

“We’re Not Even Allowed to Ask for Help”



DEBUNKING THE MYTH OF THE MODEL MINORITY



Coalition for Asian American
Children and Families

Pumphouse Projects
Support for Change Agents

“We’re Not Even Allowed to Ask for Help”

DEBUNKING THE MYTH OF THE MODEL MINORITY

The quality of education available to Asian Pacific American students in New York City public schools is vulnerable to the same factors that shape the education provided to other children of color. Poverty, inequitable distribution of teaching resources, overcrowding, locked down schools, and serious deficits in the cultural competence of many administrators and some educators affect the schooling of Asian Pacific American children and youth as they do that of Black, Latino, and other communities of color.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Funding for this report was provided by the Ford Foundation and Carnegie Corporation, with additional support from the Beautiful Foundation and New York Community Trust.

CACF and Pumphouse Projects thank the following for their assistance in organizing focus groups and obtaining data used in our analysis:

Adhikaar, CACF's Asian American Student Advocacy Project, CACF's Project Collegbound Asian American Student Advocacy Project, Chinese-American Planning Council, DRUM (Desis Rising Up and Moving), NYC Coalition for Educational Justice, NYC Department of Youth and Community Development, New York State Office of Children and Family Services, Partnership for Afterschool Education, Queens YWCA, TASC (The After School Corporation), and the Young Women's Leadership Institute.

Special thanks to those individuals who offered their input and guidance: James Lee, Kevin Nadal, Ed Pauly, Shao-Chee Sim, Robert Teranishi, and Vivian Tseng.

This report was written by John Beam, Jodi Casabianca, and Ailin Chen with assistance from Wayne Ho and Vanessa Leung. Jodi Casabianca conducted the statistical analyses. Research support provided by Jennifer Banh, Nia Evans, Lisa Garrett, Daniel Jones, Elaine Sanchez-Wilson, Choua Vue, Justin Wedes, Stacey Weinick, and Michelle Wong.

Mannar Wong designed the report. Denise Tong provided invaluable copyediting. Deinya Phenix assisted with the preparation of and orientation to our core dataset. Claire Sylvan provided perspective and reality check.

The essential contributions of all these colleagues notwithstanding, the opinions and recommendations expressed in this report are solely those of the Pumphouse Projects and CACF and do not necessarily represent the views of our funders; CACF member agencies, families, or youth leaders; or Fordham University.

This project represents a merger of community roots, cultural competence, and strong advocacy and policy analysis capacity.

The Coalition for Asian American Children and Families (CACF), the nation's only pan-Asian children's advocacy organization, works to improve the health and well-being of Asian Pacific American children and families in New York City. CACF advocates on behalf of underserved families in our communities, especially immigrants struggling with poverty and limited English skills. CACF promotes better policies, funding, and services for East Asian, South Asian, Southeast Asian, and Pacific Islander children, youth, and families.

The National Center for Schools and Communities, a policy advocacy center co-sponsored by the Graduate Schools of Social Service and Education at Fordham University, was the original partner in this project. Pumphouse Projects, which provides policy, research, and advocacy support to social change organizations, has provided continuity for the original NCSC commitment.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter I	Executive Summary	4
Chapter II	Introduction	8
Chapter III	The Model Minority Myth: Burden for Youth, Excuse for Adults . .	11
Chapter IV	Methodology	16
Chapter V	Who and Where Are the APA Students?	19
Chapter VI	The Educational Experience of APA Students	33
Chapter VII	Findings and Policy Implications	45
Appendix	Additional Tables	50
	Technical Appendix	Available at www.cacf.org

TABLES, CHARTS, FIGURES, AND MAPS

Table 1	Schools Represented in Focus Groups and Interviews	15
Chart One	Variables Used in This Report	18
Table 2	Child Poverty	19
Chart Two	U.S. Census National /Ethnic Labels ACS Respondent Self-Identification	20
Table 3	Borough Enrollment by Race	20
Table 4	Asian Enrollment by School Type	21
Table 5	Asian Enrollment in Densest Quartile of Asian Enrollment	22
Table 6	Schools by Top and Bottom Quartiles of Asian Enrollment	23
Maps	Distribution of Afterschool Programs by APA Enrollment	24–25
Maps	Distribution of School Age APA Residents by Ethnic Concentration	26–30
Table 7	Second Wave APA Migration	31
Table 8	Distribution of APA and Other Students by School Language Concentration	32
Figure One	Distribution of APA Enrollment by School Home Language Concentration	32
Figure Two	Average School Poverty by Asian Language Concentration	34
Table 9	Clusters Based on Concentrations of Race and Poverty	42
Table 4a	Distribution of APA Enrollment by Borough and School Type	50
Table 8b	10% Asian Home Languages Concentration by Schools (= > 10%)	51

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“We’re Not Even Allowed to Ask For Help”—*Debunking the Myth of the Model Minority* is organized into four sections.

This first section of three chapters sets the context for the rest of our report and includes highlights of our broad findings and some of our policy recommendations; an introduction to the myth of the model minority and the invisibility of Asian Pacific Americans (APAs) who live beyond the narrow parameters of that myth; and an opportunity to hear the voices of APA students and parents whose day-to-day experience of the city’s public schools can differ dramatically from that myth.

The second section, also three chapters, describes the sorts of data and measures we developed; the geography of the educational environment of APA students; and an analysis of how various factors of school climate and resources, as well as the overall structure of the school system in terms of race and poverty, relate to the academic and other outcomes of APA students, be they model minorities or regular working class people of color like most of the students in New York City Public Schools.

The third section stands alone as the chapter summarizing our main policy findings and presenting a number of recommendations to City Hall and the Department of Education. The last section is an extended technical appendix available with the digital version of this report online at CACF.org.

