

Data Brief: NYC Charter School Performance on the 2009-10 State Exams for Math and English

August 9, 2010

Overview

The recent release of state test scores for school year 2009-10 presents both validation and challenges to New York City's public charter schools. This brief offers an initial exploration of that scoring data, which pertain to the Math and English Language Arts exams that are administered annually to students in grades 3-8, in order to highlight key trends and invite further reflection.

New York City charter school students continue to score higher than their neighborhood peers in public schools, in a large majority of Community School Districts (CSDs) across the city. This advantage is most notable in the three areas where charter schools are most concentrated; in Central Brooklyn, Harlem, and the South Bronx, charter school students are more proficient in both subjects and at all grade levels.

While charter schools' mean scale scores varied very little from the previous year, the State Education Department's laudable move to tighten the definition of proficiency brought sobering news to charter schools and district schools alike. Most charter schools experienced large drops in their proficiency percentages, particularly in ELA. There is much work left to do.

Observations

- Even under the adjusted standards for proficiency, some high-performing charter schools continue to serve as "proof points" by achieving extremely high proficiency rates in both subjects.
- Nevertheless, the realignment of proficiency rates—based on courageous reckoning by the state's education leadership—cannot be overlooked or explained away. If the charter sector is to live out its promise, this must be a moment of honest analysis and re-doubling of efforts. Our conversations with numerous school and network leaders affirm that they are not only aware of this but already hard at work.

- ELA proficiency rates suffered worse losses than Math in many schools, including some of the city's most highly regarded charter school networks. The charter sector can learn from such schools as Harlem Success Academy and Bronx Excellence, whose instructional strategies related to literacy and comprehension resulted in high proficiency rates.

- By the same token, charter schools that are attempting to pioneer innovative approaches but have posted *low* scores will be important for authorizers and observers to monitor over time. Examples include The Equity Project (in only its first year) and Opportunity Charter School (which serves a high percentage of special education students).

- Three observations in light of recent legislative debates over charter schools:

1. In the high-need communities where charter schools are most concentrated (or, allegedly, "saturated"), they consistently—and often dramatically—outperform district schools on state tests, validating the high demand for them from charter parents.

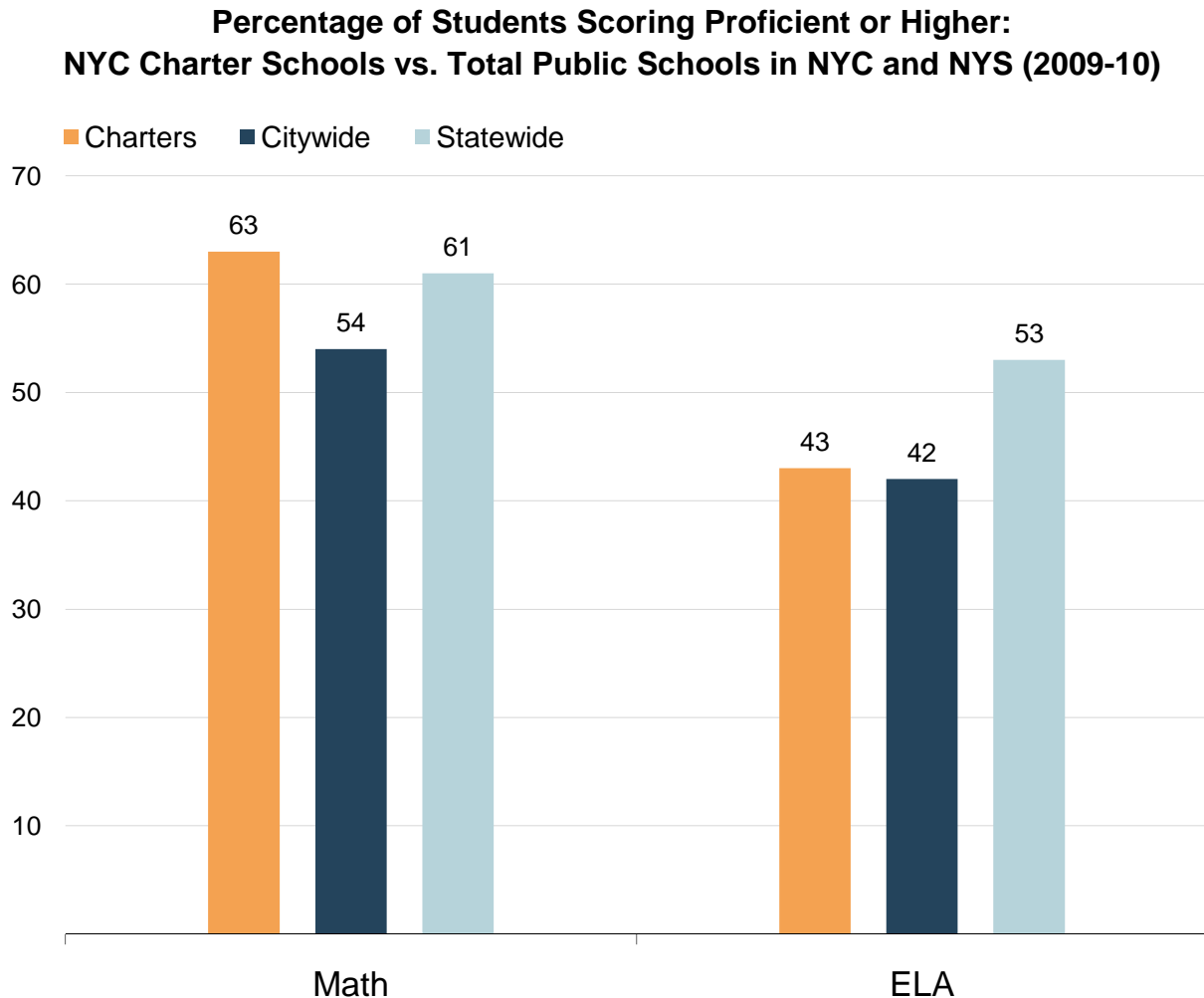
2. The distinction between for- and non-profit school networks was not strictly predictive of student achievement; in aggregate CMO students were more proficient in Math, EMO students in ELA.

3. The UFT Charter School is among the city's lowest-performing charter schools. This is nothing for charter school advocates to be gleeful about, but it should pose difficult questions for the city's teachers union, which operates the school while acting as the broader charter movement's most powerful legislative opponent.

- Finally, it is important to remember the backdrop of fiscal inequity to all of New York City charter schools' successes and shortcomings. In the year when these achievement results were earned, charter schools received \$1,000 per pupil *less* than they were due under the state's equitable funding formula, under a charter-specific funding freeze that threatens to be repeated for 2010-11. It seems a strange reward for superior achievement.

Charts and Tables

In school year 2009-10, state test scores show that New York City charter school students continued to outperform their citywide district peers, and led their statewide peers in math.

