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# Grade 3

## English Language Arts

An Analysis of Rochester City School Results on the  
2010-11 New York State Standardized Tests

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May, 2012  
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## 1. Overview

The newest data is in, and it is not encouraging! For the 2010-11 school year, fewer than one quarter of Rochester city school third graders met the New York State standard for English Language Arts (ELA). Rochester performed considerably poorer than the statewide mark (56%), lower than our regional level (57%) and considerably lower than all suburban school districts.

Rochester also performed lower than *any* of the large urban school districts. At 24%, Rochester is only slightly lower than Syracuse (25%) and Buffalo (26%), but considerably lower than cities in the eastern part of the state. As discussed below, Rochester's students tend to be poorer than those in the other cities, though there are some very fascinating results in New York City.

**Table1: Percent of third graders achieving level three or higher on English Language Arts<sup>1</sup>**

Regional Comparisons		New York Urban Comparisons	
Area	Percent	District	Percent
Rochester City	24	Rochester City	24
Seven County Region <sup>2</sup>	57	Albany City	44
Monroe County	55	Buffalo City	26
Highest County (Wayne)	61	New York City <sup>3</sup>	48
Lowest County (Livingston)	54	Syracuse City	25
		Yonkers City	44
New York State	56	New York State	56

## 2. Trends

The 2010-11 data represents a very slight increase over the 23% achieved for 2009-10.

Gleaning longer-term trends is difficult because of a major change made in the testing protocol beginning with the 2009-10 year.<sup>4</sup> Charts 1 and 2 on Appendix A show separate trends during each of the testing protocol periods. The patterns are fairly erratic, characterized by generally downward movement in the beginning years, a significant improvement in 2004-05, then more decline followed by another jump in the final year of the old protocol (2008-09).

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1. Level 3 is "Meets Standard" and Level 4 is "Exceeds Standards." For convenience in this report, these levels combined are referred to as "passing."
  2. The seven-county ACT Rochester region: Monroe, Orleans, Genesee, Livingston, Wyoming, Ontario, Wayne.
  3. New York City results are extracted and summarized from 32 separate geographic area reports.
  4. As a result of the changes, Rochester's 2009-10 performance (23%) appears dramatically worse than the 2008-09 year (49%). Similarly, New York's statewide results declined from 76% (2008-09) to 55% (2009-10).

### 3. Rochester: A Deeper Look - Demographics

As detailed in Table 2 below, the third grade ELA results vary among students from different ethnic and racial backgrounds, economic status, and levels of English language proficiency.

Some interesting observations can be made about the data:

- Third grade girls outperform boys at a rate that seems to mirror the statewide results.
- African-American and Latino students in Rochester lag their New York state counterparts by a significant degree.
- Economically disadvantaged students in Rochester significantly lag in performance when compared to economically disadvantaged students statewide
- Not surprisingly, students with limited English proficiency lag other students, but in Rochester only 10% of such students meet the ELA grade, as compared to 22% statewide.
- Only 8% of Rochester students with disabilities “passed” as compared with 19% statewide.
- Multiracial third graders in Rochester outperform all other racial/ethnic groups (including white), but only 21 tested students identified as multiracial.

**Table 2: Characteristics of third graders achieving level three or higher on English Language Arts (ELA)**

	Rochester (% at Level 3&4)	NY State (% at Level 3&4)
<i>Gender</i>		
Female	27	61
Male	22	51
<b>All Students</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>56</b>
<i>Racial/Ethnic – Selected</i>		
Black/African American	23	39
Hispanic/Latino	22	42
Asian/Native Hawaiian-Pacific Islander	26	69
White	34	67
Multiracial	43	60
<b>All Students</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>56</b>
<i>Education Category</i>		
General Education	28	62
Students with Disabilities	8	19
<b>All Students</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>56</b>
<i>English Proficiency</i>		
Proficient	26	59
Limited Proficiency	10	22
<b>All Students</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>56</b>
<i>Economic Disadvantage</i>		
Economically Disadvantaged	23	43
Not Disadvantaged	45	72
<b>All Students</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>56</b>

#### 4. Rochester: A Deeper Look - the Schools

##### *The Public Schools:*

The percentage of students “passing” varies from a low of 7% (School #8) to a high of 60% (School #25). Only two City schools matched or exceeded the statewide mark - School #23 (with 56% “passing”) and School #25 (with 60% “passing”).