According to the *New York Times*, in 2009, of New York City “Asian/Pacific Island” general education graduates (2005–06 cohort), more than one in three were deemed not college ready, meaning they passed Regents exams but with scores that predicted they would need remedial classes before tackling college coursework. Put more starkly, half¹ of the cohort finished their fourth year in high school unqualified to earn Cs on basic college coursework.² Furthermore, according to state officials, only seven percent of the city’s English language learners—a group that includes many Asian students—were found to have graduated on time and ready for college and careers.³

And yet, the preconceptions of much of the public and media of Asian Pacific American (APA) students are of youths—probably Chinese and Korean—who make up over 60 percent of the enrollment of New York’s famous exam schools: Stuyvesant, Bronx Science, and Brooklyn Tech. In fact, those students are only about five percent of the APA enrollment in New York City Public Schools. They are, however, the poster kids for New York’s version of the Model Minority Myth, which homogenizes the diversity of cultures, languages, economics, and unique histories of APA communities and trivializes the very real academic and developmental needs of their children.

This report summarizes an in-depth investigation into the educational fate of the other 95 percent. A quarter of so-called “Asian” enrollment, in fact, is packed into 31 of the largest schools in the city, including the three exam schools. However, another quarter of the system’s APA students, about 34,000 young people, attends nearly 1,200 schools spread throughout the city. Ninety-four percent of the city’s public schools enroll some Asian students, frequently in relatively small numbers and percentages. Over 2,500 APA students are isolated in 583 schools with no more than ten Asians.

Our analyses relied heavily on a core of data for the 2007–08 school year provided by the New York City Department of Education (DOE) to the State Education Department (NYSED) for over 1,500 schools. We also drew on data submitted by

individual schools to DOE for their annual Comprehensive Educational Plans (CEP), on mid-decade estimates from the U.S. Census American Community Survey, and on data summaries based on DOE’s annual Home Language Survey.⁴ In addition, our work benefitted from journalistic and academic articles, policy analysis from advocacy organizations, and, most importantly, extensive input from APA students and parents from a cross section of 27 mostly high schools. This latter qualitative work included 16 focus groups with students and six with parents as well as many one-on-one background interviews with service providers.

HIGHLIGHTS OF MAJOR FINDINGS⁵

“We’re Not Even Allowed to Ask for Help” identifies a number of areas of concern:

RACE AND ETHNICITY

Race and ethnicity of enrollment are defining characteristics of the schools attended by APA students. Race-based identities and perceptions, as well as related cultural and economic differences and school-level leadership, shape both a variety of environments with a range of educational outcomes and the overall policy framework in which DOE and related city agencies operate:

- In general, higher Asian enrollment tends to be associated with higher White enrollment and to be inversely (negatively) associated with Hispanic and Black enrollment.
- The largest number of APA students is enrolled in schools where Spanish is the dominant non-English home language.
- There are important differences in average school scores among the home language concentration groupings and among schools with different concentrations of race and ethnicity.

For example, holding race and poverty constant, a school’s average total SAT score increases by about 2.7 percentage points for each ten percent increase in Asian enrollment. It decreases by roughly the same amount for each ten percent increase in Black

¹ The 25 percent of the cohort that graduated with not ready for college exam scores and the 25 percent that did not graduate in four years.

² Otterman, Sharon (February 7, 2011). *Most New York Students Are Not College-Ready*. NY Times. http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/08/nyregion/08regents.html?_r=1&hp. Asian diploma versus college ready rates defined as 80 percent on math/75 percent on English. http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/08/nyregion/08regents.html?_r=1&hp.

³ Otterman, Sharon (October 13, 2011). *State Puts Pressure on City Schools Over English Language Learners*. New York Times.

⁴ Home Language Survey (HLS) data helped us identify schools where at least ten percent of students speak a non-English language at home. We refer to these schools as language concentration schools. Other HLS data covered foreign born and U.S. born differences within APA language groups.

⁵ See Chapter VI for a fuller treatment of findings and recommendations.

enrollment. Finally, it decreases by about 5.4 percentage points for each ten percent increase in Hispanic enrollment. (All differences are significant to $<.001$.) Obviously, this finding must be framed in terms of a discussion of uneven distribution of educational resources.

While we find measures of more positive outcomes and other indicators for all students and often Asian students specifically in groups of schools with *relatively* more Asian students, most APA students do not attend such schools (i.e., schools with concentrations of home speakers of various Asian languages or high percentages of APA enrollment).

- School suspension rates tend to be lower with higher White enrollment, and higher with higher Hispanic and Black enrollment.
- Earlier research conducted when the DOE released suspension statistics by race found that suspensions for all students were substantially higher—and for APA students were four times higher—in Black and Latino majority schools.

POVERTY

Poverty relates to the APA educational situation as a characteristic of individual schools and as a demographic related to APA students' specific ethnic communities. APA students in schools with relatively few APA students are typically in a higher poverty environment than schools with more APA students. School poverty rates also vary widely among the Asian home languages schools depending on which of five Asian languages at least ten percent of a school's students speak at home.

We found a modest *inverse* (negative) relationship between the number and percentage of Asian students attending a school and its poverty rate. Statistics notwithstanding, nearly 10,000 APA students attend 17 schools with relatively high Asian enrollment where, on average, over three quarters of each school's students live in poverty. Another 2,200 Asian students are scattered among 256 schools with an average poverty rate of 86 percent. Furthermore, many Asian students attend schools with relatively high Hispanic⁶ enrollment, which has a much stronger, *positive* correlation with school poverty (i.e. school poverty tends to go up as Hispanic enrollment goes up).

- A comparative increase in school-level poverty is associated with weaker average school-level test results for Asian students.
- School poverty rates are, on average, higher in Spanish, Spanish-and-Asian, and No language concentration schools than in the Asian home languages schools.
- Higher school poverty rates are associated with weaker average school test results for Asian students, average school all-student results, and school SAT results.
- Schools are more likely to designate APA children from low-income and poor families as Limited English Proficient (LEP).

RESOURCES

School-level data suggest that school climate and resource factors

are related to the academic success of APA students in New York City schools, as measured by standardized tests and other indicators.

- The distribution of important instructional resources is uneven across the New York City Public School system, varying in relationship to factors such as racial mix, poverty, and the home language concentration⁷ of the schools.
- Across all relevant schools, there are correlations between all-student and Asian-student test results and various measures of instructional resources.