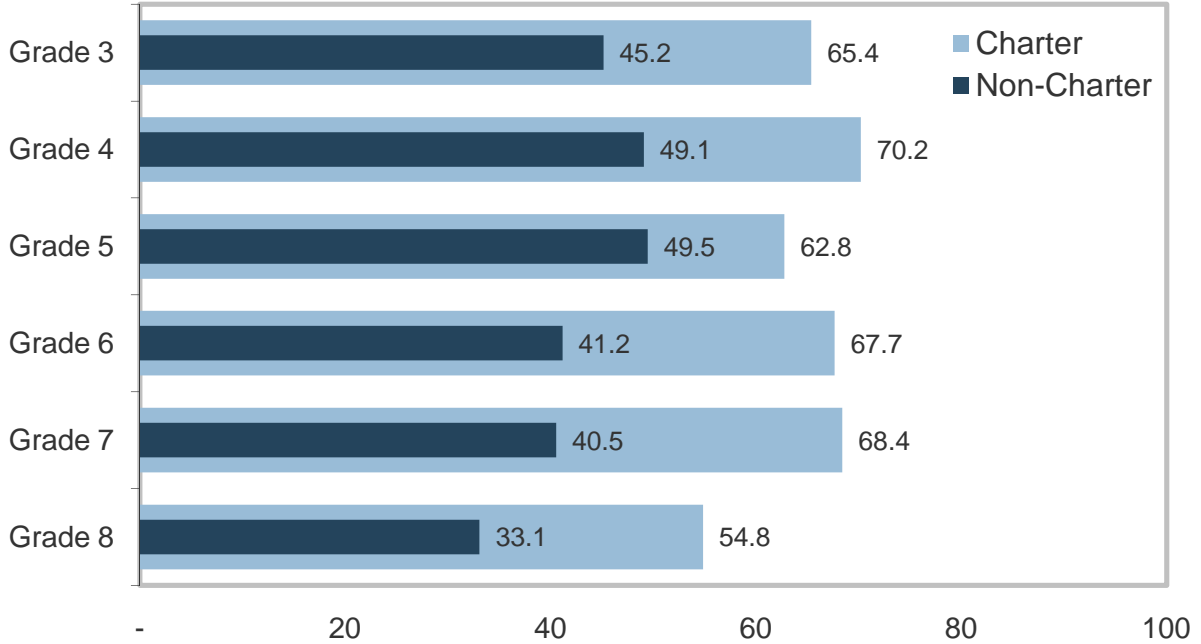


Test scores come from the New York State Department of Education and are available for download at <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/irts/ela-math/>. Charter school percentages are out of all students, not an average of school rates. Because of rounding differences, certain percentage totals in this document may vary slightly from those listed in other third-party analyses.

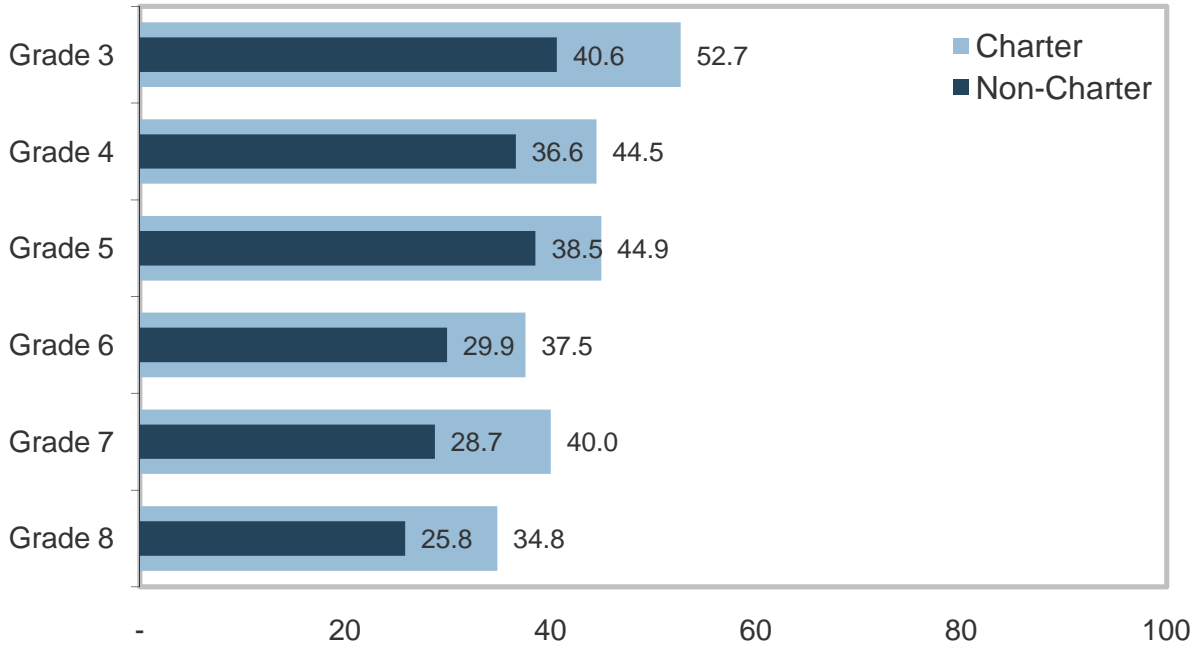
Subgroup comparisons are not yet available, but early estimates suggest that charter school proficiency rates will also be higher than citywide rates in both subjects for African-American and Hispanic students, and students with disabilities.

NYC charter school students outscored their district school peers in Central Brooklyn, Harlem, and the South Bronx.

Percentage of Central Brooklyn Students Proficient at Math: Charter vs. District School Students, by Grade Level (2009-10)

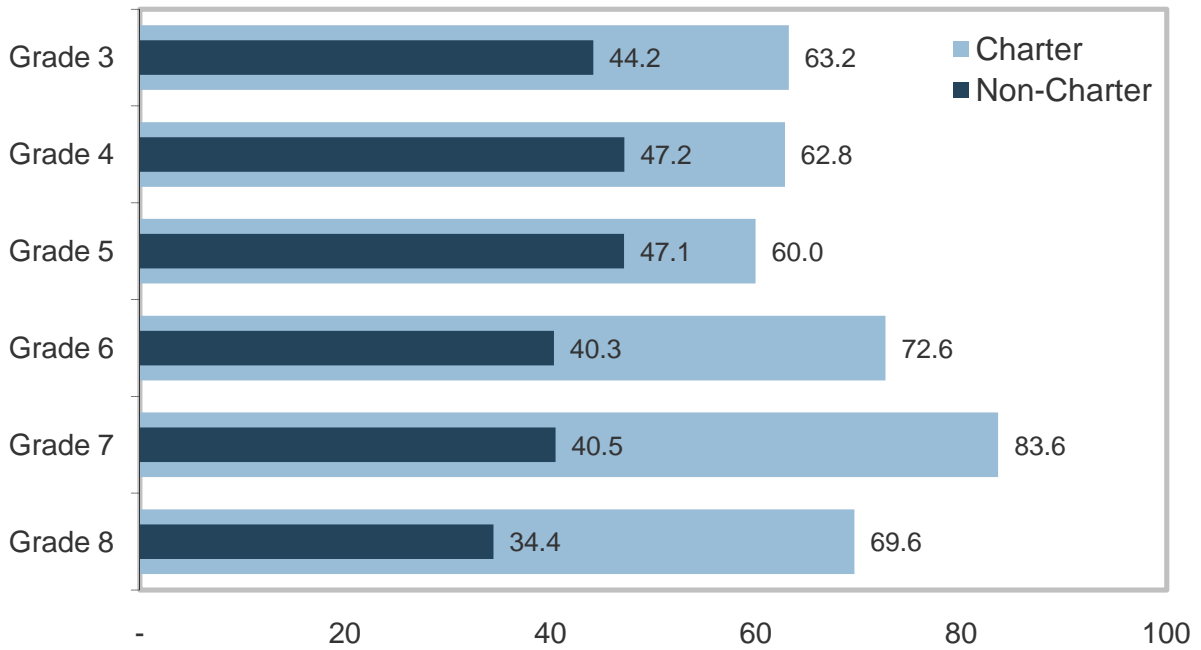


Percentage of Central Brooklyn Students Proficient at ELA: Charter vs. District School Students, by Grade Level (2009-10)

