sup>
- Hartford, CT<sup>\*P</sup>
- Los Angeles, CA<sup>P</sup>
- Minneapolis, MN
- Nashville, TN<sup>P</sup>
- RSD New Orleans, LA<sup>\*P</sup>
- New York City, NY<sup>\*P</sup>

### Signed in 2011:

- Austin, TX
- Boston, MA<sup>\*</sup>
- Central Falls, RI<sup>P</sup>
- Chicago, IL<sup>P</sup>
- Philadelphia, PA<sup>\*</sup>
- Sacramento, CA<sup>P</sup>
- Spring Branch, TX<sup>\*P</sup>

### Signed in 2013:

- Aldine, TX
- Franklin-McKinley, CA
- Lawrence, MA<sup>P</sup>

### Signed in 2014:

- Spokane, WA<sup>P</sup>
- Tulsa, OK<sup>P</sup>

### Signed in 2015:

- Cleveland, OH<sup>P</sup>
- Grand Prairie, TX<sup>P</sup>
- Indianapolis, IN<sup>P</sup>

### Florida DOE Compacts (2014):

- Miami-Dade County
- Duval County (Jacksonville)

CRPE also tracks district-charter collaboration work developing in approximately 10 other cities that do not have Gates Foundation-funded Compacts but show a commitment to work together.

\* Indicates seven cities that were awarded more significant Gates Foundation funding to support collaboration work.

P Indicates cities that, at the time they signed their Compacts, were moving toward the Portfolio system, where public schools operate on a level playing field and have similar kinds of autonomies and accountabilities as those typically associated with charter schools alone.

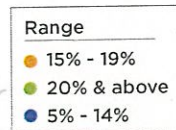
4/4x



*The costs of battling and refusing to work together are simply too high for both districts and charter schools and the families they serve.*

One look at Figure 1 explains why a growing number of districts are working with charter schools. At least 10 percent of all public school students in many of the nation's largest school districts are now served by charter schools. In these cities, the costs of battling and refusing to work together are simply too high for both districts and charter schools and the families they serve, as Figure

**FIGURE 1.**



*A Growing Movement: America's Largest Charter School Communities*



Some districts are working to meet that challenge: Cleveland and San Antonio, for example, have both sharply increased the diversity of their traditional public school offerings in the last five years. But most districts see charter schools as having unfair advantages and operating on an uneven playing field, which makes cooperation more difficult. A 2016 Mathematica Policy Research study interviewed district representatives in seven cities with active cooperation; the study found that 56 percent of those interviewees believed that charter schools served a different student population.<sup>5</sup> In particular, respondents said they believed that “charter schools serve higher achieving students and fewer English language learners or special education students, and that charter schools expel students with discipline problems.” The study also revealed that district officials thought collective bargaining constrained their ability to both compete and collaborate with the charter sector, citing, for example, how contractual work hours limited district teachers’ ability to engage in cross-sector professional development.<sup>6</sup>

Whether these challenges, perceptions, and tensions feed turf battles or simply result in a lack of coordination, students and families ultimately pay the price.

Amid uncoordinated charter school growth, some neighborhoods may have their pick of strong district and charter options while others are “quality school deserts,” leaving families who do not have the time or means to drive their child to school with no options beyond their failing neighborhood school. Families face a dearth of clear and transparent information on schools and services, a lack of transportation to schools, and the challenges of navigating multiple information and enrollment systems. All of this has made accessing choice and good schools difficult for many families, especially parents with less education, minority parents (who tend to have higher rates of poverty), and parents of children with special needs—raising fundamental equity questions.<sup>7</sup>

**FIGURE 2** The Cost of Continued Contention

FOR COMMUNITIES		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fewer school options for families</li> <li>• Lower likelihood that every child in every neighborhood is served by a quality school</li> <li>• Lack of clear information for finding best school match for child</li> </ul>		
FOR SCHOOL DISTRICTS	FOR CHARTER SCHOOLS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lost opportunity for change and innovation</li> <li>• Inability to learn from charter work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time and resources spent fighting with district (or being ignored)</li> <li>• Persistent marginalized status</li> <li>• Intractable limits on reach, scale, resources (especially facilities)</li> </ul>	



The hit families take from this lack of cross-sector coordination is painfully exemplified in Detroit, where parents have a high level of choice among a proliferation of mostly low-quality district and charter schools, thanks to a lack of accountability, oversight, and coordination. A dozen different government agencies sponsor schools without any coordination, resulting in a morass for families: no one is taking responsibility for transportation, for closing low-performing schools, or for ensuring students with special needs are well served. Detroit parents describe choosing a school in a “hypercompetitive” environment as a saturated system of schools battle for enrollment from a dwindling number of students. And they describe the challenge of finding a high-quality school when some neighborhoods have many school options, but none with a passing grade.<sup>8</sup> In 2013, only 4 percent of Detroit Public Schools’ 4th graders were proficient in math. Detroit charter schools slightly outperform district schools, but their students are still among the lowest-performing in the nation.<sup>9</sup>

***Cities like Detroit demonstrate that choice is a powerful force, but it must be accompanied by thoughtful government oversight and supports for quality, accountability, and equity—not left to function as a market free-for-all.***

Cities like Detroit demonstrate that choice is a powerful force, but it must be accompanied by thoughtful government oversight and supports for quality, accountability, and equity—not left to function as a market free-for-all. Cooperation can help ensure that schools of choice serve the most challenging students. Coordinated efforts in a community can empower all parents with information, transportation, and other support systems. Without these efforts, families most often end up with a lot of choice and precious little in the way of better options.

While many see cooperation challenges as intractable, cities are starting to chip away at them armed with enlightened self-interest, a little goodwill, and budding trust, coordination, and creative problem solving. Figure 3 includes some of the benefits realized from effective cooperation. A growing number of district and charter leaders now recognize that they each have something to gain by working with, versus against, each other. Together, they can:

**Learn from each other.** Autonomy allows charter schools to experiment and innovate. Districts have collaborated with charter schools to take advantage of innovations in leadership training, instructional strategies like personalized learning, and Common Core implementation and curriculum development.

**In Boston, district, charter, and Catholic school educators received a three-year sequence of joint professional development to improve instruction for underserved students, including English language learners, special education students, and black and Latino males.**

**Work to address coordination problems that surface for charter schools, the district, or families.**

When choice becomes the norm, parents often experience challenging logistics that affect their ability to choose a school (for example, transportation and enrollment processes).

**In Denver, Washington, D.C., and New Orleans, most or all public schools—district and charter—now participate in “common enrollment systems” that include standardized enrollment forms, timelines, and a centralized lottery and assignment process. New Orleans’ OneApp common enrollment system covers some 89 percent of its public schools, as well as 29 private schools in the Louisiana Scholarship Program and early childhood programs, including private schools and child-care centers receiving public funding. In these cities, common enrollment systems have led to greater transparency around admissions, better school information, and a more manageable and fairer enrollment process.<sup>10</sup>**

47y



**Locate new or relaunched schools in neighborhoods that need them.** Without coordination, state agencies or other independent charter school authorizers (for example, colleges and universities) often create uneven school supply in a city: too many in some neighborhoods, not enough high-quality schools in others.

After a series of failed efforts to turn around Philadelphia's worst district schools, the school district recently turned to nonprofit charter management organizations, a move that is hotly contested by many of the same groups that opposed the for-profit school model of earlier years. Unlike the earlier effort, the charter schools were authorized as part of the district's Renaissance Schools program, which provided opportunities for community input into selecting operators and retained the neighborhood schools' traditional assignment boundaries.

**Address pressing equity questions.** By nature of being schools of choice, charter schools can see their enrollment skew in undesirable ways if not intentionally watched and planned for. Though the reasons are complex, students with special needs, English language learner students, and other unique populations may not attend charter public schools at similar rates as they attend district public schools.<sup>11</sup> Because charter schools typically set their own policies on discipline, they may suspend or expel students using different criteria than district schools, forcing districts to accept students midyear who have been expelled from charter schools.<sup>12</sup> Charter schools often do not accept new students midyear or after traditional "entry" grades (kindergarten, 6th, and 9th grades), leaving districts concerned that test score comparisons are unfair and do not reflect different realities in what students are served.<sup>13</sup> Charter schools, for their part, often argue that it is unfair that they lack access to the buildings, funding, and policy environment they need to succeed.

In 2014, New Orleans' state-run Recovery School District tried to remove financial disincentives around serving special education students by aligning special education dollars with the level of service a student needs, sharing the costs of rare but extremely expensive special education placements across schools, and incentivizing high-performing schools to expand their special education offerings. A charter-run fellowship program offers professional development for special education coordinators citywide. Furthermore, the Recovery School District and New Orleans schools created a centralized expulsion system to make final determination on student expulsions fairer.