In terms of DOE's instructional resource metrics for the experience and training of teachers, Asian home languages schools fare better than schools where Spanish is the dominant home language or no non-English language dominates. However, nearly three times more APA students attend schools in the latter two groups than attend the Asian home languages schools.

- According to *The New York Times*, "5,190 children were not getting the language lessons to which they were legally entitled" because DOE lacks the necessary certified teachers of English for Speakers of Other Languages.⁸
- For APA students with Limited English Proficiency, the very low Asian enrollment in many schools may limit what English Language Learner services are available to them.

The New York State Commissioner of Education informed news media that in 2010, "some parents were being deprived of their legal right to choose what kind of program they wanted for their children, whether a bilingual program—in which major subjects are taught in a student's native language—or all classes in English, with some extra help."⁹

The relationship between enrollment and a school's percentage of LEP students is stronger for Hispanic enrollment than for Asian enrollment. Moreover, despite their large number relative to Asian enrollment in other home language concentration groupings, APA students are only nine percent of the enrollment in Spanish home language schools and not all of them require ELL support. Therefore, the more dispersed APA LEP students may have less access to the instructional method best suited to their language learning needs.

The availability of cross-tabulated data (LEP students subdivided by ethnic group) would advance our understanding of the language acquisition supports available to isolated APA ELL students.

- The distribution of Department of Youth and Community Development Out-of-School Time (OST) funding is uneven and appears to disadvantage areas with higher percentages of Asian enrollment and residential concentrations of various APA ethnic communities. (See maps in Chapter V.)

Federal and local education strategies have increasingly used OST activities and funding to supplement the school day agenda with tutoring and homework help. In addition, in the age of test prep, afterschool programs are frequently the only places where students have music and sports. However, zip codes with higher percentages of APA students often have no DYCD programs. Other neighborhoods have so few programs that the ratio of

⁶ The New York State Education Department dataset (based on DOE data) uses Hispanic. In this report, references to those data will use Hispanic. In more narrative contexts, both CACF and Pumphouse Projects generally use Latino.

⁷ A home language other than English spoken by at least ten percent of a school's enrollment.

⁸ Op.cit. Otterman, Sharon (October 13, 2011).

⁹ Ibid.

potential participants of any race to available programs suggests that there are many more students than there are after school slots.

DISPERSION, ISOLATION, CONCENTRATION

The distribution of Asian enrollment by quartile concentrates large numbers of APA students in a relatively small number of schools and scatters tens of thousands of others in very small pockets across the city.

- The densest quartile of Asian enrollment, about 34,000 students, attends just 31 schools, most of them high schools.
- Roughly the same number of students in the most dispersed quartile attends nearly 1,200 schools.
- Twenty of the 31 largest APA enrollment schools (the densest quartile) are also among the 31 largest schools in the system (2,572 - 4,469 students) with total Asian enrollment of 25,503. Over half (17) of the highest APA enrolling schools in the city are in Queens.
- In a more recent Independent Budget Office dataset, seven of the 31 most over-capacity (128 to 254 percent utilization) schools in the system are in Queens.

We also define a set of nine clusters of schools in terms of similar poverty and racial mixes.

- At one extreme, in a cluster of 256 schools dominated by Hispanic enrollment, the ratio of Latino and Black students to APA students is 56:1.
- At another extreme, one of the two majority APA clusters comprises nearly 10,000 students in 17 schools with average Asian enrollment of nearly 80 percent.
- Compared to the lower average poverty rate APA-dominated cluster, all-student scores on some elementary and middle grades tests are substantially lower in the clusters where APA students are isolated. Average per school *Asian-student* scores are also substantially lower in one or more of those clusters for some middle grades tests.
- SAT scores for the APA students in the densest quartile of enrollment are markedly higher than those of APA students in the widely dispersed quartile.

DATA SUPPRESSION

Data provided by DOE, NYSED, and City Hall are frequently inadequate to answer questions raised by APA parents and their organizations.

- DOE's data presentations frequently lack even the most logical of cross tabulations.

For example, from annual report data, we know the number of Asians and the number of Limited English Proficient students in a school but have no idea how many APA students are designated LEP. Absence of such obvious break-outs suggests a failure to consider children and youth as multidimensional individuals and must hinder effective planning at the school and grade level.

- DOE's policy of not disaggregating results for groups of fewer than five students seriously handicaps any effort to understand what is happening to APA students in hundreds of schools they attend.

Arguably, this policy is rooted in a concern for protecting the privacy of individual students. However, given the extreme isolation of many APA students, this policy also results in a lack of transparency concerning their academic progress to a degree that violates the spirit, though not the requirements, of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) monitoring requirements.

- At the K-8 level, there are more schools that omit the test

results of Asian students than report them.

Across all 16 NCLB accountability tests for grades 3-8, we found more schools where the Asian-student test scores were not reported than we did schools where they were provided. For example, for third grade English Language Arts, there were 302 schools not reporting versus at least 232 reporting schools. Translated to the child level, we have nearly 1,400 APA third graders whose reading skills cannot be compared from one school to the next, or, for that matter, within their own schools. We conservatively estimate that outcome measures are not presented for almost 7,000 Asian students in grades three through eight for our main data year.

Given that a core system-wide DOE strategy is "what you count is what you get," what does DOE's failure to count the progress of isolated APA students mean?

HIGHLIGHTS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

RACE AND ETHNICITY

The salience of race and ethnicity in the administration and performance of the public schools argues strongly for a central and more substantive role for Asian Pacific Americans and other families of color in monitoring DOE performance in addressing institutionalized racism. The following initiatives by City Hall and DOE would help establish the on-going dialogue about the role of race in the equity issues that are apparent in the administration of New York City's public schools:

- Appoint an independent task force, supported by the Research Alliance for New York City Schools, to analyze child-level data to clarify the relationship of resources and outcomes to enrollment disaggregated by APA ethnicity, race, LEP, and special needs.
- Reform the culture of the Panel for Educational Policy, the City's Board of Education, to incorporate parent and student feedback as a respected input for its decision making process.
- Hold principals and New York City Police Department personnel accountable for the compliance with the Student Safety Act, Chancellor's Regulation A-832, and the state Dignity for All Students Act (DASA).