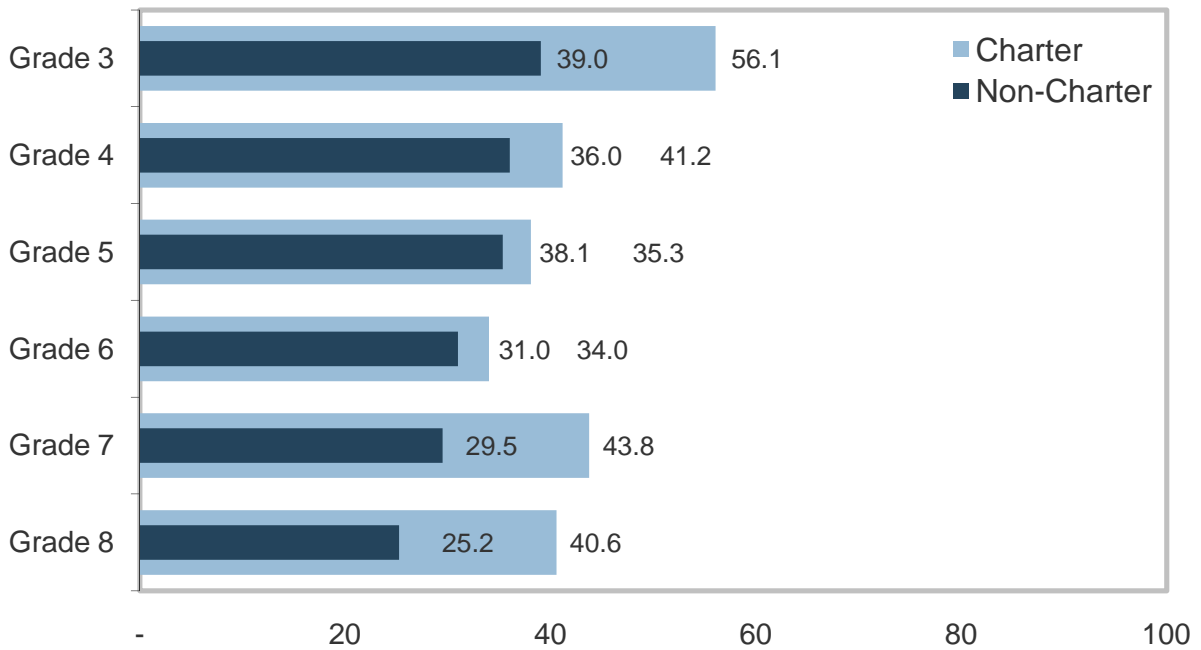


Central Brooklyn is defined as CSDs 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 23, and 32. Charter school percentages are out of all students, not an average of school rates.

Percentage of Harlem Students Proficient at Math: Charter vs. District School Students, by Grade Level (2009-10)

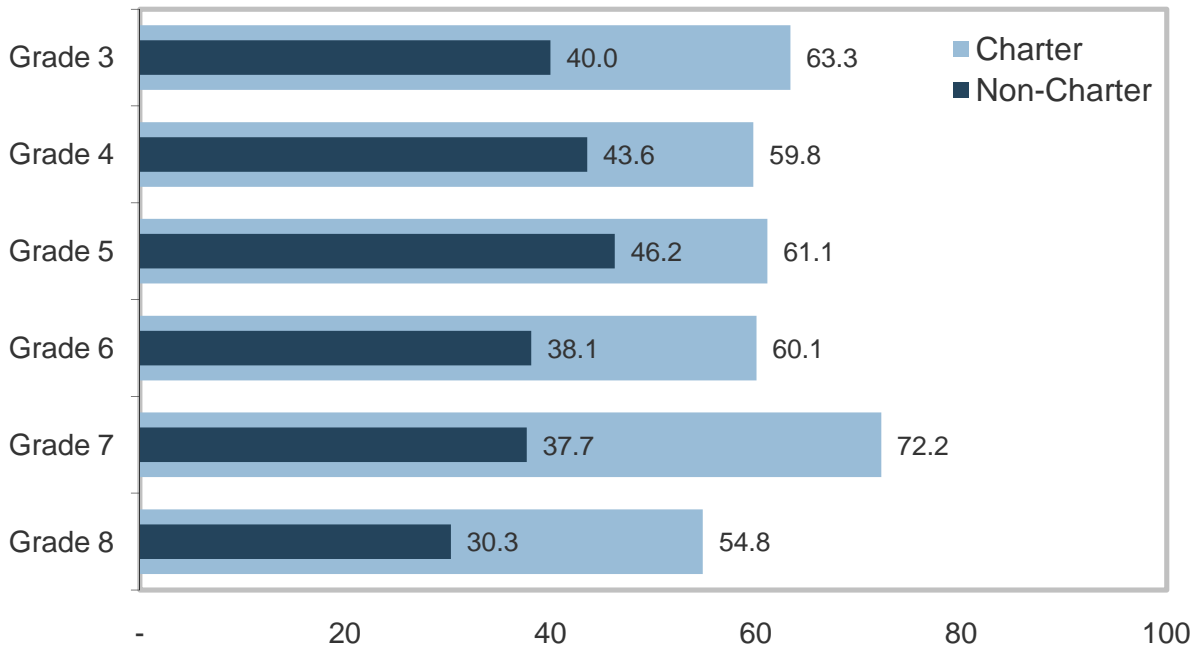


Percentage of Harlem Students Proficient at ELA: Charter vs. District School Students, by Grade Level (2009-10)