For four schools, the results were below average by a noteworthy degree (more than one standard deviation):

<u>School</u>	<u>Percent “Passing”</u>	<u>Variance from the Mean</u>
School #8-Roberto Clemente School	7	-17
School #44-Lincoln Park School	8	-16
School #30-General Elwell Otis School	10	-14
School #4-George M Forbes School	11	-13

On the other end of the spectrum, 7 schools exceeded the mean by a meaningful extent (more than one standard deviation):

<u>School</u>	<u>Percent “Passing”</u>	<u>Variation from the Mean</u>
School #12-James PB Duffy School	38	+14
School #53-Franklin Montessori	38	+14
School #20-Henry Lomb School	40	+16
School #1-Martin Anderson School	43	+19
School #52-Frank Fowler Dow School	46	+22
School #23-Francis Parker School	56	+32
School #25-Nathaniel Hawthorne School	60	+36

The results for School #25 are noteworthy. This was the highest performing school in the district and its result was nearly two standard deviations above the mean. In addition, School #25 is a relatively high poverty school (see discussion of poverty below).

The results for the remaining 27 schools were within one standard deviation of the mean (plus or minus).

Appendix B contains a listing of all Rochester elementary schools ranked according to their scores on the Grade 3 ELA test results.

#### 4. Rochester: A Deeper Look - the Schools (continued)

##### Charter Schools:

Rochester has three charter schools that recorded results on the Grade 3 ELA. All three met or exceeded the statewide average score.

<u>School</u>	<u>Number of Students Taking Grade 3 Exam</u>	<u>Percent "Passing"</u>
Eugenia Maria De Hostos Charter School	50	66
Genesee Community Charter School	31	90
Urban Choice Charter School	45	56

The results for Eugenia Maria De Hostos Charter School are important as this school serves a significant economically disadvantaged student population (92% as compared to the district-wide level of 84% for Rochester City schools).

Certainly, the results for the Genesee Community Charter School are impressive. However, this school does not serve a significant economically disadvantaged population. In fact, at 17% the economically disadvantaged population at this school is lower than 10 Monroe County suburban districts.

#### 5. Academic Achievement and Poverty

Clearly, there is strong relationship between academic achievement and the incidence of poverty. New York State collects a measure of "economic disadvantage" for each school. This measure – the combined percentage of children eligible for free and reduced price lunches in school – is an excellent proxy for the poverty rate, and it reflects the actual school population.

As detailed in Table 3, among New York's large urban school districts, there is a strong pattern of low achievement in districts with the greatest levels of poverty. Rochester had the lowest Grade 3 ELA "passing" rate, and it had the highest rate of poverty. Syracuse and Buffalo are the next lowest performers and are fairly close in poverty. New York City presents a slight break in the pattern. Its 48% Grade 3 ELA "passing" level belies its poverty ranking only slightly lower than Buffalo and Syracuse. A more detailed discussion of New York City is provided below.

**Table 3: NY Large Urban School Districts – Grade 3 ELA Results and Poverty**

<b>Grade 3 ELA Results</b> (% "passing")			<b>School District Poverty</b> (% eligible for free and reduced lunch)		
<b>City School District</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Rank*</b>	<b>City School District</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Inverse Rank*</b>
New York City	48	1	Albany	60	1
Albany	44	2	Yonkers	69	2
Yonkers	44	3	New York City	75	3
Buffalo	26	4	Syracuse	77	4
Syracuse	25	5	Buffalo	79	5
Rochester	24	6	Rochester	84	6
* Rank – highest achievement to lowest			* Rank – lowest poverty to highest		

## **5. Academic Achievement and Poverty (continued)**

A look within the Rochester School District reveals a similar pattern, with academic achievement and poverty strongly related. The chart on Appendix C lists all elementary schools ranked by poverty (most to least poor). The right part of the chart shows check marks indicating results on the Grade 3 ELA tests. While most schools performed in the “typical” category (within one standard deviation of the average), 7 schools are labeled “over achieved,” meaning that their ELA results were more than one standard deviation above the mean. And 4 schools are labeled “under achieved,” with ELA results below the average by more than one standard deviation.