POVERTY

A more robust understanding of the impact of poverty and race in the situation of APA students will require a commitment on DOE's part to conduct system-wide analyses of child-level data or to develop protocols that will allow independent researchers to do the work while protecting individual student privacy. Poverty-related initiatives should include:

- Map the variation in and impact of economic poverty among APA ethnicities using child-level data to cross-tabulate children in poverty and children from different APA communities.
- Incorporate the knowledge that the most isolated APA students tend to be in higher poverty schools into professional development for differentiated instruction.
- Review practices for certifying children for free—and reduced—price lunch with particular attention to the accessibility of those practices to parents of foreign-born students.
- Provide adequate numbers of culturally competent guidance counselors, beginning in lowest income and most overcrowded schools.

RESOURCES

Neither DOE nor City Hall has control over the race or income of students in the public schools. They do, however, have total responsibility for whether or not educational resources are distributed equitably.

- The Mayor and Chancellor should lead the way in demanding full State compliance with the Campaign for Fiscal Equity ruling, which has been abandoned by the governor, the legislature, and City Hall.

Albany's tardiness in implementing this historic court decision should not, however, be used as an excuse for the City's failure to dedicate more local resources to the schools or to distribute them equitably.

- The City's elected officials need to support progressive revenue options at the State level to ensure full funding for education, including ELL instruction, guidance services, and other programs that support students, such as OST.
- A consensus of all stakeholders including parents must be reached that respects both the educational rights of students and the workers' rights of teachers and other education professionals such as guidance counselors to allow administrators to place the most qualified teachers in the schools that need them most.
- DOE should publish the disaggregation of LEP students by ethnicity and type of ELL services provided.
- City contracting officials should investigate equity issues in the distribution of publicly funded OST and other youth development programming to ensure they are accessible to APA students.

APA ISOLATION

The wide dispersion of thousands of APA students and the systematic lack of outcomes and other data monitoring of their situation raise the need for measures that keep them from disappearing from public view and keep DOE accountable for their education. We recommend that DOE:

- Identify and instruct principals to use culturally competent community based organizations or service providers to provide ombudsperson services in schools where language or immigrant minorities meet a standard of isolation. This would provide DOE with an opportunity to establish working relationships with culturally competent CBOs and social service providers.
- Develop a culturally competent peer buddy system for recent immigrants above some threshold of isolation. Trained buddies would receive credit toward their community service requirement.
- Develop clear feedback systems to ensure quality translation and interpretation are available in the public school system.

DATA SUPPRESSION

The lack of publicly available data that are disaggregated and cross-tabulated by student characteristics, special needs, and available educational resources represents a failure to consider children and youth as multidimensional individuals. We recommend that DOE:

- Find ways to disaggregate student data by Asian enrollment at minimum and, more usefully, by APA ethnicity.
- Implement a transitional strategy that could begin with grouping demographic, resource, and outcome indicators across school and grade levels in the schools that currently do not publish APA results for many APA test takers. Such an analysis might begin to uncover differences among schools attended by very dispersed APA students and other schools.
- Produce relatively accessible school-level cross tabulations of the various categories to which the same students belong.

An example might be ELL and LEP populations disaggregated by race or ethnicity. Such data presentations would dramatically increase parents' and the public's understanding of the needs of each school's students and the appropriate supports required by their teachers and principal.

INTRODUCTION

*Entrance to Stuyvesant, one of the most competitive public high schools in the country, is determined solely by performance on a test... This year, 569 Asian-Americans scored high enough to earn a slot at Stuyvesant, along with 179 Whites, 13 Hispanics, and 12 Blacks.*¹⁰

Thus, another layer is added to the Model Minority Myth that depicts all Asian students as bright, diligent, and naturally predisposed to academic success. In fact, last year Asian students made up 61 percent of total enrollment at the three traditional special exam schools, Stuyvesant, Bronx Science, and Brooklyn Tech. These students, however, are less than five percent of the Asian Pacific Americans (APAs) in the New York City public schools. This report focuses mostly on the other 95 percent.

APA parents across the city seek assistance from member organizations of the Coalition for Asian American Children and Families (CACF) in navigating New York City's education and social service system. Their students are not, in fact, all high-achieving, naturally bright, fluent in English, or fully acculturated to the formal—and informal—requirements of and barriers to academic success in one of the other of 1,500 plus schools¹¹ that are not famous exam schools.

DEBUNKING THE MYTH

The issues of APA students who do not exemplify the Model Minority are almost never acknowledged as part of the APA student experience. Frequently, the only narrative about APA students that is front and center is the “positive” stereotype of the monolithic figure who is not affected by racial discrimination, poverty, or the personal upheaval and dislocation of the immigration process—to name a few of the key factors that are traditionally used to engage *other* communities of color in a discussion about how they experience public schools.

Mainstream news coverage of APA student experience frequently focuses on the APA high school students who attend New York City's specialized high schools, plays them off against other groups, or ignores them altogether. Last February, the *New York Times* covered the New York State Regents' release of calculations comparing graduation rates for the 2005-2006 cohort with a predictor of college readiness and included APA results in the story, which we cite in this report. But, when the next year's cohort (2006-2007) results were released in June once again contrasting slightly increased four-year graduation rates with abysmal college-readiness rates, APA students, who make up 14 percent of New York City public school students and a disproportionate number of graduates, were nowhere to be found in the Regents' press release or the *Times*' coverage.

Results for the urban pilot exam of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) released in early December showed flat progress comparing 2003 and 2009 for White and APA students, who enroll in New York City Public Schools in roughly equal numbers. The DOE press release made no mention of APA or Latino students, and *The Wall Street Journal*/Associated

Press and *Times* coverage made no mention of the APA results.