**Use each other's competitive advantages.** Increasingly, districts are partnering with high-performing charter schools to replace chronically low-performing district schools. Charter schools have shown interest in districts' specialized expertise or economies of scale.

The YES Prep and KIPP charter networks tap the Houston-area Spring Branch Independent School District's economies of scale to provide their charter schools with food, transportation, facilities, technology, and maintenance services as part of the parties' funding agreement. (District and charter leaders still must negotiate unanticipated costs.) The district also provides the networks' charter school students with equitable per-pupil funding.



**FIGURE 3. Cooperation Can Result in Tangible Benefits**

FOR COMMUNITIES		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More high-quality seats available for students</li> <li>• Higher-quality options available for English language learners and special education students</li> <li>• More streamlined information and systems</li> </ul>		
FOR SCHOOL DISTRICTS	FOR CHARTER SCHOOLS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A partner in the work of ensuring high-quality schools in every neighborhood</li> <li>• Sharing burdens like talent pipeline and professional development</li> <li>• Access to charter innovation, professional development, and expertise</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved access to facilities, funding, and families</li> <li>• Reduced political tensions</li> <li>• Exposure to district expertise</li> <li>• Increased reach and impact</li> </ul>	

*Cooperation allows districts and charter schools to share resources and responsibilities in a way that benefits both parties and the families they serve.*

While some argue for standing aside and letting free-market forces do their job, increasing evidence suggests that this approach is, at least in the short term, imposing real costs on real families and exacerbating inequities, making students and families the true victims of the discord and disharmony. Cooperation lets the parties come together to address key issues like those detailed earlier in a voluntary, rational way. Cooperation allows

districts and charter schools to share resources and responsibilities in a way that benefits both parties and the families they serve. Done well, cooperation demonstrates that the sum is greater than its parts.

49x

# Cross-Sector Cooperation Arises in Cities Large and Small

In some communities, forward-thinking superintendents, board members, and leaders of individual charter schools or charter management organizations (CMOs) have collaborated across sectors in an informal, ad hoc way for years. These handshake deals tend to be pragmatic: narrowly focused on a particular problem or opportunity at a given point in time. But they also tend to lack staying power, often petering out once the individuals involved have moved on or outside support dries up.

*Cooperation is a natural outgrowth of a philosophy that says results matter more than who operates a school.*

In contrast, broader, more durable initiatives that deliver real impacts have taken hold in cities where structural and strategic reforms have *demanded* cooperation. Cities following a portfolio strategy are moving toward a system where all public schools operate on a level playing field and have the same kinds of autonomies and accountabilities as those typically associated only with

charter schools. In the portfolio cities CRPE tracks, many districts partner with charter schools to better serve students. In these cities, cooperation is a natural outgrowth of a philosophy that says results matter more than who operates a school.

Regardless of whether the parties' initial motivations for collaborating were narrow or broad, 23 cities have formalized their efforts with the Gates Foundation-funded *District-Charter Cooperation Compacts*, which outline cross-sector goals and projects (see Figure 4). In addition, two Florida counties have developed district-charter cooperation in response to an initiative by the Florida Department of Education, which has a statewide Gates Foundation-supported Compact.

**FIGURE 4.** Localities That Have Signed *District-Charter Cooperation Compacts*





CRPE also tracks roughly a dozen other cities that do not have formal Compact agreements, but have shown either a strong, sustained commitment to working together (like Washington, D.C.) or are just beginning to explore small-scale cooperation efforts.

Our monitoring efforts have led us to see cross-sector cooperation in all stages of maturity, with each stage building on the one before. Figure 5 provides a detailed breakdown of CRPE's identified six stages of cooperation.

*Emerging cooperation* is the first step beyond the typical baseline district-charter relationship of conflict and distrust. The *Emerging* stage usually includes building relationships, creating trust, and dispelling myths. This can happen through teacher-to-teacher or principal-to-principal interactions—such as through joint professional learning communities—or can be spurred by high-level problem-solving meetings between leaders. While this initial stage is often slow and low on tangible results, it helps build a foundation for higher-impact cooperation.

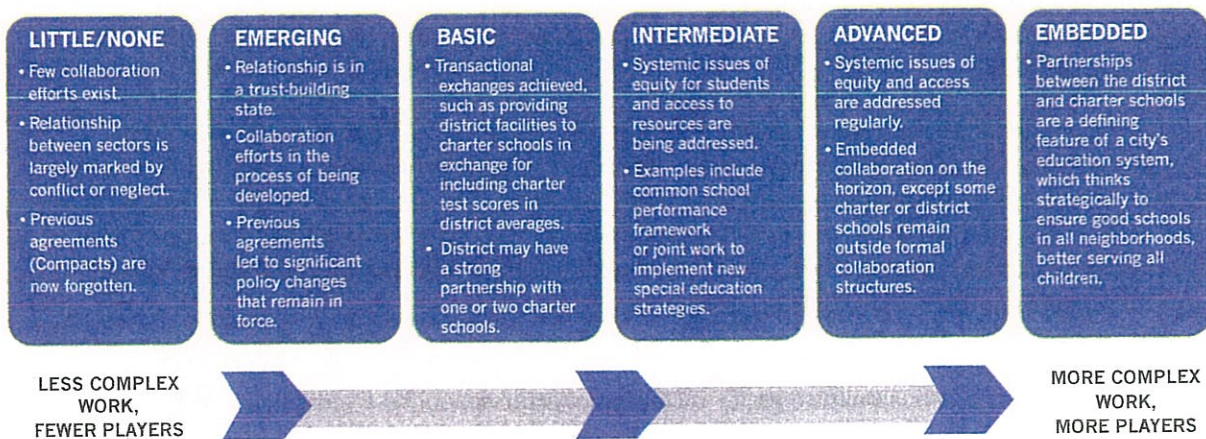
In the *Basic cooperation* stage, partnerships drive more practical results, such as districts providing charter schools with facilities in exchange for including charter school test scores in the district's average for state accountability purposes. While often useful, these efforts tend to tinker around the edges of each sector's core "turf" issues, whether charter schools' autonomies or districts' political capital and resources.

Districts and charter schools reach the *Intermediate* and *Advanced* cooperation stages when they work more robustly to improve equity for students and families. Often, deals are struck around shared resources and shared responsibilities for serving all students, such as in the special education arena. In many cities, charter schools have been faulted for low enrollment of students with the most intensive (and costly) needs; charter schools in turn often point to not getting their fair share of resources to help them effectively serve such students. Cooperation on reworking funding policies can help alleviate these concerns (as Los Angeles, Denver, and New Orleans did).<sup>14</sup>

Cooperation can also help charter schools boost recruitment efforts among families with special education students—such as participating in district-sponsored school fairs—or tap district expertise to improve the special education services they offer. Likewise, some cities use their deeper cross-sector connections to develop a common school performance framework: this provides a common standard for charter renewal or school district management decisions on school-level accountability and helps parents navigate school choice options with apples-to-apples comparisons among schools. The *Intermediate* stage typically means that a majority of a city's charter schools are working with the district on at least one common area. The *Advanced* stage means nearly all charter schools are working with the district on more than one common area.



**FIGURE 5.** Transactional Exchanges Can Lead to More Strategic Cooperation



*Embedded cooperation is described as all types of schools and authorizers working in tandem to ensure that good schools are in every neighborhood and that every child has access to a variety of high-quality options.*

We expect cooperation reaches the *Embedded* stage if district-charter partnerships become a defining feature of a city's education system. *Embedded* cooperation is described as all types of schools and authorizers working in tandem to ensure that good schools are in every neighborhood and that every child has access to a variety of high-quality options. Such strategic cooperation may require charter schools to agree not to locate in over-saturated neighborhoods. Or it may involve district contracts with charter schools to turn around troubled campuses or operate specific programs. For parents and students, navigating between the district and charter

sectors is seamless because the boundaries between them are nearly invisible. Families have a one-stop shop for enrolling in school: when they have a concern the school principal cannot resolve, they can expect the district office and/or charter authorizer to resolve it using near-identical processes and systems. Clearly, this *Embedded* cooperation embodies an ideal, but it is one worth striving for to benefit families.