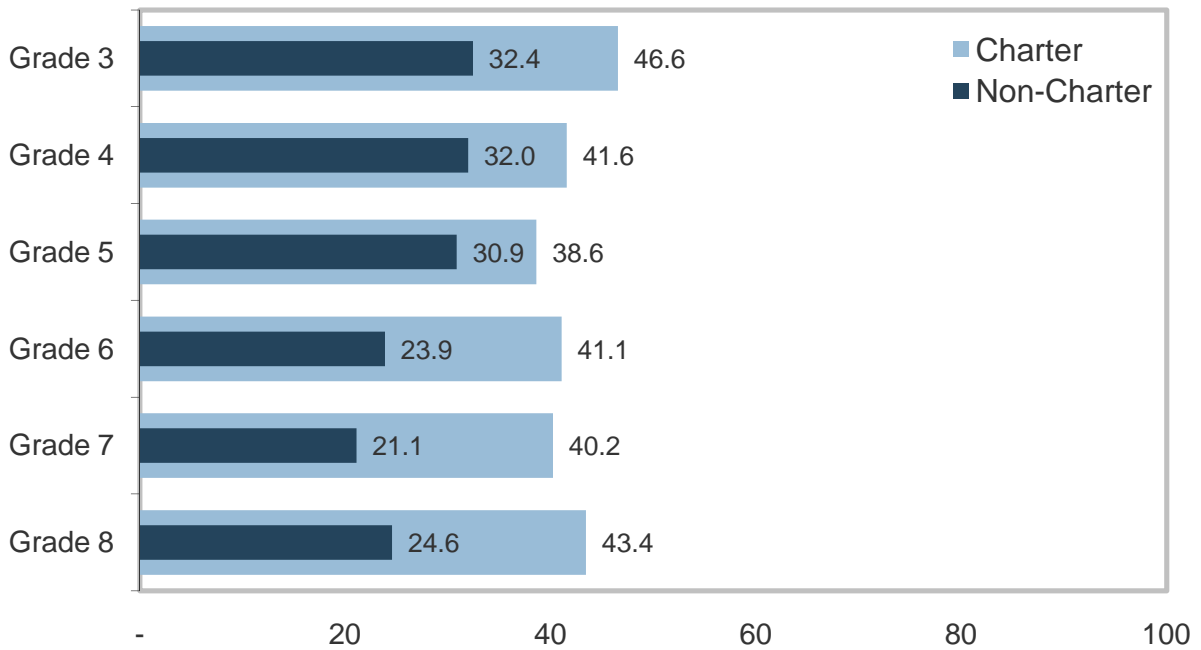


Harlem is defined as CSDs 4 and 5. Charter school percentages are out of all students, not an average of school rates.

Percentage of South Bronx Students Proficient at Math: Charter vs. District School Students, by Grade Level (2009-10)

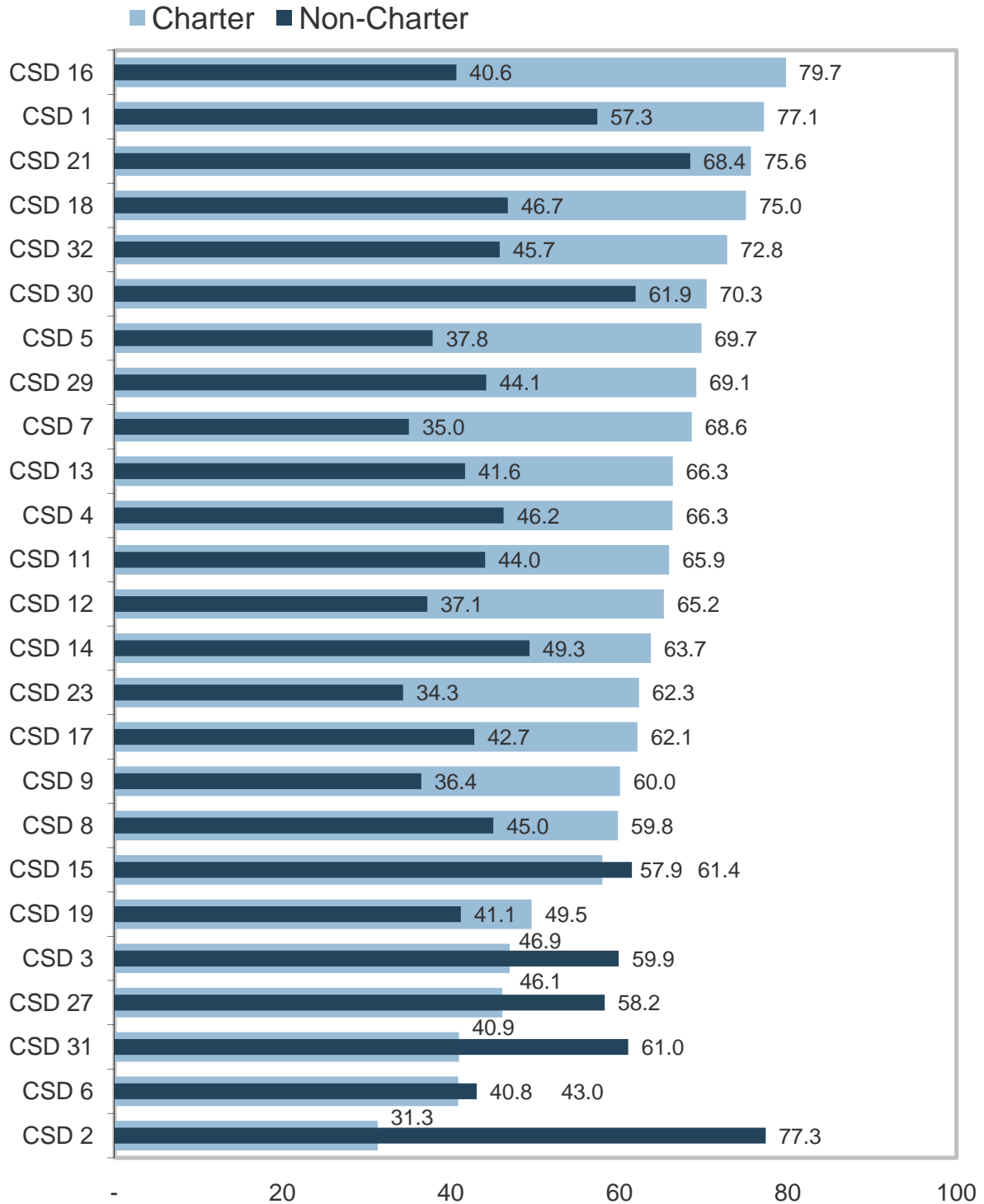


Percentage of South Bronx Students Proficient at ELA: Charter vs. District School Students, by Grade Level (2009-10)