Most recently an on-line article from City Limits manages to turn APA and Native American students White while covering the demographics of the latest list of schools targeted by DOE for closing:

All of the schools serve a greater majority of children of color, whose families live at far greater levels of poverty, than the school system as a whole. Of the 25 schools listed, black and Hispanic students make up at least 95 percent of the student body at 19 of the schools, compared with the NYC public school average of 68 percent children of color.¹²

Sixty-eight percent only represents the percentage of Black and Hispanic students of color enrolled in the New York City public schools. The same paragraph then discusses poverty rates, thus reinforcing the mistaken notion that they are only relevant to some groups of students.

There is a dearth of knowledge about the demography of AAPI students, their educational trajectory and their postsecondary outcomes. Educational research for the most part excludes AAPIs from the broader discourse on equity and social justice and does not adequately represent the needs, challenges, and experiences of AAPI students, particularly with regard to the wide range of social and institutional contexts in which they pursue their educational aspirations. AAPIs are, in many ways, invisible in policy considerations at the federal, state and local levels, and in the development of campus services and programs.¹³

The Coalition for Asian American Children and Families and the National Center for Schools and Communities at Fordham University set out to create a more richly detailed and sharply focused picture of the educational reality of the students from the many languages, cultures, and ethnicities hidden underneath the imprecise label of Asian. Pumphouse Projects has provided continuity for the original Carnegie grant made to Fordham.

Our effort, “**We’re Not Even Allowed to Ask for Help**,” sought to answer three sets of questions:

- Who and where are the “Asian” students in the New York City public schools?
- What happens to APA students in their schools? What are the opportunities for and barriers to learning? What are the outcomes?
- What are the policy implications raised by a clearer understanding of the variety of educational contexts which APA students experience? What more do policy makers need to know to advance our understanding of their reality?

“**We’re Not Even Allowed to Ask for Help**” shares our initial findings with parents and students, policy makers, and the wider

¹⁰ Yang, Wesley (May 16, 2011). *Paper Tigers*. New York pg. 22

¹¹ Our dataset (2007-08) based on New York State Education Dept. (NYSED) data encompassed 1,512 schools. New York City Dept. of Education (DOE) lists roughly 1,700 for the most recent year.

¹² Zelon, Helen (December 12, 2011). *Schools Targeted for Closure Serve Kids with Higher Needs*. City Limits Blog. <http://www.citylimits.org/blog/blog/181/schools-targeted-for-closure-serve-kids-with-higher-needs> Downloaded 12/15/11

¹³ Teranishi, Robert; Nguyen, Tu-Lien; et al (2011). *The Relevance of Asian Americans & Pacific Islanders in the College Completion Agenda*. National Commission on Asian American and Pacific Islander Research in Education (CARE) and the Asian & Pacific Islander American Scholarship Fund (APIASF). Disclosure note: Robert Teranishi is a member of the CACF board of directors.

public who are concerned with issues of quality and equity in our public schools and their impact on real APA children and youth as opposed to mythical Asians.

COMMUNITIES THAT REFUSE TO BE IGNORED

The organizations that conducted this study, as well as other advocacy groups, policy analysts, community based organizations, and social service providers, have long understood that many schools do not serve APA and other children of color well. However, when presented with testimony and other evidence that DOE policy and practice fail to integrate race and ethnicity, language, culture, immigrant status, and poverty into its educational strategy, administrators and policy makers retreat into, in the words of one APA agency head, “opposition, disagreement, surprise, denial, and apathy.”

“We’re Not Even Allowed to Ask for Help” builds on research and policy advocacy conducted by CACF, NCSC, and Pumphouse Projects. This report summarizes an investigation that moves beyond the rhetorical and anecdotal to drill deeply into the educational reality facing APA children and youth who might not be Model Minorities.

Asian Pacific Americans, in all their diversity, are the fastest growing community in New York City. Over one million Asian Pacific Americans¹⁴ constitute 13 percent of the city’s population and nearly 14 percent of its public school students but receive a disproportionately small share of public resources. Whether we count City social service contracts, City Council discretionary funding, or City Council initiative projects, APA-led organizations¹⁵ receive a tiny fraction of City program funding compared to the percentage of their constituencies in New York City’s population.¹⁶

CACF released *Hidden in Plain View: An Overview of the Needs of Asian American Students in the Public School System* in 2004 in an attempt to open the public conversation about the Asian Pacific American student experience in New York City.

About the same time, CACF launched the Asian American Student Advocacy Project (ASAP), an intensive leadership program for 15 Asian Pacific American public high school students who defined issues, conducted research, and developed policy recommendations on current problems facing students in New York City public schools. Students represented all five boroughs of New York City, 13 different public high schools, all four grades, nine different Asian and Pacific Islander ethnic backgrounds, and spoke a total of ten different languages. ASAP participants identified challenges that included lack of support for English Language Learners, language barriers for parents, harassment of students, and incidents of racism. Unfortunately, issues have remained the same and recommendations made by the students relegated to best practices that schools can choose to implement, or not.

On a parallel track, the National Center for Schools and Communities at Fordham University had been working with grassroots organizations in a dozen cities to document how schools with

higher enrollments of Black and Latino students were frequently shortchanged in the distribution of educational resources. Pumphouse Projects brought extensive experience helping grassroots organizations produce studies on the impact of institutional racism on the schools serving their neighborhoods.

Since the release of *Hidden in Plain View*, CACF’s education policy work has included advocating for more resources and improved educational outcomes for English Language Learners (ELL). CACF participated in various coalition efforts to maintain an explicit recognition of services for English Language Learners in the implementation of the CFE vs. NYS decision and to oppose City budget cuts during the last several budget cycles for ELL instruction and other services for immigrant students with interrupted formal education (SIFE).

CACF addressed harassment issues documented in *Hidden in Plain View* by participating in the Dignity in All Schools Act Coalition that supported the passage of the Dignity in All Schools Act by the City Council in 2004, and engaged in efforts of the DASA¹⁷ in ACTION Coalition, which in 2008 successfully advocated for Chancellor’s Regulation A-832. The stories of APA students who were harassed by other students and received no protection from the adults in their schools were a core strand of coalition efforts to draw attention to the need for strong oversight and reporting mechanisms.