# Cooperation Has Not Progressed Steadily

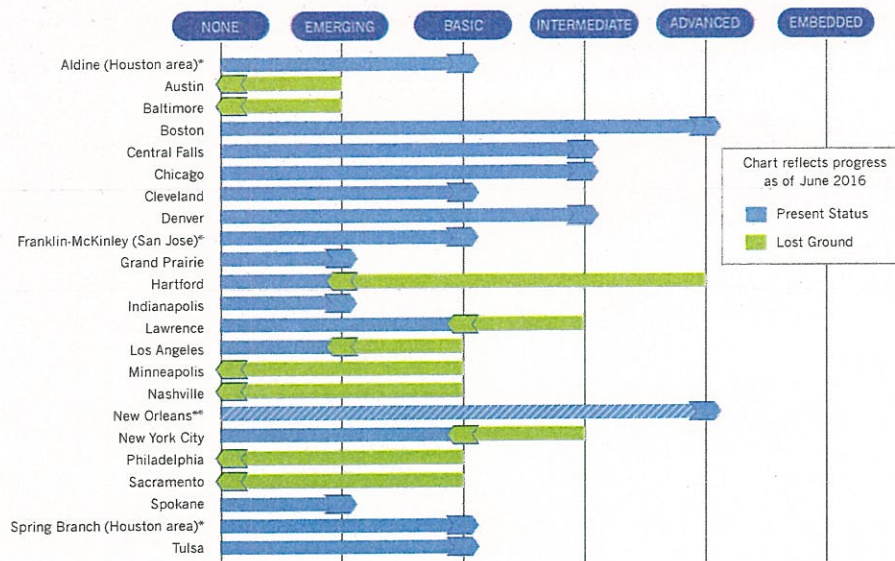
Most of the 23 Compact cities have not yet reached the more mature cooperation stages: 11 are in the earliest stages, 7 are still at the *Basic* stage, and just 2 (Boston and New Orleans) have achieved and maintained *Advanced* cooperation and where *Embedded* cooperation seems just on the horizon. Boston benefits from cooperation facilitation by the Boston Compact, a separately funded third-party entity. New Orleans, unique for being a nearly all-charter city, sees cooperation largely between charter schools and between the charter schools and their authorizers—the state-run Recovery School District and the local Orleans Parish School Board. The independently run charter schools and the school district have developed norms for coordinated problem solving and common policies,

*Cooperation in most Compact cities ebbs and flows based on shifting commitments and personalities.*

such as student expulsion procedures, that are necessary for an efficient and equitable city school system. But New Orleans' cooperation falls short of *Embedded* because too many examples of parallel systems persist between the largely state-run charter schools and the relatively few schools (district and charter) run by the local school board. This will likely change as the system prepares to merge under one elected board.

Cooperation in most Compact cities ebbs and flows based on shifting commitments and personalities. As the green bars in Figure 6 show, nearly half the cities have slid back from earlier-won gains.

**FIGURE 6.** Cooperation in Localities With Compacts Often Falls Short of Potential and Gains Can be Lost



\*School districts listed, such as Sacramento or Indianapolis, may not align to city boundaries.

\*\*Collaboration in New Orleans is primarily within the charter school sector, given that charters serve over 90% of students.



Though discouraging, Figure 6 depicts the real challenges in moving warring parties to mutual action and in mustering the required leadership and commitment to overcome rivalries and ideological differences in pursuit of better outcomes for students and families.

And yet despite such difficulties, cooperation with real impact is surfacing in cities even without the aid of a grant or other incentive. In Washington, D.C., charter and district officials have worked together to bring more innovation and personalized learning to their city and developed common reporting of student suspension data through their Cross-Sector Cooperation Task Force. The city's student discipline reporting efforts were accompanied by citywide drops in suspension rates overall and among specific student groups, such as those with special needs. Expulsion rates fell by almost half. In Oakland, leaders from the district, charter schools, and third-party organizations have signed an Equity Pledge, a Compact-like document that is guiding work around developing a common school performance framework, attracting talent, equitably allocating facilities, and more. Atlanta KIPP charter schools have shared professional development with Atlanta Public Schools with the goal of boosting student achievement and developing a positive school climate. Charter and district schools in Providence, Rhode Island, are collaborating to pilot a personalized learning program while being trained by Summit Public Schools, a CMO from California.

Many leaders who signed Compacts reported that the documents helped anchor the work and provided a road map for what would be attempted.

Increased interest in cooperation is apparent both in what CRPE has seen as we monitor activity around the country as well as in media coverage. But is a grant necessary to spur cooperation? Given the evidence of cooperation outside the Gates Foundation's Compact grants, the answer appears to be no. That said, Compact leaders certainly reported that the grants helped them in many ways, like enabling them to follow through on their

commitments by funding dedicated staff time and big projects like common enrollment systems. In some cities, a grant could make the difference in whether cooperation gets off the ground or not. Many leaders who signed Compacts reported that the documents helped anchor the work and provided a road map for what would be attempted. But Compacts also could quickly become stale and forgotten when goals became more difficult to realize than anticipated or the leader who signed the document left.

In the following sections, we discuss examples of the most and least successful partnerships and what differentiates successful efforts from those that fail or stagnate.



# Choosing the Right Focus for Cooperation Can Make Time and Efforts Worthwhile

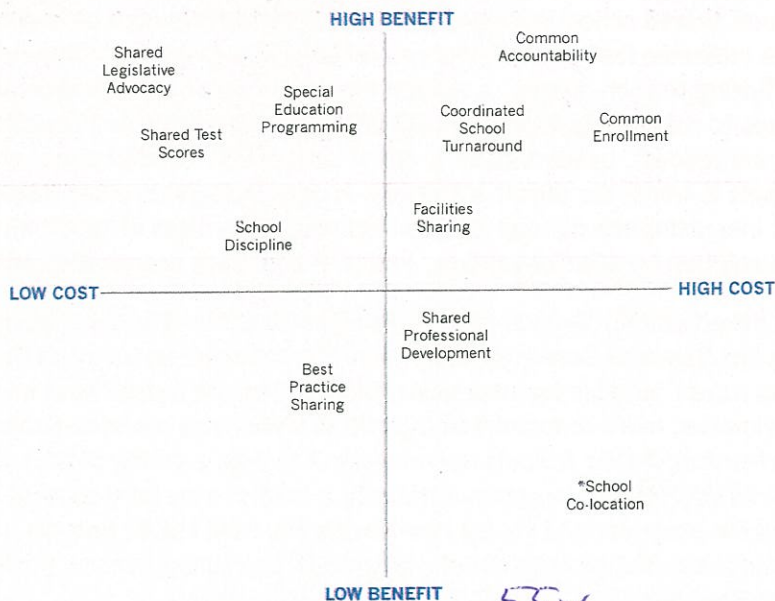
Cooperation is hard work. Beyond the universal elements needed to give potential partners the best shot at success, the parties involved should consider what specific cooperation activities will yield the greatest payoff for schools and families. Cooperation can play out in various policy, operational, and instructional areas. But many efforts require more resources (in time, money, and political capital) than leaders might find is warranted.

Potential partners in a city must weigh uniquely local factors: Do the cooperative projects meet the needs of both charter school and district leaders as well as those of the local community? Do the projects consider the local politics and the specific partners' strengths and weaknesses?

In CRPE's work on cooperation, more generalized findings have surfaced on the cost-benefit equation for certain common types of cooperative projects. These findings can help those contemplating new cooperation initiatives—including sponsors such as mayors, state leaders, or nonprofit harbormasters—decide what projects to tackle.

Figure 7 maps the most common areas of cooperation along two continua: the benefits accrued and the resources or costs required, based on the past five years of monitoring cooperation initiatives in cities with formalized Gates Foundation-supported Compacts.

**FIGURE 7.** In Compact Cities, Different Costs and Benefits for Different Types of Cooperation



\*For school co-locations, there may be different costs/benefits for academic improvement versus co-locations for the sole purpose of providing charter schools access to district space.



## Low Cost/Low Benefit

**Shared best practices:** Every city that signed a district-charter Compact included language in the document pledging to “share best practices” across sectors. Austin’s Compact lists the phrase a dozen times in eight pages. Sharing took several forms, including district schools hosting tours for charter teachers and vice versa, opening up each sector’s professional development to educators from the other sector, and identifying star teachers or leaders who could become mentors across school types. While most of these initiatives involve relatively little effort, they also often failed to produce long-term tangible benefits aside from schools getting to know each other, dispelling some myths, and inspiring negligible changes. Even otherwise successful Compact cities, like Boston, have seen best-practice sharing efforts fall short: one that intended to replicate successful strategies for serving black and Latino boys was eventually reworked when educators realized the difficulty of transplanting practices into different school settings. While some failures are to be expected—and the benefits of educator to educator relationship-building are hard to see and measure—frustration around time wasted can mount, diverting attention from and souring attitudes for other higher-benefit cooperation efforts.