Appendix C clearly shows the relationship between poverty and results, but it is neither determinant nor absolute. The check marks for schools that “under achieved” are concentrated near the upper portion of the chart, illustrating that they are high poverty schools. Similarly, the check marks for the schools that “over achieved” are concentrated at the lower part of the chart, where the lower poverty schools are displayed.

There are, however, several noteworthy exceptions. Three schools - #1 (Anderson), #20 (Lomb), and # 25 (Hawthorne) – are “over achieving” schools that have higher than average levels of poverty. As described above, School # 25 (Hawthorne) achieved the highest level Grade 3 ELA results. Its poverty rate (93%) is nine points higher than the Rochester City School District level.

## **6. A Look at New York City**

With 48% of its third graders “passing” the ELA test, New York City’s performance is meaningfully higher than Rochester’s. Because of its size and complexity, comparisons to New York City are seldom attempted. However, with Grade 3 ELA results broken down into 32 separate geographic districts, some interesting observations can be made.

- Every one of the 32 New York City geographic districts achieved Grade 3 ELA results better than Rochester.
- The lowest scoring New York City District had a 28% “passing” mark (compared to Rochester’s 24%)
- More than one third (11 geographic districts) of the districts have a poverty rate equal to or greater than Rochester’s. These high poverty districts, located mainly in the Bronx and Brooklyn, achieved Grade 3 ELA “passing” rates ranging from 28% to 46%.

A summary of New York City’s data is on Appendix E.

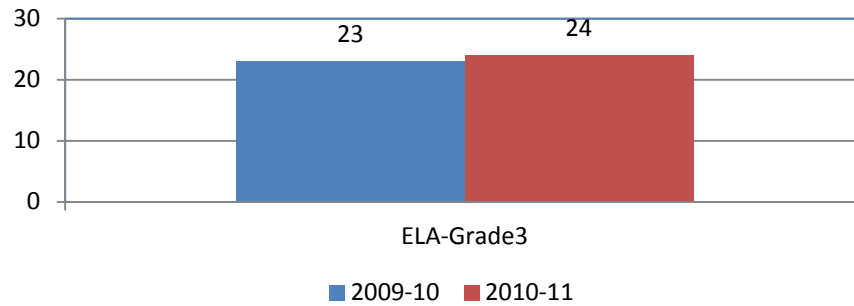
## **7. Conclusion**

This community faces a tremendous challenge to improve our children's academic outcomes. Clearly, that challenge can only be met through a comprehensive, community-wide approach.