ETHNIC AND ECONOMIC DIVERSITY

There is no one Asian immigrant experience, let alone a single generic *APA student* experience, particularly since many APA students are Americans by birth. The stereotype of the Korean or Chinese computer nerd at Stuyvesant or the bluntly racist post-9/11 merging of all South Asians with all Arabs into closeted terrorists perpetuates public ignorance of the rich diversity of the Central Asian, South Asian, Southeast Asian, East Asian, and Pacific Islander communities of New York City. We have tapped a variety of datasets as well as the first-person experience of a cross section of APA students to provide a very preliminary sense of the economic and cultural diversity of New York’s many APA communities.

Having some sense of the variety and impact of the APA students’ own immigration experiences and that of their parents is critical. Thus, we include both qualitative and quantitative discussions that highlight emerging APA ethnic *groups* within the New York City public schools such as the Fukienese, Nepali/Tibetan, and Indo-Caribbean populations as well as *schools* in which at least ten percent of students speak an Asian language at home. For this study, we spoke with groups of students from multiple APA ethnicities and a wide range of high schools, most of them not schools attended by the stereotypical “Asian” student. In our quantitative analysis, we explored differences in school resources and outcomes that become clear when we parse out language groups, differences of economic status among APA communities, and the concentration and isolation of APA students in the 1,500 schools whose data we examined.

¹⁴ Asian is a racial label that encompasses people who trace their heritage from East Asia, Southeast Asia, and South Asia, and comprises a diverse range of language groups, cultures, and nationalities. In this report, we have generally used Asian when the label refers to the name of a variable in a dataset. We use the broader but more accurate APA to refer to people from or descended from ethnic communities in Asia as well as the Pacific Islands and Hawaii who live in the United States.

¹⁵ We define APA-led organizations as those with a mission focusing on all or some segment of the Asian Pacific American communities and the clients or members, board, and senior staff of which are drawn primarily from those communities.

¹⁶ Sim, Shao-Chee. *An Analysis of Public Funding Provided to Social Service Organizations Serving the Asian American Community in New York City*. Asian American Policy Review: Volume XI, 2002. In addition, from analysis of FY2012 NYC Budget by 13% and Growing Coalition: For City Council Discretionary funding, 43 Asian Pacific American organizations were awarded \$987,825 through individual member items. This represents a 28 percent dollar amount increase from last year, and is two percent of the total \$49.6 million in City Council Discretionary funding.

¹⁷ Dignity in All Schools Act

While immigrants and immigrant children make up the vast majority of APAs living in New York City, APAs also include third and fourth generation individuals, who trace their families' first arrival in the Nineteenth Century. The largest and more diverse wave of immigrants from Asia came after the 1965 Immigration Act. That legislation paved the way for a generation of APA immigrants, many of whom were more highly educated than more recent migrants. People in this wave frequently arrived equipped with professional degrees and prepared to enter the work force and to raise families in the U.S. Beginning in the 1980s, however, circumstances under which APA children and families have made the journey to the U.S. have varied considerably. Many more were undocumented immigrants or successful asylum applicants.

Some APA parents migrate here years before they can send for their children. On the other hand, some immigrants meet and marry here but then send children overseas to the care of grandparents until they are old enough for school. In either case, families in which parent and child have been separated for a long time might reunite in households that include new family members or an extended family. The challenges of renewing familial bonds while learning a new way of life and dealing with the complexities of the public school system are daunting and can lead to strained family relationships and conflict.

Many of these more recent arrivals come from rural communities and have less formal education than those in the previous wave. Consequently, many run up against profound socioeconomic barriers. Poverty rates also vary widely among the larger ethnic/language groups in DOE surveys: Fukienese (96 percent), Mandarin and Bengali (78.5 percent), Hindi (61.1 percent), Punjabi (79.8 percent), Korean (51.8 percent), and Tagalog (51.3 percent).¹⁸ Once in the U.S., many of these families become a part of the city's working poor and struggle to meet basic needs here and obligations in their home countries that might include debts owed to traffickers and support of other family members.

A POSITIVE IMAGE THAT HURTS

The Model Minority Myth continues to be pervasive.¹⁹ While there are APA students who achieve academic success, success is not representative of the entire group. In addition, high scores on standardized exams do not always translate to academic and future post K-12 success. The APA student identity, when it is referenced at all, consists of polarized stereotypes of the self-sufficient high-achiever or as English Language Learner whose concerns often are perceived as specific and transitional for a limited number of students and thus carry less weight in broader discussions about educational equity, achievement, and resources.

Work by Princeton sociologists Thomas Espenshade and Alexandria Walton Radford²⁰ suggests that, given four college applicants of otherwise similar qualifications but different races, an Asian student's SAT scores must be 140, 270, and 450 points better than those of the White, Latino, and Black applicant, respectively, to have an "equal" chance of being selected for the

"elite private" universities they studied. While there is a broader, defensible perspective related both to affirmative action to overcome structural racism and to a Supreme Court protected public interest in cultural and ethnic diversity, these findings do suggest that whatever disproportionate academic success some APA students achieve might then be devalued by forces beyond their control. They also suggest that APA students are judged by a narrower standard (i.e., high test scores) than by criteria reflecting a more holistic notion of diversity, criteria that are applied to other applicant groups (e.g., criteria that might consider economic class, artistic or athletic talents, or interesting formative experiences). Moreover, such devaluation of the whole APA student socializes onto the shoulders of one category of young people of color the costs of repairing society's failure to distribute important resources equitably.

The monolithic stereotype of the model Asian student also does damage to the identities, cultures, and needs of the overwhelming majority of the APA students in other ways. More specifically, it stands in the way of students receiving the full range of educational opportunity and support to which they have a right and complicates their claim to those resources.

In a school system where more than 60 percent of the population consists of a wide variety of immigrant students or children of immigrants, policy makers, administrators, and sometimes even educators frequently address the needs of immigrant students, especially APA immigrant students, as if they were *all* English Language Learners (ELLs). Paradoxically, they rarely take into account the impact of acculturation on student and parent experience or the degree of their own cultural competence on educational outcomes. For example, in background interviews with students and community leaders, Indo-Caribbean students, who are primarily English speaking, report that they are often mistaken for English Language Learners, while Tibetan students say they are asked to make-do with Hindi translators. The diversity of the New York City public school enrollment requires a school system that is equipped to respond swiftly to demographic shifts and student needs.