## High Cost/Low Benefit

**Co-locations:** Some cities have sited a charter school in the same building as a district school, either to utilize unused classrooms or, more ambitiously, to improve academic performance by housing a high-performing school with a low-performing one. As CRPE detailed in a 2016 report, co-location for school improvement is a difficult and risky undertaking and it requires large investments of time and effort. Some cities that attempted this are seeing some modest improvements over time in the struggling schools, and some co-locations have inspired deep connections between educators and shifts in school practices (more commonly by good luck than by good design). But they can also intensify divisions between schools—co-locations in cities like Los Angeles and New York City have sparked political backlash—and produce little academic benefit. And the mechanics are complex: district and charter schools can have vastly different cultures, co-locating elementary students with middle or high school students creates natural friction, and staff cooperation runs up against the usual snags of differing schedules, differing student bodies, and competing priorities.<sup>15</sup>

Yet it is not hard to see the appeal for sharing costs and/or education strategies: a local high-performing charter school needs space and the district has a struggling school in a half-empty building.<sup>16</sup> Co-locations that aim to boost academic performance and instill a high-expectations culture typically include shared school missions and joint staff-to-staff work on instruction. But little evidence to date indicates that co-locations can reliably turn around a failing school. Even in the Houston-area Spring Branch district, a system often held up as a co-location exemplar, the arrangement continues to require significant coordination and school leader time. And after three years, student gains are modest. Leaders need to ask if co-location’s added stress on students, teachers, and principals is worth the payoff if the goal is academic gains alone. However, any city that is serious about increasing the number of great schools, regardless of label, must find a long-term public facilities solution for charter schools, even if it sets back cooperation on other fronts.

**Shared professional development:** Several cities have attempted structured professional development efforts around things like Common Core implementation. For the most part, these efforts have not produced much in the way of tangible learning gains, but they require a significant investment of time and resources. However, more concrete training efforts show more promise. Achievement First, a CMO, partnered with Hartford Public Schools in Connecticut to train aspiring district principals in the Achievement First leadership training program. Currently, a total of nine have entered the program, seven have completed the program, and six are now leading Hartford Public Schools. Reviews from the district are strong, and principals are considered well trained. The school board’s positive support was key; when external funding ended, the district funded the program itself.

56x



## Low Cost/High Benefit

**Shared advocacy:** Some cities, like Hartford, Chicago, and Philadelphia, are pursuing efforts like shared legislative advocacy to address state policies that create an uneven playing field, such as the school funding formula in Philadelphia. Major school districts already have lobbyists at the state capitol, as do associations for school boards, administrators, and teachers. Charter networks may have them, too. Cleveland's Compact includes a subcommittee for just this task, with plans to prioritize work on shared funding challenges, changes to state policy on charter authorizing, and smaller regulations that aggravate both sectors, such as how school attendance is logged. When both sectors coordinate their efforts, they can be a powerful voice for bipartisan legislation that smooths cross-sector cooperation, increases revenues, and/or wins flexibilities from well-intentioned but burdensome state laws that stymie innovations designed to help students.

*When both sectors coordinate their efforts, they can be a powerful voice for bipartisan legislation that smooths cross-sector cooperation, increases revenues, and/or wins flexibilities from well-intentioned but burdensome state laws that stymie innovations designed to help students.*

**Student discipline:** Through policy and systems coordination, New Orleans and Washington, D.C., have significantly improved the equity and transparency of student discipline practices in both sectors. D.C.'s expulsion and suspension rates have been on the decline for the past three years since implementing a policy on transparency in discipline through their Equity Reports. Most significantly, even larger declines in suspension rates have been seen for students with special needs and for black students, two groups that traditionally have the highest rates of school discipline.<sup>17</sup>

In New Orleans, district and charter leaders came together to create universal school discipline standards, including a tightly defined list of infractions that could result in expulsion. Once the list was finalized, all public

schools in the city began using the Louisiana Recovery School District's centralized school expulsion system to make final determinations on expulsion requests. The system not only helped ensure that behavioral expectations were more consistent from school to school, it also tracked the students that were expelled to make sure they were placed in a new school and that they continued to receive services. In each year since implementing a centralized system for all public schools, expulsion rates have shown a steady downward trend, and there seems to be more interest in examining practices and considering alternatives to harsh discipline. This process is more "fair, transparent, and efficient" for students and families.<sup>18</sup>

**Shared special education efforts:** New Orleans had struggled with the same problem as many cities with large charter sectors: how to allow charter schools with the same level of resources to effectively serve students with special needs. New Orleans (through Orleans Parish School Board and the Recovery School District) developed a new system of distributing per-pupil funding to schools in a way that is better aligned with the true cost of serving their special needs students (based on minutes of service needed, by their disability). They also created a citywide fund for catastrophic costs. While it is too early to tell whether this access to more equitable funding for charter schools will translate to better academic outcomes for students with special needs, it provides a promising framework for how cities can improve access for all students to attend the school that can serve them the best, without creating burdens for that school.<sup>19</sup>

In Denver, the school district tapped two local CMOs to create new, specialized special education services, providing more access for students with special needs to attend the school of their choice. Denver Public Schools had longstanding programs for students with special needs that required more specialized services at specific schools, called "center programs." Spurred by the Compact

57x



agreement, as of 2015, 10 of these center programs had transitioned from being held at district schools to charter schools, with the goal of reaching 20 programs at charter schools (out of 132 total).<sup>20</sup> The district provides help with funding, training, and development of the model, and the charter school takes on the role of leading the program.<sup>21</sup> This push to replicate district-run special education center programs within the charter sector has nearly eliminated an imbalance between the share of special education students served in district versus those served in charter schools. After the center programs were created within the charter sector, district and charter leaders re-convened to reflect on the special education students for whom the center programs were not the right fit. Together, district and charter leaders traveled the country to research inclusion models, resulting in the creation of four schools—two district and two charter—with high rates of students with special needs receiving instruction within general education classrooms.

## High Cost/High Benefit

**Common enrollment systems:** Efforts like common enrollment systems—which typically include standardized enrollment forms, timelines, and a centralized lottery and student assignment process across sectors—can be a heavy lift and require deep, sustained commitment to succeed. But they directly benefit families, including some of the city’s most vulnerable. Cities must find a willing system host, build the choice algorithm (which can require complex tradeoffs such as offering in-neighborhood schools versus sibling preferences), explain and publicize the system, and help parents navigate it. Charter schools have to give up autonomy on application materials, deadlines, and backfill policies. District schools must reconsider making at least some of their long-established attendance zones less rigid and rise above the mindset that they are helping competitors fill their schools. But this hard work benefits families in many ways: those with English language learners and children with special needs can learn about options they assumed were not available to them, and all families get a one-stop shop for entry instead of having to face multiple—and potentially off-putting—applications. Ultimately, these systems help ensure that all families have equal opportunity to choose a school that best fits their child’s needs.

*Efforts like common enrollment systems can be a heavy lift and require deep, sustained commitment to succeed. But they directly benefit families, including some of the city’s most vulnerable.*

Most or all public schools in Denver, Washington D.C., and New Orleans now participate in common enrollment systems that have led to greater transparency around admissions, better school information, and a more manageable and fairer enrollment process.<sup>22</sup> It is hard to imagine that high-charter cities like D.C. and New Orleans could ensure equity of access without their common enrollment systems. Common enrollment could help tame the chaotic nature of Detroit’s public school system if the idea gains traction there. Despite the complex work involved, cities should not be afraid to tackle the hard stuff.

**Common accountability frameworks:** Like enrollment systems, common accountability frameworks can provide parents a simple way to navigate a wide variety of school types in a city, and can also provide a fair, well-informed, and transparent way to oversee schools for government agencies tasked with making decisions about the school system. Building a common accountability framework takes time, leadership, and consensus building to create a tool that represents all types of schools without being diluted by exceptions. But the process can be worth the effort: leaders from Chicago Public Schools, which uses a School Quality Ratings Policy to evaluate all district and charter schools, report that it has helped school leaders be more proactive about school improvement, and that it is overall a better evaluation system than they had before.<sup>23</sup>



**Coordinated school replacements / turnarounds:** While sometimes politically difficult, and with high costs of time and capacity to make a smooth transition, using CMOs to turn around persistently low-performing district schools—when done well and with attention to community need—shows promise for building higher-quality schools. CRPE’s Ashley Jochim describes two such recent examples:<sup>24</sup>

- Camden, New Jersey, posted some of the worst student outcomes of any district in the state, with only half of the city’s high school students graduating and 90 percent of the schools in the bottom 5 percent of student achievement statewide. Under the state-appointed superintendent, Paymon Rouhanifard, three large charter networks have won approval for up to 15 new schools. In 2015, the district announced a streamlined enrollment process that retained a guaranteed seat at the neighborhood school. While the district has its critics, opposition has been relatively silent compared to other state takeovers in New Jersey and elsewhere.
- In 2010, Massachusetts reformed the state’s accountability system. The Achievement Gap Act provided new power to the State Board and Commissioner of Education to intervene in schools and districts in the lowest tier of the state’s accountability system. Lawrence was the first school district in Massachusetts taken over under the new law. Prior to takeover, Lawrence posted outcomes that put it in the bottom five districts statewide with only half of students graduating within four years. Between 2013 and 2014, the district instituted several changes: reduced spending in the central office, enhanced school autonomy, partnerships with charter operators to manage turnarounds, investments in teacher and principal pipelines, a new collective-bargaining agreement that ended step-and-lane increases, and expanded learning time. The district worked collaboratively with the teachers union on the new contract and the union has managed the turnaround of at least one of Lawrence’s low-performing schools. Because of the collaborative approach, the turnaround effort has faced little opposition.