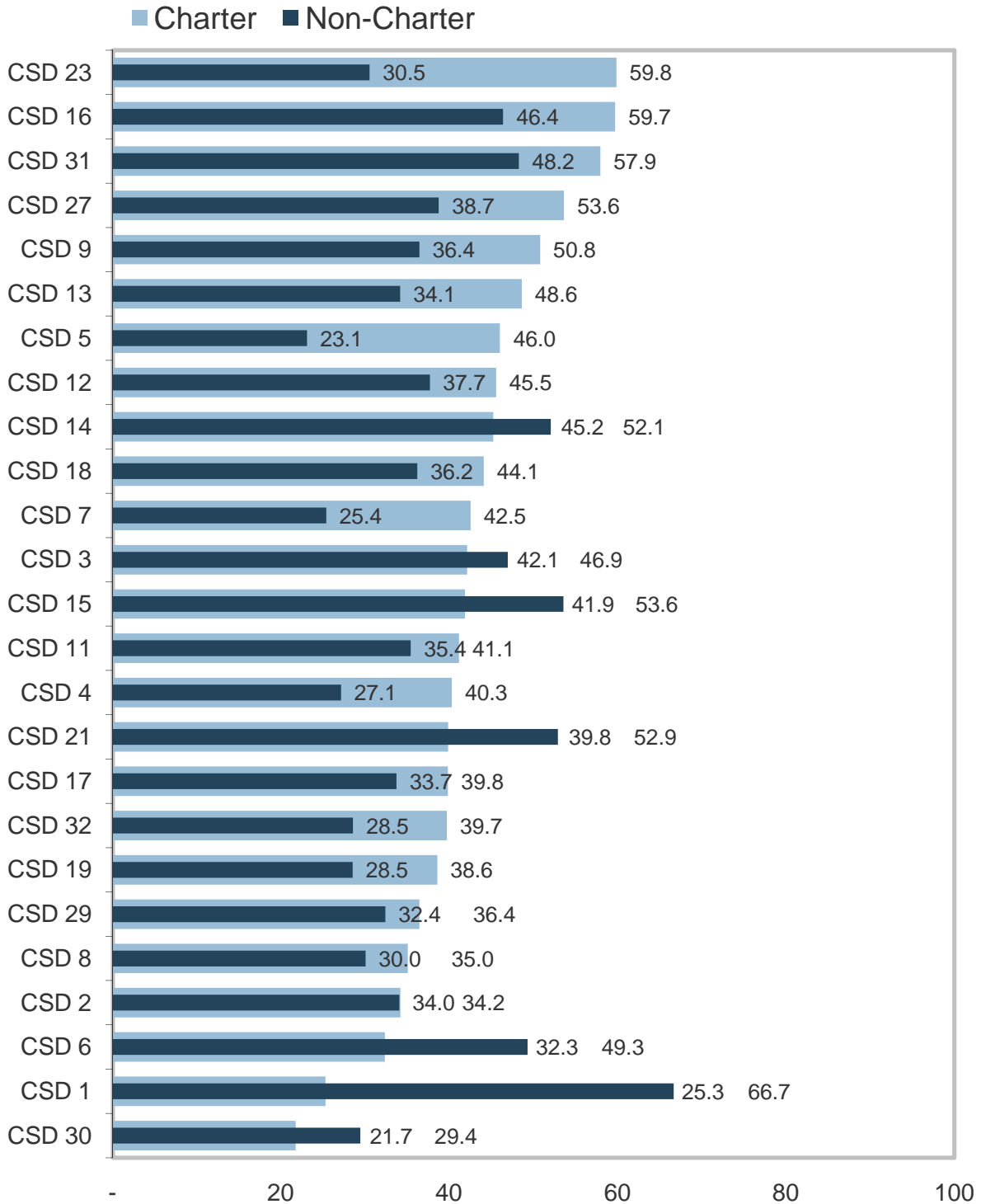
South Bronx is defined as CSDs 7, 8, and 9. Charter school percentages are out of all students, not an average of school rates.

Percentage of NYC Students Scoring Proficient or Higher in Math: Charter vs. District Schools, by CSD (2009-10, Grades 3-8)



Charter school percentages are out of all students, not an average of school rates.

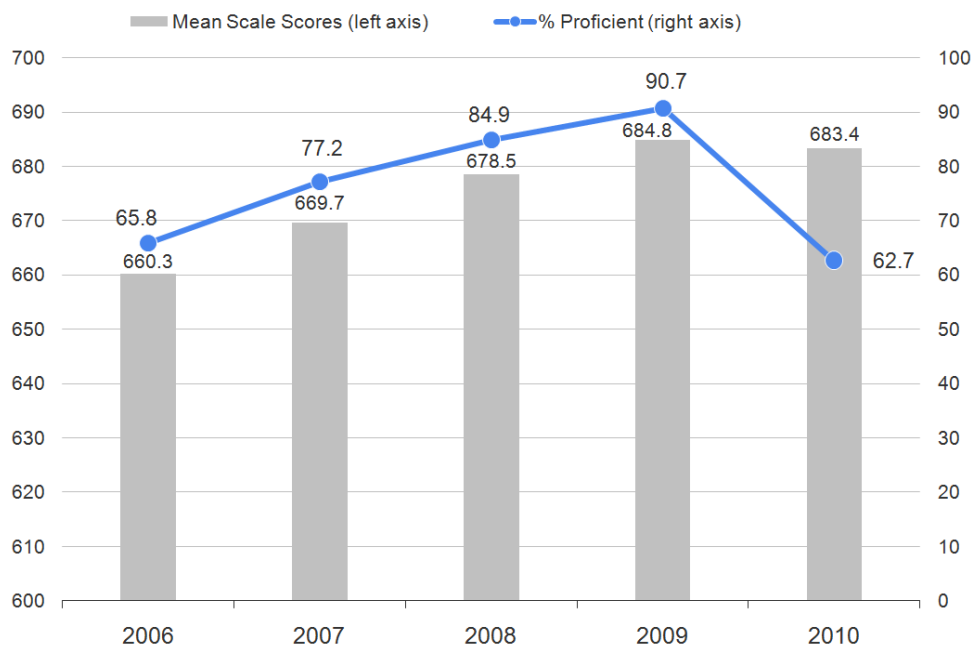
Percentage of NYC Students Scoring Proficient or Higher in ELA: Charter vs. District Schools, by CSD (2009-10, Gr. 3-8)



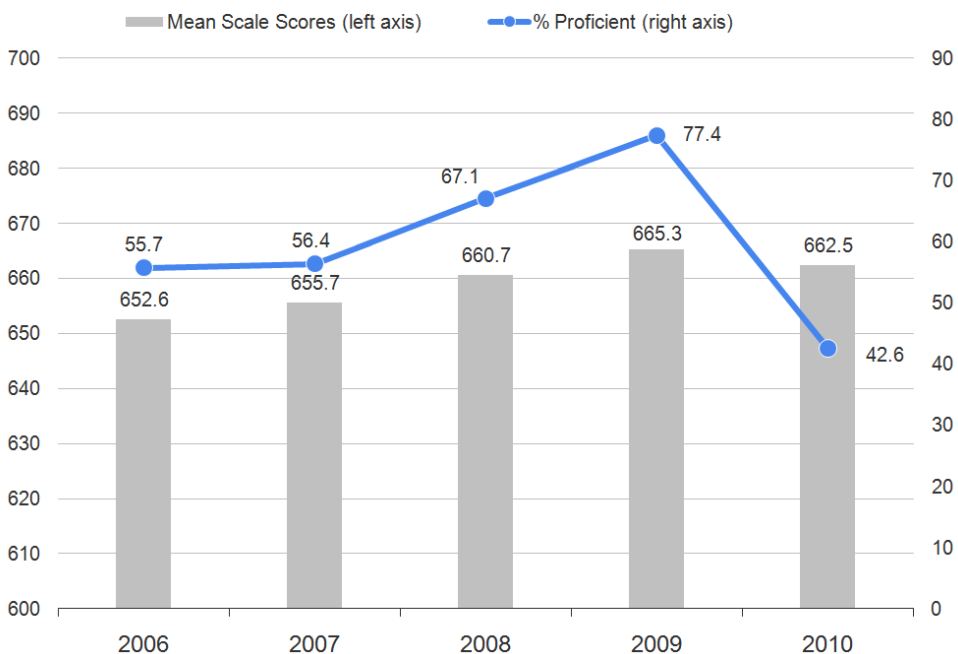
Charter school percentages are out of all students, not an average of school rates.

Charter schools' mean scale scores for 2009-10 were comparable to the previous year's, but the "cut scores" that translate scores into proficiency ratings were dramatically adjusted, resulting in sobering news for all public schools.