The failure of elected officials and bureaucrats to respect the varied educational needs of the APA student population causes APA students from graduating from high school and succeeding in college and career. For example, a recent analysis of New York State Education Department (NYSED) data by the New York Times estimated that, despite their relative high graduation rates more than a third of 2008-09 APA Regents diploma graduates were not academically prepared for college coursework or careers.²¹

Information like this that specifically spotlights the situation of APA students is rare. What is clear, however, is that, according to state and city data, tens of thousands of APA students share schools with other students of color that are over-crowded, under-resourced, and subject to increasingly test-driven accountability measures and declining resources.²² Clearly, a desk at Stuyvesant or Bronx Science or Harvard is not in the future of most APA students in New York City.

¹⁸ DOE's poverty indicator combines the percentages eligible for free and reduced price lunch, which comprises a broad range but tends to tilt toward the free (lower-income) range of the combined indicator. We report the figure for U.S.-born students on an assumption, inferred from DOE data, that the families of foreign-born students will under certify for public benefits. On the other hand, U.S.-born status suggests families that have been in the country longer.

¹⁹ The term Model Minority dates from a January 1966 New York Times Magazine in by sociologist William Peterson. The article was titled *Success Story: Japanese American Style*.

²⁰ Espenshade, Thomas J. and Walton Radford, Alexandria (2009). *No Longer Separate, Not Yet Equal: Race and Class in Elite College Admission and Campus Life*. Princeton University Press. <http://press.princeton.edu/chapters/s9072.pdf>

²¹ Op.cit. Otterman, Sharon (February 7, 2011).

²² American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, Multiracial, and White are used on the New York State Education Department NYSED Annual Report Card website. ASIAN, BLACK, HISP, and WHITE are used in the NYSED datasets.

THE MODEL MINORITY MYTH: BURDEN FOR YOUTH, EXCUSE FOR ADULTS

In our main data year of 2007-2008, a million young people attended over 1,500 New York City Public Schools. Asian Pacific American students attended almost all of those schools in numbers large and small. Inevitably, the results of our exploration of the APA experience will be described in a shorthand of facts and figures. Before diving into the numbers that describe the huge variation in what happens to APA students in the city's public schools, we provide them with an opportunity to speak for themselves.

*Some of us like to claim only part of that history, while others own our entire story. I'm not here to say there's a right or a wrong, I've already experienced more than once what it feels like to have someone tell me what I was. And it pissed me off. So I'm going to respectfully not go there.*²³

Nadeena Seodorsan, Indo-Caribbean blogger

This blog entry by a recent New York City public school graduate is one person's reaction to having other people define her identity, specifically on the question of: How Asian is she really? But, more broadly her words could apply to the multiple identities lived on a daily basis by nearly 136,000 New York City public school students that range from invisibility to cartoon to object of envy to casualty of racism.

"We're Not Even Allowed to Ask for Help" takes a closer look at the breadth of situations and outcomes that make up the pan-Asian student experience that includes East Asian, Southeast Asian, South Asian, and Pacific Islander ethnic groups. (Chapter V includes a more detailed discussion of APA student diversity using Census and the DOE Home Language survey.)

We begin our report by listening to APA students who sometimes do and sometimes do not live the myth. CACF gathered their stories in 16 focus groups of students, six focus groups of parents from two elementary schools, and interviews with former students and school personnel. Students were CACF program participants, friends of those participants, and participants from programs sponsored by partner organizations.

Students identified as recent immigrant, first generation, and second generation. They also identified ethnically as Bangladeshi, Chinese (speaking Fukienese, Cantonese, and Mandarin), Filipino, Indian, Indo-Caribbean, Korean, Pakistani, Tibetan, and Vietnamese. Students attended 27 mostly high schools with total Asian enrollment of nearly 19,500 students. Asian enrollment per school ranged from four to 70 percent. For the 23 schools for which data were available, the Asian cohort four-year Regents diploma rates ranged from 35 to 100 percent. We asked students about their overall academic experience, their experiences as the Asian Pacific Americans in New York City public schools, available support network and knowledge of resources, peer and staff relationships, and family attitudes about education.

Parents were from two CACF partner community based organizations in Queens. Three of the focus groups were with primarily Chinese parents from an elementary school, and the other three with Nepali parents with a wider age range among their children. We asked parents about their views on education and parent engagement, assessment of school quality and student achievement, and the impact of Asian Pacific American identity on student achievement.

DIFFERENT SITUATIONS, SAME OLD STUFF

APA students experience the same range of day-to-day reality that other students do and are similarly affected by budget cuts, school closings, co-locations of schools, overcrowding, and heightened security. The overall climate at the school, the learning environment, and the interaction of students with the school community can help or hinder academic success of students. APA students are not immune to these challenges.

- * *Teachers shouldn't be taking money out of their own wallets just to help us. It should be the city's job.*
- * *You have to go through metal detectors. The campus is scary. It doesn't make you have school spirit. You just want to leave. People from other high schools are running around the halls, and there is no sense of community.*
- * *Cuz when I came I was first so scared—I heard bad things about high school and I thought [names a school] would be bad but then when I came here I was so impressed that no one made fun of each other and they were kind to each other.*
- * *The hallways at [one of the most selective high schools] are ridiculous. It takes five minutes to move ten feet. It makes us late for classes, and the teachers care. And now, if you have three lates in a month you get a cut.*
- * *We never go get lunch downstairs because there is so much gang activity. If you grow up in New York City, it's common.*

However, from the focus groups specific themes arose that highlight the experience of Asian Pacific American students in our public schools, specifically the impact of the Model Minority Myth.²⁴ The students report that because many non-Asian peers and teachers presume that all APA students have an innate, superior academic capability, they feel that they are held to a higher academic standard, and they are expected to overcome any challenges without assistance.