**Weighing costs and benefits:** It should be evident from this analysis that not all cooperation efforts are worth the time, especially those involving loose strategies for sharing best practices. Anyone considering a cross-sector initiative should take such dynamics into account. It is also true, however, that exceptions to these rules always exist. While an effort to share effective practices for black and Latino boys did not work as well as leaders in Boston had hoped, similar efforts in Denver appear to have been more successful. In some cases, finding ways to get educators or school leaders to work together on instructional strategies can provide an essential trust-building platform for more productive cooperation projects in the future.

59x



# Cooperation Succeeds or Fails Based on Commitment, Structure, and Accountability

As shown earlier in this report, successful cooperation can take many forms: focusing on systems to improve special education services for students, better information systems for families, peer learning networks, co-locations of charter and district schools, shared central services, fairer funding formulas, and joint advocacy efforts. But even if cooperation efforts target high payoff topics, success depends heavily on committed and structured implementation.

## Successful Elements of Cooperation

In our observations, we have seen that successful cooperation efforts have most of these elements in common:

### Specific Shared Objectives and Accountability for Progress

Cooperation takes time. It is messy. If not managed effectively, cooperation can easily result in nothing more than a series of meetings. All successful partnerships to date have anticipated that problem and managed it by starting with a clear sense of the desired outcomes. Whether the goal was “more effective Common Core implementation across schools,” or “more high-quality seats and equitable access to them,” successful partnerships kept the goals at the forefront and explicitly tracked progress toward achieving them through proactive management processes and detailed documents.

*Successful efforts have balanced the sometimes-ambitious goals with realistic expectations about how quickly they could be realized, given fraught political environments and tactics.*

Successful efforts have balanced the sometimes-ambitious goals with realistic expectations about how quickly they could be realized, given fraught political environments and tactics. In Chicago, which arguably has the nation’s most contentious education politics, the broadly supported local teachers union has a strong anti-charter stance and pressures the mayor and district to treat charter schools as a threat to public education in the city. When headline-grabbing battles over school closures and teacher strikes threatened to derail collaborative work, district and charter leaders’

commitment to tangible targets for cooperation helped keep the work on track. Despite polarizing politics, the Compact parties managed to produce a cross-sector school performance framework, a revamped process for charter application, shared professional development, and a joint personalized learning project.

Compact Blue, the Denver committee charged with defining collaborative work and supporting its implementation, regularly discusses priorities and capacity. Priority issues have included charter use of district facilities, higher-quality and more equitable special education services (including above-

40x



referenced center programs), and sharing levy dollars. The city's ability to focus on a few key areas has led to several critical improvements for schools and families, including a common accountability system that holds all public schools to the same standards and gives parents the school performance information they need to make informed choices.

## Leadership That Artfully Manages Commonalities and Differences

Even the best-intended cooperation efforts can easily go sideways: managing the diverse interests of charter and district actors can be like herding cats.<sup>25</sup> In Denver, leaders continually remind the parties of their common purpose. The city's cooperation focuses on how the district and charter school systems complement one another and how working together can produce benefits for families.

*Even the best-intended cooperation efforts can easily go sideways: managing the diverse interests of charter and district actors can be like herding cats.*

In Texas, when the Spring Branch superintendent invited charter operators to open and run schools within the district, central office staff and district school staff and faculty understandably pushed back. Charter operators, for their part, were also wary of risk to their autonomy. But the superintendent skillfully worked to allay fears on all sides as the parties developed trust. The district hired charter leaders for high-level district positions, helping to solidify charter sector trust and proving its commitment to ensuring charter school needs were understood and respected.

These uniquely positioned leaders, which CRPE calls "boundary spanners," have proven adept at finding common ground and have negotiated cooperation initiatives in cities like Denver, Atlanta, Spokane, and Washington, D.C.<sup>26</sup> Today, in Spring Branch's co-located schools, boundary spanners continue to hone how district and charter schools share data and solve problems.

In Central Falls, Rhode Island, cooperation has focused not on the entire charter sector, but rather on tailored partnerships with individual schools and organizations that share goals. Multiple collaborative efforts continue to thrive despite district leadership turnover.

## Valuing Outcomes Over Institutions

In cities closest to *Embedded* cooperation, partnerships go beyond self-interest and become a means to a shared end. District leaders committed to outcomes over labels see their job as ensuring all students in a city are well served in public schools. Charter leaders committed to the same principle see their job as giving the most students as possible access to a high-quality education as quickly as possible. Without these driving philosophies, cooperation becomes a one-off exercise whose success rests in the hands of a relative few.

## Reasons Cooperation Efforts Fail

Unfortunately, examples of failed cooperation efforts are more common than the successes. Anyone contemplating such partnerships must understand the reasons for those failures, many of which stem from these elements:

### Side Project Mentality

If cooperation is just an add-on that lacks a central purpose and support, it gets lost among other initiatives or priorities. In cities like Los Angeles, Sacramento, and Hartford we have seen how leadership turnover, lack of commitment, and district staff resistance can derail even the least controversial cooperation. In Sacramento, then-superintendent Jonathan Raymond championed a broad vision for cooperation. But when he and most of his cabinet left, the school board chose to

6/1x



focus on other efforts; the promising work on a common school performance framework became just another compliance-driven activity to meet a grant-specified deliverable. Sacramento-area charter schools still regularly communicate with each other and the district on charter renewals and school facilities policies, but the energy and urgency to jointly tackle big issues is gone.

## Environment of Mistrust

In cities like Austin (Texas), Sacramento (California), and Rochester (New York), cooperation suffered from toxic community politics and ingrained distrust could not be overcome. Los Angeles, where some 20 percent of public school students are in charter schools, shows how moving to transactional cooperation without tending to underlying trust issues can create partnerships that cannot weather leadership transitions. The biggest cooperation win in Los Angeles was a district-created funding mechanism to support more autonomy for charter schools around special education services: the charter schools saw this as a critical lifeline that let them improve services for students with disabilities.<sup>27</sup>

But when Aspire, a high-performing charter operator, decided they wanted to continue working with a regional entity on special education outside of the Los Angeles Unified School District, the school board reacted by refusing to renew the charter of several of the operator's schools. Ultimately, the board's high-profile action was widely seen as self-defeating since the successful charter operator simply appealed the decision and was granted a charter by the county.<sup>28</sup>

In Philadelphia, attempts to adopt a common school enrollment system failed in part due to lack of trust. Several prominent community leaders were suspicious because conversations about the proposed system were held behind closed doors. Many charter leaders did not trust that the district would be able to manage the system. District officials, for their part, were caught off guard and unable to allay fears.

## Unequal Power

Many districts interact with charter schools in their role as authorizer, which gives them unilateral power over the charter schools. In Baltimore, elements of district-charter governance were seen by charter leaders as limiting charter school autonomy (and power) in the city. Under state law, the local district is the only authorizer for all charter schools in Baltimore and is responsible for hiring and dismissal decisions for charter school principals. Charter school teachers, like their district counterparts, must collectively bargain with the district. In 2010, then-district CEO Andres Alonso signed the Compact with the goal of increasing financial and programmatic autonomy across both district and charter schools. Baltimore made some progress—most notably on a jointly developed school performance framework and in a revamped charter renewal process seen by many charter leader as imperfect, but a clear improvement. But the power imbalance (and Alonso's departure) ultimately choked off the potential for deeper cooperation.

Urban districts once enjoyed a monopoly over public education in their communities; in some cities this is still true. But even when it is not, districts sometimes still operate as if it were true. Cooperation requires listening to multiple voices and seeking compromise and accommodation where necessary. The New York City Schools chancellor is appointed by the mayor. The current mayor, Bill de Blasio, chose Carmen Fariña, who has operated with a more centralized vision for running schools than her predecessor, leaving less room for collaborative decision making. Both de Blasio and Fariña are also widely seen as skeptical of charter schools. The net result has relegated district-charter engagement to efforts where substantive policy decisions are off the table.