Trends in NYC Charter School Scores and Levels: Math (2006-2010, Grades 3-8)



Trends in NYC Charter School Scores and Levels: ELA (2006-2010, Grades 3-8)



Grade 4 Math Proficiency at NYC Charter Schools (2009-10)

	Charter School	Percent Proficient	Students Tested
1.	Harlem Success Academy Charter School	93.1	58
2.	Renaissance Charter School (The)	92.0	25
3.	Icahn Charter School 1	89.7	39
4.	Leadership Preparatory Charter School	89.5	38
5.	Icahn Charter School 2	88.0	25
6.	Bronx Charter School For Excellence	84.6	52
7.	Brooklyn Excelsior Charter School	83.0	100
8.	Excellence Charter School Of Bedford Stuyvesant	82.9	41
9.	Harbor Science And Arts Charter School	80.8	26
10.	South Bronx Classical Charter School	80.6	36
11.	Achievement First Crown Heights Charter School	80.3	76
12.	Amber Charter School	79.5	44
13.	Grand Concourse Academy Charter School	78.7	75
14.	Achievement First Bushwick Charter School	77.5	71
15.	Harlem Children's Zone Promise Academy Ii Charter School	76.3	38
16.	Girls Preparatory Charter School Of New York	76.2	42
17.	Achievement First East New York Charter School	75.0	72
18.	Bronx Lighthouse Charter School	74.2	66
19.	Manhattan Charter School	72.7	33
20.	Community Roots Charter School	72.0	50
21.	Brooklyn Scholars Charter School	69.2	26
21.	Community Partnership Charter School	69.2	52
23.	Merrick Academy-Queens Public Charter School	68.8	77
24.	South Bronx Charter School-Inter Cultures And Arts	68.0	50
25.	Our World Neighborhood Charter School	65.3	75
26.	Harlem Children's Zone Promise Academy Charter School	64.2	95
27.	Explore Charter School	63.5	52
28.	Peninsula Preparatory Academy Charter School	60.8	51
29.	Hellenic Classical Charter School	58.3	48
30.	East New York Preparatory Charter School	56.8	37
31.	Sisulu-Walker Charter School Of Harlem	55.6	54
32.	Beginning With Children Charter School	54.0	50
33.	Family Life Academy Charter School	52.9	51
34.	Bronx Charter School For Better Learning	52.5	59
35.	Bronx Charter School For The Arts	48.9	47
36.	Brooklyn Charter School (The)	48.6	35
37.	Future Leaders Institute Charter School	46.0	50
38.	Harlem Link Charter School	42.9	49
39.	Ross Global Academy Charter School	41.7	48
40.	UFT Charter School	40.7	59
41.	Bronx Charter School For Children	38.5	65
42.	Harriet Tubman Charter School	29.2	48
43.	Harlem Day Charter School	15.4	39

Grade 8 Math Proficiency at NYC Charter Schools (2009-10)

	Charter School	Percent Proficient	Students Tested
1.	Harlem Village Academy Charter School	100.0	19
1.	Harlem Village Academy Leadership	100.0	39
1.	Icahn Charter School 1	100.0	28
4.	Williamsburg Collegiate Charter School	96.2	53
5.	Explore Charter School	85.7	35
6.	KIPP Infinity Charter School	84.5	58
7.	Renaissance Charter School (The)	82.7	52
8.	KIPP Academy Charter School	81.0	63
9.	Democracy Preparatory Charter School	79.3	111
10.	Brooklyn Excelsior Charter School	72.5	40
11.	Our World Neighborhood Charter School	68.8	64
12.	Achievement 1st Endeavor Charter School	66.2	68
13.	Hellenic Classical Charter School	61.5	26
14.	KIPP S.T.A.R. College Prep Charter School	60.8	51
15.	KIPP AMP Charter School	59.6	52
16.	Achievement First Crown Heights Charter School	54.1	74
17.	New Heights Academy Charter School	47.9	96
18.	Beginning With Children Charter School	43.8	48
19.	Bronx Preparatory Charter School	42.2	102
20.	Ross Global Academy Charter School	39.6	48
21.	Hyde Leadership Charter School	39.5	76
22.	Harbor Science And Arts Charter School	36.4	33
23.	Future Leaders Institute Charter School	33.3	15
23.	Harriet Tubman Charter School	33.3	21
25.	St Hope Leadership Academy Charter School	20.5	44
26.	UFT Charter School	13.2	106
27.	Opportunity Charter School	4.6	65

Grade 4 ELA Proficiency at NYC Charter Schools (2009-10)

	Charter School	Percent Proficient	Students Tested
1.	Harlem Success Academy Charter School	86.2	58
2.	Renaissance Charter School (The)	80.0	25
3.	Brooklyn Excelsior Charter School	68.0	100
4.	Bronx Charter School For Excellence	67.3	52
5.	Excellence Charter School Of Bedford Stuyvesant	63.4	41
6.	Community Roots Charter School	60.0	50
7.	Icahn Charter School 1	59.0	39
8.	Grand Concourse Academy Charter School	58.3	72
9.	Manhattan Charter School	57.6	33
10.	Our World Neighborhood Charter School	57.3	75
11.	Girls Preparatory Charter School Of New York	57.1	42
12.	Harbor Science And Arts Charter School	56.0	25
13.	Icahn Charter School 2	56.0	25
14.	Achievement First Crown Heights Charter School	55.3	76
15.	Peninsula Preparatory Academy Charter School	52.9	51
16.	Amber Charter School	52.2	46
17.	Sisulu-Walker Charter School Of Harlem	50.9	53
18.	Harlem Children's Zone Promise Academy II Charter School	50.0	38
18.	Hellenic Classical Charter School	50.0	48
20.	Merrick Academy-Queens Public Charter School	49.4	77
21.	Family Life Academy Charter School	49.0	51
22.	South Bronx Classical Charter School	47.2	36
23.	Beginning With Children Charter School	46.0	50
24.	Achievement First Bushwick Charter School	42.3	71
25.	South Bronx Charter School-Inter Cultures And Arts	42.0	50
26.	Explore Charter School	40.4	52
27.	Harlem Children's Zone Promise Academy Charter School	40.0	95
28.	Leadership Preparatory Charter School	36.8	38
29.	Achievement First East New York Charter School	36.6	71
30.	Community Partnership Charter School	34.6	52
31.	East New York Preparatory Charter School	32.4	37
32.	Bronx Charter School For Better Learning	32.2	59
33.	Bronx Lighthouse Charter School	30.3	66
34.	Bronx Charter School For The Arts	29.8	47
35.	Bronx Charter School For Children	27.7	65
36.	Brooklyn Scholars Charter School	26.9	26
37.	Future Leaders Institute Charter School	26.0	50
38.	UFT Charter School	25.4	59
39.	Ross Global Academy Charter School	20.8	48
40.	Harlem Link Charter School	20.0	50
41.	Harriet Tubman Charter School	16.7	48
42.	Brooklyn Charter School (The)	14.3	35
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Grade 8 ELA Proficiency at NYC Charter Schools (2009-10)