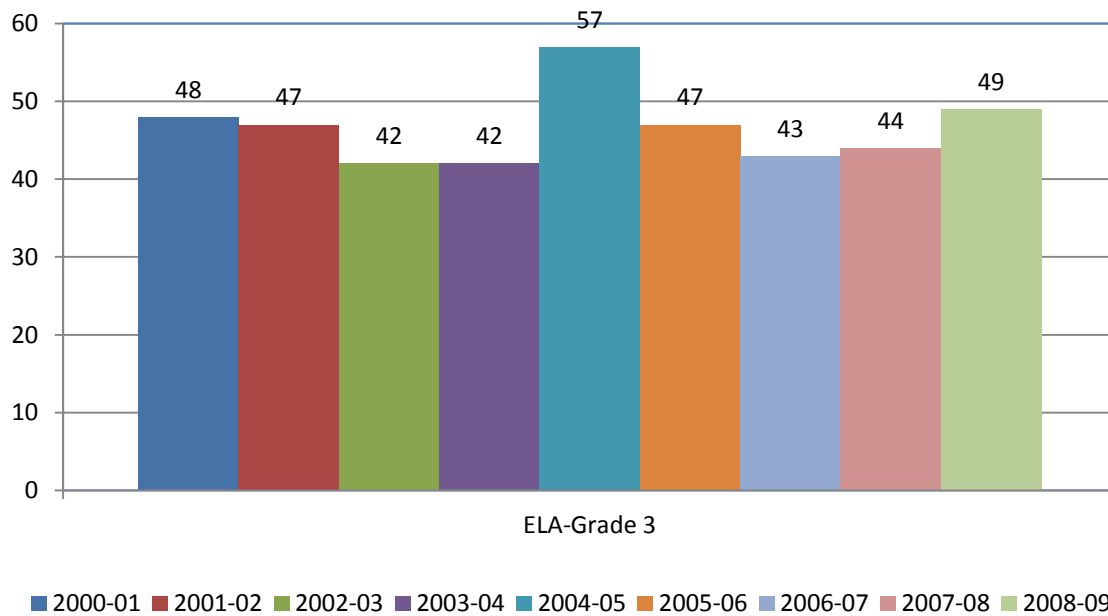
While it is beyond the scope of this analysis to prescribe solutions, one cannot escape the issue of poverty and its impact on academic performance. Any successful initiative needs to consider strategies to ameliorate and de-concentrate poverty. More effective strategies to improve learning for the poor (and other disadvantaged groups) would also be productive. Results such as those in New York City, and more locally at School #25 should receive more study.

Third Grade English Language Arts (ELA) – Rochester City School Trends

**Chart 1:** Percent of Rochester third graders achieving level three or higher on English Language Arts 2009-10 and 2010-11 (New Protocol)



**Chart 2:** Percent of Rochester third graders achieving level three or higher on English Language Arts 2000-01 to 2008-09 (Old Protocol)





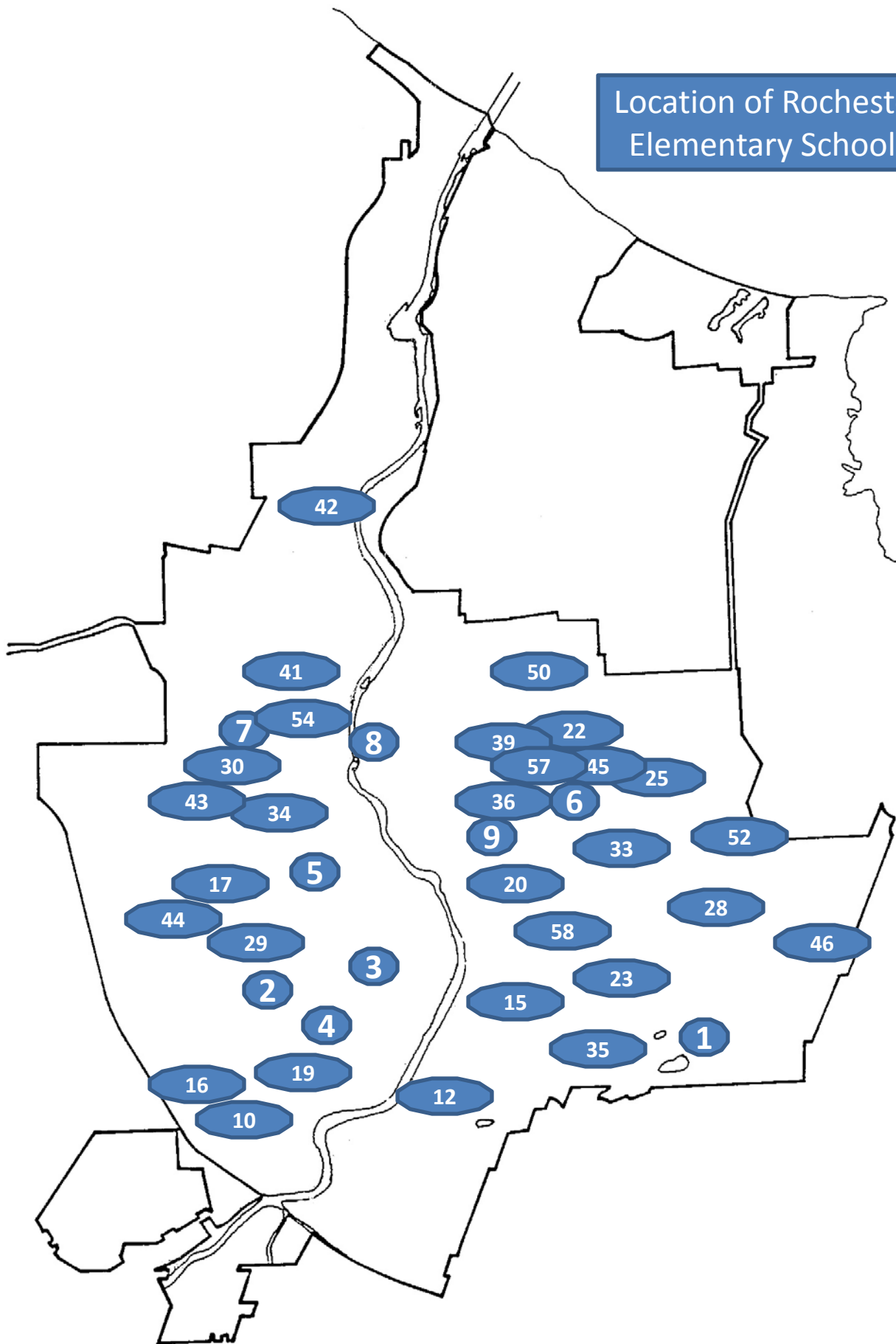
3rd Grade ELA  
Sorted by % at Level 3/4