62x



## Tone-Deafness

Many potential collaborators fail to understand that they are dealing with a diverse set of partners. Although charter schools are often talked about as a monolithic bloc assumed to hold common

*Many potential collaborators fail to understand that they are dealing with a diverse set of partners. Although charter schools are often talked about as a monolithic bloc assumed to hold common interests, school-by-school variations are vast.*

interests, school-by-school variations are vast. A charter may operate as an independent or stand-alone school. Or, it may be part of a network or CMO. Some charter schools target special student populations; others operate much like a traditional district school, serving a surrounding neighborhood. Some charter schools are based on certain instructional models or hold particular educational philosophies. This differentiation may be encouraged in cities who seek to serve the diverse needs of children and give families choices. But it can make cooperation a more complex negotiation than, for example, a transportation contract or even a collective-bargaining agreement with teachers. Cooperation agreements can be exclusive, leaving some charter

schools behind. Or they can be too inclusive and try to be all things to all people, becoming diluted to the point where goals are intangible or no realistic path for implementation exists.

Without good planning, broad commitment, and strong leadership, time can be wasted on ineffective partnerships and already-fragile relationships can sour. But the alternatives—continued isolated actions like one-size-fits-all state regulation, top-down district directives, or no action at all—are worse.

Cooperation is not always possible or productive. But it is usually best for districts, charter schools, and families to try to work jointly on some things even while competing on others. The central question for potential collaborators, then, is not whether to work together, but rather when, around what issues, and with what goals? The following section will help inform those decisions.



# Recommendations for District and Charter Leaders, States, and Funders to Realize the Opportunities of Cooperation

The increasing number of successful district-charter partnerships generally stem from clear-eyed pragmatism and a recognition that:

- Time invested in the hard work successful cooperation demands is not time wasted, but ignoring opportunities to serve students more effectively most certainly is.
- Public education's core mission is not about gaining or preserving market share but about meeting the needs of all students by whatever means possible.

By identifying ways to level the playing field for fair school competition, by developing common strategies to make parents' school choice experience more user-friendly and fair, and by looking for opportunities to leverage complementary organizational assets and advantages for greater impact on students and classrooms, the sum will indeed be greater than the parts of sector-specific education reforms.

*Like it or not, traditional school systems in most major cities operate in a highly competitive environment because of the rise of public charter schools. Districts that continue to ignore or fight competition are likely to see their already severe financial consequences worsen.*

Like it or not, traditional school systems in most major cities operate in a highly competitive environment because of the rise of public charter schools. In truth, many urban settings have seen enrollment declines in traditional public schools for decades, thanks to families with the requisite savvy or economic means decamping to private schools or neighboring suburban districts—a factor most school districts have ignored. Districts that continue to ignore or fight competition are likely to see their already severe financial consequences worsen.

That said, school choice advocates who believe charter school expansion can continue in a bubble, entirely isolated from these increasingly dire district realities, are kidding themselves—even with a new, strongly pro-school choice federal administration taking power. The political backlash to operating as lone wolves without regard to the impact on students who remain in struggling district schools is growing fast. News coverage in “high-choice” cities in recent years has focused on school closures, uneven special education enrollments, harsh student suspension and expulsion policies, growing community anger over chronically poor school options in certain neighborhoods, and fights to get into high-quality schools in others. With a new president who talked on the campaign trail of little else besides school choice, charter schools are at risk of being

64x



seen as a conservative, partisan project that feeds the “end of public education” narrative. To combat this—and make sure choice works for all families—choice leaders must insist on policies and practices that promote quality, equity, accountability, and collaborative district-charter problem solving.

Both sectors fail to engage on these issues at their own peril. Charter schools will not continue to grow apace without access to the funding or facilities that districts control. Districts will not be able to use charter schools’ flexibilities to their advantage and stabilize enrollment losses without substantive partnerships with those charter schools. And families will continue to pay the price for isolated, self-interested action.

Carving a new path will require hard work. Compelling successes described in this report show what is possible when competitors also become collaborators. But when we look across the formalized efforts to date, a concerning disconnect emerges between the stark need for cross-sector cooperation and what has actually been accomplished. Lack of commitment, strategy, resources, and legal frameworks to support cooperation all contribute to the limited success. Worse, they contribute to the many cities that are backsliding on progress. It is past time for leaders to accelerate this work.

## What district and charter leaders can do to support successful cooperation

- **Recognize mutual interests, and help others do the same.** Cooperation is strongest when district and charter school leaders understand that they each have a vested interest in the other’s success. Leaders must help others see the light. Do not expect central office staff to suddenly become charter-friendly or for charter school advocates to suddenly see districts as anything other than a barrier. In toxic environments, spend time building trust and goodwill between sectors and celebrate early wins to sustain motivation for future work. Recognizing their mutual interests, district and charter leaders worked together to secure state passage of the Cleveland Plan—which set a common vision for education in the city—and voter approval of a subsequent property tax levy that benefits both sectors. Now these leaders are finding ways to deepen cooperation.
- **Build a strong coalition for a citywide approach to education.** Cooperation is less likely to survive over time if just a few leaders in the district or charter sectors support it. Include everyone who wants to see the city succeed. Boston broadened the tent by bringing in Catholic schools and the mayor’s deputy for education. School leaders can help advocacy groups understand cooperation’s goals and merits and how they can support the work citywide. While many groups have focused on advocating for state-level legislative action, supporting cooperation is more nuanced than rallying support for an up or down state vote. But groups that traditionally promote charter schools could provide critical help when, for example, a Compact or contract comes before a school board or a collaborative superintendent seeks reappointment.
- **Find and use boundary spanners.** People with experience in both sectors, or who are willing to switch from one to the other, carry authority that helps them bridge diverse interests and negotiate effectively. As shown in cities or districts such as Denver, Spring Branch Independent School District, and Washington, D.C., a boundary spanner can infuse district or citywide strategy with innovative ideas, see both sectors’ perspectives in the gray area of contentious issues, and help gain trust and facilitate cooperation without being seen as beholden to one sector.

65x



- **Focus on issues that will lead to clear accomplishments.** Identify tangible, concrete goals that benefit both district and charter schools, as Chicago did in its Compact. Choose cooperation activities that fit leaders' desired cost benefit, as shown in Figure 7, to maximize results. Wins build support for more complex work as the relationship matures.
- **Make "trades" that give each party a win.** Hard-nosed bargaining need not diminish the altruism that drives many in education. Leaders should come to the table ready to deal: partnership needs to deliver clear benefits for each party. In San Jose, California, the Franklin-McKinley School District wanted to ensure that its growing number of charter schools enrolled an equitable share of special education students. Cooperation negotiations resulted in the district offering facilities the charter schools needed and the charter schools working with the district on enrollment fairs and other initiatives to help special education families learn about the charter school options available to them.
- **Develop focused partnerships, but do not stop there.** Cooperation in places like Spring Branch and Central Falls began with a relatively narrow scope, focusing on limited partnerships between individual schools or groups of schools to achieve specific purposes. These one-off efforts can produce concrete early wins, but leaders should use these successes as a springboard for broader cooperation. Commit to it as an ongoing, long-term endeavor, addressing issues with partners as they arise, rather than approaching cooperation as a single, discrete project.
- **Consider creating a dedicated governance entity for cooperation.** Boston, Denver, and Cleveland have seen continued success as the result of dedicated cooperation committees whose sole mission is to support joint work with clear meeting structures, timelines, and accountability for broad participation and progress in the initiatives. Neither the charter sector nor the district is treated as a monolith; the committees work to ensure that all charter schools can participate in at least one initiative and that multiple district departments are involved. A third-party or independent facilitator often supports the work and ensures all voices are heard.

But even the most serious-minded, savvy commitments are at risk without policy and political support. Outside prodding and accountability are needed to maintain momentum and provide political cover for local leaders pursuing a change to the status quo.

## What states can do to support cooperation

As a previous report on district-charter collaboration describes in depth, the state has a largely unexplored, but potentially important, role to play in supporting city-level cooperation.

At the very least, states should *create greater transparency* around data for all schools (enrollment, discipline, etc.). Verifying and auditing charter school data can go a long way toward solving tough equity issues while infringing least on autonomy and being relatively inexpensive to do. To date, states have not done very much of this.

To encourage districts and charter schools to partner, states can take these first steps:

- **Provide political cover and support.** Governors or state school chiefs can use their informal power to support cooperation by building coalitions, connecting interested parties to cooperation efforts, and publicizing innovations and successes that stem from cooperation both locally and beyond.
- **Use funding to incentivize cooperation.** State-administered competitive grants can promote district-charter collaborative projects. States could also modify or eliminate barriers in state funding formulas that get in the way of cooperation.