	Charter School	Percent Proficient	Students Tested
1.	Renaissance Charter School (The)	75.0	52
2.	Williamsburg Collegiate Charter School	69.8	53
3.	Harlem Village Academy Charter School	68.4	19
4.	KIPP Academy Charter School	68.3	63
5.	Icahn Charter School 1	67.9	28
6.	Our World Neighborhood Charter School	67.2	64
7.	Hellenic Classical Charter School	61.5	26
8.	Future Leaders Institute Charter School	60.0	15
9.	Harlem Village Academy Leadership	56.4	39
10.	KIPP Infinity Charter School	55.2	58
11.	Explore Charter School	54.3	35
12.	Bronx Preparatory Charter School	43.1	102
13.	KIPP Amp Charter School	38.5	52
14.	Democracy Preparatory Charter School	37.8	111
15.	KIPP S.T.A.R. College Prep Charter School	37.3	51
16.	Ross Global Academy Charter School	36.2	47
17.	Beginning With Children Charter School	33.3	48
18.	Achievement 1st Endeavor Charter School	32.4	68
19.	Achievement First Crown Heights Charter School	30.7	75
20.	Harbor Science And Arts Charter School	30.3	33
21.	Harriet Tubman Charter School	28.6	21
22.	New Heights Academy Charter School	27.7	94
23.	UFT Charter School	21.7	106
24.	Hyde Leadership Charter School	18.4	76
25.	Brooklyn Excelsior Charter School	15.0	40
26.	St Hope Leadership Academy Charter School	13.6	44
27.	Opportunity Charter School	6.2	65

The change in cut scores affected charter schools unevenly; some experienced large drops in proficiency from 2008-09 while others had small losses or even gains.

Changes in Math Proficiency at NYC Charter Schools (2008-09 to 2009-10, Grades 4 and 8)

Grade 4 Math

Charter Schools with Smallest Changes		% Proficient		
		2008-09	2009-10	Change
1.	Carl C. Icahn Charter School	94.2	89.7	-4.5
2.	Renaissance Charter School	100.0	92.0	-8.0
3.	Bronx Charter School For Excellence	95.9	84.6	-11.3
4.	Harbor Science And Arts Charter School	96.0	80.8	-15.2
5.	Brooklyn Excelsior Charter School	99.1	83.0	-16.1

Charter Schools with Largest Changes		% Proficient		
		2008-09	2009-10	Change
1.	Bronx Charter School For Children	98.5	38.5	-60.0
2.	Harriet Tubman Charter School	83.4	29.2	-54.2
3.	UFT Charter School	93.0	40.7	-52.3
4.	Future Leaders Institute Charter School	91.7	46.0	-45.7
5.	Sisulu Walker Children's Academy Charter School	100.0	55.6	-44.4

Grade 8 Math

Charter Schools with Smallest Changes		% Proficient		
		2008-09	2009-10	Change
1.	Leadership Village Academy Charter School	95.2	100	+4.8
2.	Brooklyn Excelsior Charter School	72.0	72.5	+0.5
3.	Harlem Village Academy Charter School	100.0	100	0.0
4.	Carl C. Icahn Charter School	100.0	100	0.0
5.	Williamsburg Collegiate Charter School	100.0	96.3	-3.7

Charter Schools with Largest Changes		% Proficient		
		2008-09	2009-10	Change
1.	UFT Charter School	79.3	13.2	-66.1
2.	Harbor Science And Arts Charter School	96.7	36.3	-60.4
3.	Bronx Preparatory Charter School	92.6	42.2	-50.4
4.	Ross Global Academy Charter School	87.7	39.6	-48.1
5.	Beginning With Children Charter School	90.0	43.8	-46.2

Changes in ELA Proficiency at NYC Charter Schools (2008-09 to 2009-10, Grades 4 and 8)

Grade 4 ELA

Charter Schools with Smallest Changes		% Proficient		
		2008-09	2009-10	Change
1.	Peninsula Preparatory Academy Charter School	51.0	53.0	+2.0
2.	Bronx Charter School For Excellence	77.5	67.3	-10.2
3.	Renaissance Charter School	92.0	80.0	-12.0
4.	Brooklyn Excelsior Charter School	88.8	68.0	-20.8
5.	Beginning With Children Charter School	69.4	46.0	-23.4

Charter Schools with Largest Changes		% Proficient		
		2008-09	2009-10	Change
1.	Brooklyn Charter School	81.1	14.3	-66.8
2.	Bronx Charter School For Children	89.2	27.7	-61.5
3.	Achievement First East New York Charter School	87.6	36.6	-51.0
4.	UFT Charter School	75.5	25.4	-50.1
5.	Future Leaders Institute Charter School	70.8	26.0	-44.8