School #	School Name	3rd Grade	School	School		Variance
		ELA - Level 3&4	Free & Reduced	Limited English		From Mean
		%	%	%		
8	Roberto Clemente	7	93	6		-17
44	Lincoln Park	8	92	21		-16
30	Gen Elwell Otis	10	98	5		-14
4	George M Forbes	11	93	3		-13
10	Dr Walter Cooper	14	91	14		-10
29	Adlai Stevenson	15	96	3		-9
54	Flower City	15	82	1		-9
5	John Williams	16	95	30		-8
3	Nathaniel Rochester	17	87	3		-7
22	Lincoln	17	94	33		-7
41	Kodak Park	17	92	3		-7
45	Mary M Bethune	17	93	5		-7
17	Enrico Fermi	18	97	21		-6
39	Andrew Townson	18	85	5		-6
50	Helen B Montgomery	18	89	20		-6
9	Dr Martin Luther King	19	98	38		-5
34	Dr Louis Cerulli	19	93	3		-5
16	John W Spencer	20	88	1		-4
43	Theodore Roosevelt	20	88	2		-4
15	Children's School	24	84	48		0
28	Henry Hudson	25	87	27		1
35	Pinnacle	25	90	26		1
36	Henry Longfellow	26	98	6		2
6	Dag Hammerskjold	28	98	11		4
33	Audubon	28	87	13		4
46	Charles Carroll	29	72	3		5
58	School of Inquiry	29	72	3		5
2	Clara Barton	31	88	1		7
7	Virgil Grissom	31	84	4		7
19	Dr Charles Lunsford	32	98	2		8
42	Abelard Reynolds	35	83	4		11
12	James PB Duffy	38	80	15		14
53	Franklin Montessori	38	61	1		14
20	Henry Lomb	40	93	9		16
1	Martin B Anderson	43	88	4		19
52	Frank Fowler Dow	46	74	4		22
23	Francis Parker	56	65	2		32
25	Nathaniel Hawthorne	60	93	12		36
57	Early Childhood	NA	88	2		NA
Total		24	84	11		