*lelex*



- **Promote cooperation through new accountability systems.** States can develop their new, more local accountability systems under the Every Student Succeeds Act with an eye to leveling the playing field between district and charter schools through moves like supporting citywide accountability metrics.
- **Support strong charter authorizing practices.** Charter school quality is critical to the success of district-charter cooperation: weak authorizing practices lead to low-quality schools, leaving districts with little incentive to establish cross-sector partnerships. Poor authorizing and low-quality charter schools also promotes skepticism and distrust of CMOs and the charter sector in general on the part of district staff, teachers, and community members. States can fund improvements to authorizers or help local authorizers institutionalize best practices through technical assistance, whether directly or through organizations like the National Association of Charter School Authorizers.

While the first steps listed above would certainly support local cooperation efforts like those described in this report, states can advance cooperation on a larger scale. States can help families by creating solutions to pressing challenges around choice and school quality by reworking systems so that cities can function as an integrated “system of schools” rather than as hosts to two separate sectors. Retooling the entire education system to be collaborative by design can prevent lost progress on areas of key importance to students and families—losses that stem from the political challenges and leadership turnover that so often dog district-charter cooperation efforts.

To “go big” on cooperation, states can:

- **Focus on family-friendly solutions.** Families across the country face challenges navigating enrollment systems, finding more than one school choice that offers a good fit, and securing transportation. While all these are ample areas for cooperation on their own, they would receive more attention if a state were to specifically mandate or track cities’ progress in these areas, providing technical assistance where necessary.
- **Develop systems that move beyond the district-charter dichotomy.** CRPE colleagues Paul Hill and Ashley Jochim argue for a new education governance model in *A Democratic Constitution for Public Education*. With a limited, but critical, mandate to approve an annual slate of schools, a city education commission would support a truly citywide system of autonomous public schools. The distinction between district and charter schools would matter little, but cooperation between schools could be vital to ensuring school quality in every neighborhood. Similarly, for cities with fragmented K–12 governance, coordinating practices such as enrollment policies on a citywide scale would benefit families and charter schools, and could provide more fertile ground and a more rational basis for cooperation.

## What funders can do to support successful cooperation

Funders can play a major role in fostering cross-sector collaborative practices in cities. As the Gates Foundation-funded District-Charter Collaboration Compacts demonstrate, foundations can provide the resources that incentivize cities, districts, and charter school leaders to come together. But to effectively move forward, funders should learn from the Compact process and cities’ experiences in developing them.

Key lessons in supporting cooperation include:

- **Let cities define and focus on what they need.** While some collaborative efforts are more cost- and time-effective than others, foundations should encourage cities to collaborate on the issues that matter most to their own families and schools. “Big-ticket” cooperation projects like common enrollment are laudable long-term goals for any city. But a city may have more

47x



pressing areas needing cooperation, such as special education funding and services, or accountability for student discipline practices. Enabling a city to address its specific needs can build a strong basis for future “big-ticket” work. Foundations should support the work that cities want and need to focus on.

- **Support cooperation as an ongoing effort.** The development and signing of Compact agreements garnered much fanfare. Such attention can help create momentum and temporarily cool contention between the sectors. But if agreements are not seen as living documents, as an integral part of a city’s long-term cooperation plan and philosophy, or as part of a governance system that supports continued progress and accountability (governance like the Boston Compact Steering Committee or accountability provisions like those in Chicago’s Compact), these efforts can stall out. Foundations should create incentives for ongoing work, rather than efforts tied to time-limited grant periods.
- **Invest in community engagement and plan for political cover.** Strong, thoughtful leadership has shown to be key for pushing cooperation forward. But when leadership turns over, that work can come to a halt. Foundations looking to support long-term cooperation should invest in helping cities build broad community understanding of and support for cross-sector cooperation, so progress can survive beyond the tenure of a forward-thinking superintendent or mayor. Foundations can also help cities proactively plan for and respond to political challenges and pushback that can come along with cooperation-generated changes to the status quo.



## Conclusion: What's Next for District-Charter Cooperation?

Leaders in cities with multiple public school choice options increasingly realize that engagement between school districts and charter schools is necessary. While our recommendations in this report are designed to help make the relationship collaborative and productive, much remains to be learned about how to increase the reach and impact of joint work.

The Center on Reinventing Public Education (CRPE) will continue to spotlight and track ongoing efforts or promising new agreements. Our next round of research will pay special attention to:

- Constraints and opportunities on facilities sharing
- Ways states can best support local cooperation
- Effective strategies for managing the politics of cooperation
- Promising methods to replicate high-quality district and charter models

District-charter cooperation is an opportunity—and in most cities with sizeable charter school student populations, a requirement—to most effectively meet children's educational needs. The cooperation concept is most prominent in the 23 cities that signed the Gates Foundation-supported district-charter Compacts. The 2011 announcement of the original 16 agreements served as a refreshing counter-example to the "you're either with us or against us" view dominating education politics in so many cities. That said, the relationship between district and charter schools predates the formalized Compacts and can take many forms. The central question remains how best to make that relationship effective and help it rise to the level of partnership.

Many cities, Compact and otherwise, offer successful examples of cooperation undergirded by several common elements. Successful cooperation requires a sober accounting of each side's strengths and weaknesses. It requires agreements that are specific and have reachable goals with give-and-take benefits for all parties. The strongest agreements map a clear governing structure to foster ongoing, long-term work and hold all parties accountable for progress, guided by a broad vision for the city's education landscape that spans more than one grant period or election cycle. City leaders, states, and foundations can help provide the political and financial support that sustains these agreements and can help carve a path toward cooperative problem solving and coordination among school providers, including districts in cities where thousands of students still attend traditional public schools.

69x

*All parties need to work harder to ensure cooperation is not treated as just a hypothetical good idea, but as tangible, worthwhile work that pays real dividends for the broadest possible spectrum of schools, students, and families.*

Cooperation can serve as the glue that binds cities as their education landscapes shift—shifts like those already under way in cities where school autonomy and choices for families are integral parts of a revamped public education system. Leaders can strengthen that glue by ensuring that choice is accompanied by carefully considered government oversight and supports for quality, accountability, and equity—not simply left to the whims of free-market forces. Looking ahead, school boards, central offices, and even charter school networks will evolve and could look quite different in 50 years. Students' needs will change and diversify, even as closing the opportunity gap remains a challenge. This changing landscape will generate more questions around how to best educate

children. We remain convinced that district-charter cooperation can help produce answers. But to get those answers, all parties need to work harder to ensure cooperation is not treated as just a hypothetical good idea, but as tangible, worthwhile work that pays real dividends for the broadest possible spectrum of schools, students, and families.



# Endnotes

- 1 The Portfolio Network includes more than 50 affiliated cities, but CRPE tracks and analyzes those that are actively carrying out the strategy (currently 35). Of the 23 cities with formal District-Charter Collaboration Compacts, 17 are also Portfolio cities.
- 2 The City of Central Falls exited bankruptcy after 13 months, in 2012. See Jess Bidgood, "Plan to End Bankruptcy in Rhode Island City Gains Approval," *New York Times*, September 6, 2012.
- 3 Joe Nocera, "The Central Falls Success," *New York Times*, January 2, 2012.
- 4 Michael Vaughn, "Coffee Break: Denver's Tom Boasberg on Leadership, Equity and...Cuneiform," *Education Post*, January 6, 2016.
- 5 Christina Tuttle, et al., *Understanding District-Charter Collaboration Grants* (Washington, DC: Mathematica Policy Research, 2016), 25.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Ashley Jochim, et al., *How Parents Experience Public School Choice* (Seattle, WA: Center on Reinventing Public Education, 2014).
- 8 School quality "grades" given by the Excellent Schools Detroit, a nonprofit that ranks school quality and publishes school performance data. For their methodology, see School Quality Scorecard, Excellent Schools Detroit website.
- 9 Michael DeArmond, Ashley Jochim, and Robin Lake, *Making School Choice Work* (Seattle, WA: Center on Reinventing Public Education, 2014).
- 10 Betheny Gross, Michael DeArmond, and Patrick Denice, *Common Enrollment, Parents, and School Choice: Early Evidence from Denver and New Orleans* (Seattle, WA: Center on Reinventing Public Education, 2015); Steven Glazerman and Dallas Dotter, *Market Signals: Evidence on the Determinants and Consequences of School Choice from a Citywide Lottery*, Working Paper 45 (Washington, DC: Mathematica Policy Research, 2016); Douglas N. Harris and Matthew F. Larsen, *What Schools Do Families Want (And Why)? New Orleans Families and Their School Choices Before and after Katrina* (New Orleans, LA: Education Research Alliance, 2015).
- 11 Marcus Winters, *Why the Gap? Special Education and New York City Charter Schools* (Seattle, WA: Center on Reinventing Public Education, 2013).
- 12 Patrick Denice, Betheny Gross, and Karega Rausch, *Understanding Student Discipline Practices in Charter Schools: A Research Agenda* (Seattle, WA: Center on Reinventing Public Education, 2015); Betheny Gross, Sivan Tuchman, and Sarah Yatkso, *Grappling with Discipline in Autonomous Schools: New Approaches from D.C. and New Orleans* (Seattle, WA: Center on Reinventing Public Education, 2016).
- 13 Paul Hill and Tricia Maas, *Backfill in Charter High Schools: Practices to Learn From and Questions to be Answered* (Seattle, WA: Center on Reinventing Public Education, 2016).
- 14 See CRPE's 2015 city summaries for Los Angeles, Denver, and New Orleans for more information on their work to distribute resources to serve special education students more fairly in charter schools. Los Angeles reorganized their Special Education Local Plan Area to provide more autonomy for charter schools. Denver developed "center programs" for charter schools to serve special needs students. New Orleans, through the Recovery School District, developed a system to share catastrophic costs and align special education funding with student needs. Also see Lynn Schnaiberg and Robin Lake, *Special Education in New Orleans: Juggling Flexibility, Reinvention, and Accountability in the Nation's Most Decentralized School System* (Seattle, WA: Center on Reinventing Public Education, 2015).
- 15 For more on co-location, see Michael DeArmond, et al., *The Best of Both Worlds: Can District-Charter Co-Location Be a Win-Win?* (Seattle, WA: Center on Reinventing Public Education, 2015).