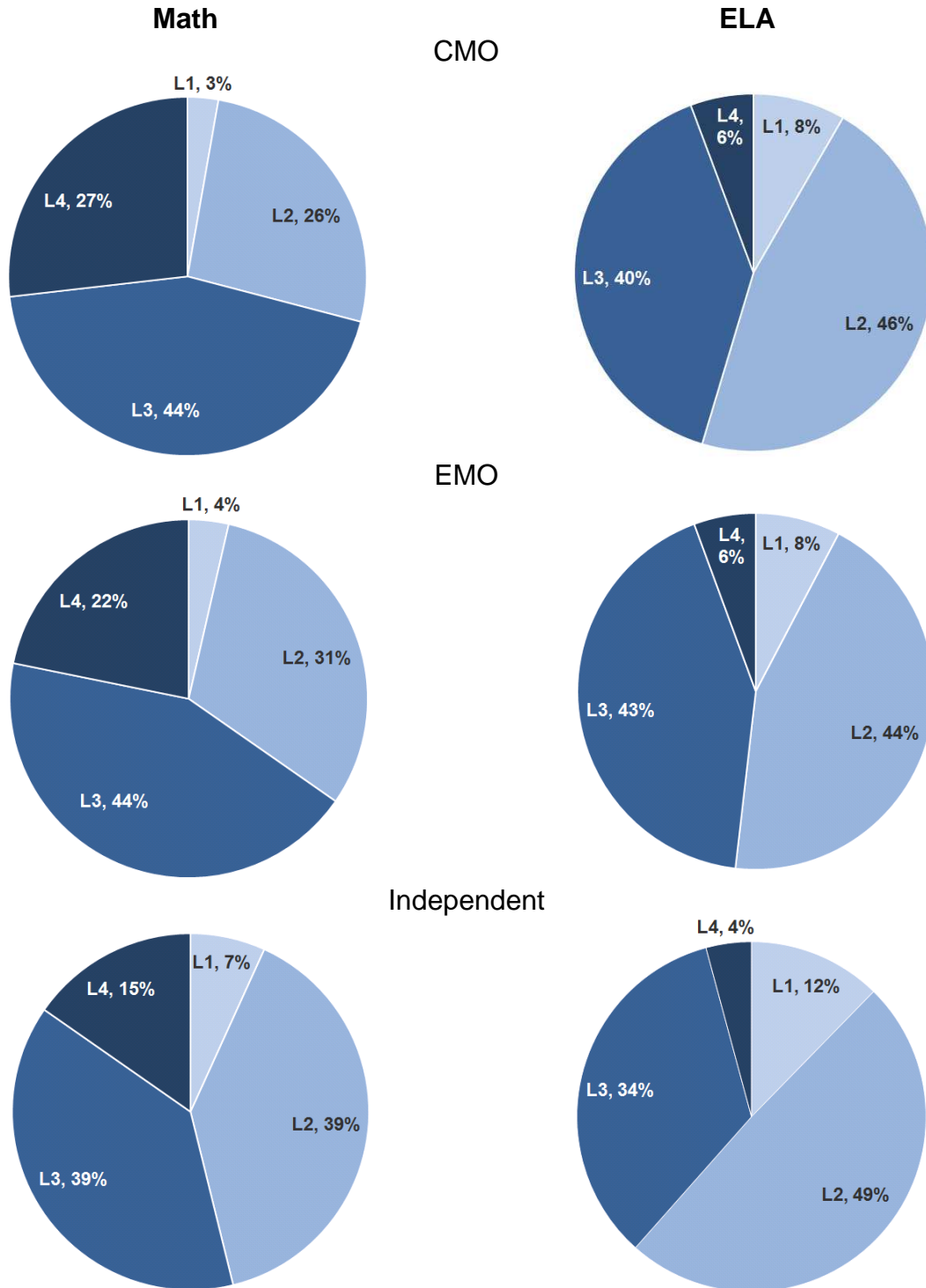
Grade 8 ELA

Charter Schools with Smallest Changes		% Proficient		
		2008-09	2009-10	Change
1.	Renaissance Charter School	82.0	75.0	-7.0
2.	Our World Neighborhood Charter School	75.4	67.2	-8.2
3.	Opportunity Charter School	15.3	6.2	-9.1
4.	Carl C. Icahn Charter School	79.3	67.9	-11.4
5.	Harriet Tubman Charter School	41.5	28.6	-12.9

Charter Schools with Largest Changes		% Proficient		
		2008-09	2009-10	Change
1.	KIPP S.T.A.R. College Prep Charter School	90.2	37.3	-52.9
2.	Brooklyn Excelsior Charter School	62.0	15.0	-47.0
3.	Achievement First Crown Heights Charter School	76.7	30.7	-46.0
4.	Hyde Leadership Charter School	64.1	18.4	-45.7
5.	KIPP Infinity Charter School	96.7	55.1	-41.6

Scores varied between independent charter schools and charter schools managed by CMO (non-profit) and EMO (for-profit) networks. (Level 3 or Level 4 scores are considered Proficient.)

NYC Charter School Student Performance Levels, by Network Type (2009-10, Grades 3-8)



NYC Charter School Performance by Network Affiliation: Grade 4 Math (2009-10)

Charter School Network <i>(# of schools serving grade out of total in NYC network)</i>	Proficient	L4 Only	Students Tested
Success Charter Network (1 of 4)	93.1%	50.0%	58
Icahn (2 of 4)	89.1%	29.7%	64
Uncommon Schools (2 of 8)	86.1%	45.6%	79
National Heritage Academies (2 of 2)	80.2%	28.6%	126
Achievement First (3 of 5)	77.6%	25.1%	219
Public Prep (1 of 2)	76.2%	11.9%	42
Lighthouse Academies (1 of 1)	74.2%	16.7%	66
Harlem Children's Zone (2 of 2)	67.7%	19.6%	133
Victory Schools (3 of 6)	63.8%	12.9%	232
Explore Schools (1 of 2)	63.5%	11.5%	52
Beginning with Children Foundation (2 of 2)	61.8%	15.7%	102
EdisonLearning (1 of 1)	29.2%	4.2%	48

NYC Charter School Performance by Network Affiliation: Grade 8 Math (2009-10)

Charter School Network <i>(# of schools serving grade out of total in NYC network)</i>	Proficient	L4 Only	Students Tested
Harlem Village Academies (2 of 2)	100.0%	51.7%	58
Icahn (1 of 4)	100.0%	35.7%	28
Uncommon Schools (1 of 8)	96.2%	49.1%	53
Explore Schools (1 of 2)	85.7%	14.3%	35
National Heritage Academies (1 of 2)	72.5%	10.0%	40
KIPP (4 of 4)	72.3%	15.2%	224
Achievement First (2 of 5)	59.9%	9.9%	142
Beginning with Children Foundation (1 of 2)	43.8%	6.3%	48
Hyde Schools (1 of 1)	39.5%	4.0%	76
EdisonLearning (1 of 1)	33.3%	0.0%	21

Grades 4 and 8 are selected as representative grade levels for elementary and secondary charter schools; grade 8 is the highest grade tested and grade 4 is the highest before charter middle schools begin. School counts refer to charts, not campuses. Schools and networks that did not serve a particular grade in 2009-10 may be chartered to do so in the future. Charter school percentages are out of all students, not an average of school rates. EdisonLearning, Hyde Schools, and Lighthouse Academies each operates a single NYC charter school, but also operate charter schools in other states.

NYC Charter School Performance by Network Affiliation: Grade 4 ELA (2009-10)

Charter School Network <i>(# of schools serving grade out of total in NYC network)</i>	Proficient	L4 Only	Students Tested
Success Charter Network (1 of 4)	86.2%	5.2%	58
National Heritage Academies (2 of 2)	59.5%	0.8%	126
Icahn (2 of 4)	57.8%	0.0%	64
Public Prep (1 of 2)	57.1%	2.4%	42
Uncommon Schools (2 of 8)	50.6%	0.0%	79
Victory Schools (3 of 6)	48.9%	2.6%	231
Achievement First (3 of 5)	45.0%	1.4%	218
Harlem Children's Zone (2 of 2)	42.9%	0.8%	133
Explore Schools (1 of 2)	40.4%	0.0%	52
Beginning with Children Foundation (2 of 2)	40.2%	0.0%	102
Lighthouse Academies (1 of 1)	30.3%	0.0%	66
EdisonLearning (1 of 1)	16.7%	0.0%	48

NYC Charter School Performance by Network Affiliation: Grade 8 ELA (2009-10)

Charter School Network <i>(# of schools serving grade out of total in NYC network)</i>	Proficient	L4 Only	Students Tested
Uncommon Schools (1 of 8)	69.8%	0.0%	53
Icahn (1 of 4)	67.9%	3.6%	28
Harlem Village Academies (2 of 2)	60.3%	5.2%	58
Explore Schools (1 of 2)	54.3%	5.7%	35
KIPP (4 of 4)	50.9%	4.9%	224
Beginning with Children Foundation (1 of 2)	33.3%	0.0%	48
Achievement First (2 of 5)	31.5%	1.4%	143
EdisonLearning (1 of 1)	28.6%	0.0%	21
Hyde Schools (1 of 1)	18.4%	1.3%	76
National Heritage Academies (1 of 2)	15.0%	0.0%	40

Grades 4 and 8 are selected as representative grade levels for elementary and secondary charter schools; grade 8 is the highest grade tested and grade 4 is the highest before charter middle schools begin. School counts refer to charts, not campuses. Schools and networks that did not serve a particular grade in 2009-10 may be chartered to do so in the future. Charter school percentages are out of all students, not an average of school rates. EdisonLearning, Hyde Schools, and Lighthouse Academies each operates a single NYC charter school, but also operate charter schools in other states.

Questions? To discuss this brief, please contact Michael Regnier, Director of Policy: (212) 437-8354 or mregnier@nycCharterSchools.org.