Rochester Schools Ranked by Poverty  
Poverty and Grade 3 ELA Results

School #	School Name	School Poverty (% Free & Reduced)	Grade 3 ELA Results		
			"Over Achieved" <sup>1</sup>	"Under Achieved" <sup>2</sup>	Typical Achievement <sup>3</sup>
6	Dag Hammerskjold	98			√
9	Dr Martin Luther King	98			√
19	Dr Charles Lunsford	98			√
30	Gen Elwell Otis	98		√	
36	Henry Longfellow	98			√
17	Enrico Fermi	97			√
29	Adlai Stevenson	96			√
5	John Williams	95			√
22	Lincoln	94			√
4	George M Forbes	93		√	
8	Roberto Clemente	93		√	
20	Henry Lomb	93	√		
25	Nathaniel Hawthorne	93	√		
34	Dr Louis Cerulli	93			√
45	Mary M Bethune	93			√
41	Kodak Park	92			√
44	Lincoln Park	92		√	
10	Dr Walter Cooper	91			√
35	Pinnacle	90			√
50	Helen B Montgomery	89			√
1	Martin B Anderson	88	√		
2	Clara Barton	88			√
16	John W Spencer	88			√
43	Theodore Roosevelt	88			√
57	Early Childhood	88	NA	NA	NA
3	Nathaniel Rochester	87			√
28	Henry Hudson	87			√
33	Audubon	87			√
39	Andrew Townson	85			√
7	Virgil Grissom	84			√
15	Children's School	84			√
42	Abelard Reynolds	83			√
54	Flower City	82			√
12	James PB Duffy	80	√		
52	Frank Fowler Dow	74	√		
46	Charles Carroll	72			√
58	School of Inquiry	72			√
23	Francis Parker	65	√		
53	Franklin Montessori	61	√		
Total		84			
1. Exceeds mean by more than one standard deviation; 2. Lags mean by more than one standard deviation 3. Within one standard deviation of the mean (plus or minus); NA = test score not available					

Location of Rochester Elementary Schools



3rd Grade ELA 2010-11  
New York City

District	Enrollment	Free Lunch	Reduced Lunch	Free + Reduced	Limited English	3rd Grade Tested	% Passing	
<u>Manhattan</u>								
1	11,935	64	7	71	12	812	55	
2	59,844	55	7	62	12	2,461	73	
3	22,650	47	6	53	8	1,383	61	
4	13,831	79	4	83	13	1,145	41	
5	12,833	74	5	79	11	932	29	
6	24,961	85	4	89	35	2,067	36	
	146,054			0.694365		8,800	0.519388	
<u>Bronx</u>								
7	19,187	85	5	90	19	1,298	29	
8	30,515	77	7	84	12	2,286	36	
9	34,112	85	4	89	26	2,875	31	
10	55,680	78	6	84	22	3,919	38	
11	37,963	71	8	79	10	3,202	41	
12	22,587	87	4	91	20	1,832	30	
	200,044			0.8527		15,412	0.3531	
<u>Brooklyn</u>								
13	22,114	65	8	73	5	1,091	45	
14	19,714	83	4	87	12	1,280	46	
15	25,451	62	6	68	17	2,467	56	
16	9,907	75	5	80	4	796	39	
17	26,188	80	6	86	10	1,950	43	
18	18,010	72	8	80	6	1,675	42	
19	24,825	84	5	89	13	2,198	36	
20	43,126	67	8	75	27	3,211	55	
21	33,241	62	8	70	17	1,887	54	
22	35,449	59	9	68	10	2,902	55	
23	11,481	79	5	84	4	1,028	28	
32	14,994	86	4	90	20	1,235	40	
	284,500			0.7747		21,720	0.4727	
<u>Queens</u>								
24	52,262	69	10	79	25	4,458	54	
25	32,938	59	12	71	20	2,447	64	
26	31,365	39	12	51	8	1,581	79	
27	44,937	69	9	78	10	3,681	53	
28	36,573	61	10	71	11	2,599	51	
29	26,763	66	9	75	8	2,611	48	
30	38,651	69	9	78	23	2,953	50	
	263,489			0.7283		20,330	0.552316	
<u>Staten Island</u>								
31 (all)	57,946	45	8	53	6	4,695	57	
Citywide	952,033			0.7510		70,957	0.4818	