- 16 One lesson from Franklin-McKinley is that good fences make good neighbors. Schools share district properties, but have their own identifiable spaces, including school entrances and child drop-off areas.
- 17 Gross, Tuchman, and Yatsko, *Grappling with Discipline in Autonomous Schools*, 7.
- 18 Ibid, 15.
- 19 Schnaiberg and Lake, *Special Education in New Orleans*.
- 20 Jaclyn Zubrzycki, "DPS Shifting More Special Education Duties to Charter Schools," *Chalkbeat*, April 30, 2015.
- 21 Josh Drake and Robin Lake, *How District and Charter Schools Coordinate Supports for Students with Special Needs*, webinar (Denver, CO: Denver Public Schools, May 2012).
- 22 Gross, DeArmond, Denise, *Common Enrollment, Parents, and School Choice*; Glazerman and Dotter, *Market Signals*; Harris and Larsen, *What Schools Do Families Want (And Why)?*
- 23 Yatsko, et al., *Apples to Apples: Common School Performance Frameworks as a Tool for Choice and Accountability* (Seattle, WA: Center on Reinventing Public Education, 2016).
- 24 Ashley Jochim, *Measures of Last Resort: Assessing Strategies for State-Initiated Turnarounds* (Seattle, WA: Center on Reinventing Public Education, 2016).
- 25 Sean Gill, Sarah Yatkso, and Robin Lake, *Herding Cats: Managing Diverse Charter School Interests in Cooperation Efforts* (Seattle, WA: Center on Reinventing Public Education, 2016).
- 26 For more on boundary spanners, see Sarah Yatsko and Angela Bruns, *The Best of Both Worlds: School District-Charter Sector Boundary Spanners* (Seattle, WA: Center on Reinventing Public Education, 2015).
- 27 In California, special education is provided through regional Special Education Local Plan Areas (SELPA), which can include multiple districts and charter schools. Many charter schools in the state use the SELPA based in El Dorado County, even though they are not located there. For more information, see *What Is a SELPA?*, California Charter Schools Association, accessed December 28, 2016.
- 28 For more on LA County's SELPA and the decision not to renew Aspire public schools charter, see Robin Lake, "Shortsighted Board Action in L. A.," *The Lens* (blog), Center on Reinventing Public Education, February 14, 2014.

70x



Clifton Board of Education

Information submitted to the New Jersey General Assembly Education Committee

February 1, 2017

Resolution of the Clifton Board of Education dated January 31, 2017

**F-1/31/17-17 -- Approval to Petition for the Board of Education's Equitable Share of State Education Aid (see attachment)**

WHEREAS, the Finance Committee of the Clifton Board of Education has commenced discussions with the administration of this Board of Education in preparing the 2017-2018 budget for the Clifton District; and

WHEREAS, the Finance Committee and the Administration has reached a consensus that the projected revenues for the 2017-2018 budget will not likely be sufficient to maintain the status quo for the level of services provided for in the current budget; and

WHEREAS, the percentage increases in revenues are less than the level of increases to expenses; and

WHEREAS, the Finance Committee feels it is imperative that funding to maintain the current educational standards and programs are of the highest priority for the Clifton District; and

WHEREAS, the Finance Committee believes that responsibility for the short fall of funding lies clearly with the Governor and the State Legislature; and

WHEREAS, the Finance Committee of the Clifton Board of Education has presented this District's Board of Education with a statement noting these circumstances and further noting that the New Jersey Department of Education under funds the Clifton School District in excess of \$50 million annually; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Clifton Board of Education adopts this resolution and corresponding statement of the Board's Finance Committee as a "Sense of Resolution" of the Clifton Board of Education; and

THEREFORE, FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED, that this resolution and corresponding Finance Committee Statement be forwarded to the Governor of the State of New Jersey, the President of the New Jersey Senate and the Speaker of the New Jersey General Assembly, the representatives of the 34th Legislative District and the Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Education.

Status Report – 2017 / 2018 Clifton Board of Education Budget Outlook  
Statement Issued by the Finance Committee of the Clifton Board of Education

The 2017 / 2018 Clifton Board of Education Budget must be adopted by a vote of the members of the Board by the beginning of May 2017. The process of putting this budget together was started by the administration in consultation with the Finance Committee of the Board in December of 2016. Although much work still needs to be done on the expenditure side of the

budget we anticipate that those expenditures will increase at a higher rate of growth than the anticipated increase in our revenues.

Since the 2009 / 2010 budget, the annual increase in the tax levy to the tax payers of Clifton for education has been 2% or less for each of the last 8 budget years. This approach was initiated before the state cap of 2% was imposed. Although in recent years the Board had the ability to raise the tax level higher than the 2% by the use of waivers, the Board has taken the position that 2% was to be held to in recognition of the unfair tax burden that our fellow tax payers currently bear.

Revenues from the state and federal sources are projected to remain flat which means our overall revenues will increase less than 2% while expenditures will grow greater than 2% if we are to maintain the status quo of what the Clifton Board of Education is called upon to pay for.

Historically the Clifton Board of Education has a long established record of maintaining high educational standards at one of the low costs per student of any district of its size in the State of New Jersey. Currently that number is approximately \$13,000 per pupil. In the current budget, the administration needed to cut 24 certificated positions to have a balanced budget. This impacts the students we educate in our elementary, middle and high schools. We can no longer continue to sustain such cuts in personnel and maintain our educational standards. It is also equally unfair to have the tax payers of Clifton bear a greater financial burden than they already carry.

The source of this crisis lies squarely at the feet of the state legislature and the Governor. The Clifton Board of Education currently receives approximately \$26.6 million in state aid per year and is short changed in excess of \$50 million per year. We receive less than 35% of what the state formula says that we are entitled to, yet the state funds 88% of what the New Jersey Department of Education full funding formula calls. Many districts in the state receive more than 88% of their entitlement and it is even more astonishing there are a considerable number of districts that receive in excess of 100% of their entitlement. This is untenable situation for the Clifton District.

The Finance Committee will recommend a budget to the entire Board that is frugal and responsible yet we are also committed to ensuring that our students receive the education they deserve while maintaining a 2% tax levy increase. Without receiving at least some of the funding that we are entitled to, the finance committee is prepared to make the necessary cuts to expenditures without impacting the staff responsible for educating our students and at the same time keeping our tax levy within the boundaries established over the last 8 budgets.

The ball is clearly in the court of the legislature and executive branch of our state as to what course of action the Clifton Board of Education must take under these circumstances. We have continually fulfilled our obligation; the state must now fulfill theirs.



Clifton BOE - Current State Aid versus State School Aid Adequacy

	State Aid 16-17	Adequacy	Difference	Percentage
Categorical Sp. Education Aid	6,684,519	9,229,134	2,544,615	27.57%
Equalization Aid	17,638,485	60,603,969	42,965,484	70.90%
Categorical Security Aid	867,934	3,546,427	2,678,493	75.53%
Categorical Transportation Aid	<u>551,845</u>	<u>2,371,972</u>	<u>1,820,127</u>	<u>76.73%</u>
Subtotal	25,742,783	75,751,502	50,008,719	66.02%
Under Adequacy Aid	500,000	500,000	0	0.00%
PARCC Readiness Aid	112,730	112,730	0	0.00%
Per Pupil Growth Aid	112,730	112,730	0	0.00%
Prof Learning Community Aid	<u>110,120</u>	<u>110,120</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0.00%</u>
Total State Aid	26,578,363	76,587,082	50,008,719	65.30%