- * *It sucks because everyone gives you the work. They're like, "We're not going to do the work because you're Asian. You're going to do it anyway." Then I'm forced to do it because I don't want to fail, and they assume it's no big deal.*
- * *Basically for math, we're Asian, and I feel like we're not even allowed to ask for help.*

Youth in our focus groups acknowledged that they begin to internalize these expectations that APA students are all can-do kids. Living up to these standards also prevents some APA students from asking for help with academic or social challenges because they are reluctant to disappoint expectations. Over time, they become too self-conscious to reach out to teachers and counselors when they need assistance.

- * *Honestly, I felt like guidance counselors were just for kids who*

²³ S. Nadeena (March 20, 2011). Lost in Translation. JahSis YWLI. Blog of Jahajee Sisters/Young Women's Leadership Institute

²⁴ Wing sketches the history of Model Minority and re-examines an earlier study of students who received D and F grades in a California high school with a highly diverse Asian enrollment ("Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Hmong, Laotian, Indonesian, Thai, Mien, Sri Lankan, Korean, Indian, Iranian, Pakistani, Filipino, and so on"). Initially, data from Asian and White students were contrasted with that of Black and Latino students. "All Asians are lumped together, with no distinctions regarding such basic differences as national origin and history, class background, immigration status, language(s) spoken, or parents' educational levels and occupations, or what classes they are taking." "At each grade level, there is a full range of GPAs, from very high to very low." Wing, Jean Yonemura. "Beyond Black and White: The model minority myth and the invisibility of Asian American students." *The Urban Review*, 2007, 39(4), 455-487.

got in trouble. So, I kind of felt like if I had a problem, I should just work it out on my own.

- * [Expectations are] kind of something I put on myself... So, back when I was in Brazil, I didn't know that Asians were smarter or whatever. I found out in my middle school, kind of, in America... and I started living up to it. Like chasing to achieve that [expected success]. Now, I still keep that in mind even though [I am] chasing to achieve more than, higher than, I need to.

APA students in our focus groups identified a variety of challenges that demonstrate the impossibility of uniform success amongst APA students. Their own stories and those about their APA peers demonstrate that those who struggle academically and some who decide to drop out are not simply exceptions to some rule.

- * The other Asians in my school are not the best students. Pretty much they are the worst. All they do is cut or smoke or go to the pool hall and stand outside. And, I don't want to join them.
- * [My mother] focused all her attention to me which added to my pressure, but that didn't really help because she would yell at me about every little thing. I would show her my report card, but then eventually I got tired and I just let that slide and it went downhill from there. Eventually, after senior year I'm trying to struggle to keep my grades up.
- * A lot of [my friends'] families say don't go to school, go to work; you need to earn money. Some people go to college, but some drop out. Some people even drop out from high school.

“They’ve expected me to go to an Ivy League ever since I was little.”

SCHOOL RACIAL DIVERSITY

The students in our focus group are conscious of the racial diversity, or, in some instances, the lack of diversity, in their schools. Focus groups participants attend a variety of schools with APA enrollment that ranges from very few APA students to a clear majority APA students. Ideally, a reasonably balanced diversity allows for our students, with the proper support, to develop cross-cultural understanding they need to succeed in school and their post-secondary worlds.

- * The best thing [about the school] is the diversity- because it's got Chinese people, Indian people, Spanish speaking students. You learn English but you also get to know people from South America.
- * Asians are a minority in my school. I am one of the only Chinese people there. Most of the Asians are Indians. I usually hang out with other races-not my own. I hang out with Spanish kids because I'm usually there with Filipino students, so it's my way in with them [Spanish students].
- * I feel more comfortable with Asians. I feel like I do talk to other students but mostly in class when we do projects. But, with other students, I have less to say. My school is three-quarters Asian.

APA students filter their understanding of their situation through an additional layer of perceived anti-Asian racism and xenophobia. This leaves many students feeling ostracized. A South Asian eleventh grader told us that one teacher instructed him to stop listening to the day's chemistry lesson “because we don't want another Times Square bombing.” “He's joking around,” said the student, “but sometimes it gets me pissed off.”

- * I feel like others (students from other races) feel we are easy targets. I don't feel it's safe. It's not the students in my school but the school on the next block. They pick fights, rob people, and especially pick on students in my school. I think it's stereotyping... They think we are an easy target.
- * So, in junior high I had a very bad experience. I was bullied because of my accent. So, even if I said “Hi,” everyone would start laughing and I felt discouraged and nobody talked to me. I come to the country...and they just thought it was uncool to talk to someone who didn't have American accent.

CONTENT AND RESOURCES

Students in the focus group shared their perspective on their teachers, instructional resources, and course work. As expected, students shared the full range of satisfaction with their education. Immigrant students compared their educational experiences here in New York with their experiences in their native country. While immigrant students struggled to learn English, many still felt prepared to tackle some of the content due to their education in their native country.

- * I like my school. I like my teachers. I am in tenth grade going into eleventh at [a Queens school]. Most teachers are good and offer a lot of help.
- * [T]he schools and teachers only teach to the next test. They don't teach us about other things. They never say: “Ok, when you go outside of high school, you need to know these things.” They just say: “You need to pass the test.”
- * I think the teachers are doing a great job at [names school]. Especially, not only are they helping us pass classes and prepare for classes, each student has different languages, so teachers really have to make sure that we both pass class and learn English.
- * In my case, school is more complicated in Bangladesh. [What] you learn in high school in Bangladesh is what you learn here in college. And, the stuff we learn here is the same as what you learn in Bangladesh in sixth grade.

The perceived quality of formal and informal support for APA students varies widely. The children and youth from lower-income, less acculturated families are the most vulnerable among the APA student population and are exactly the students who become invisible in a school system that in large part has homogenized individual needs and personal histories. The result can be a failure to direct adequate and appropriate services addressing the individual student's needs.

- * I do like going to school, but what I don't like is, instead of encouraging us, our deans go, “You are never early to school, so you are not going to graduate.” That just brings me down and makes me not want to go... Also, certain teachers are the same way, “Oh you're not going to graduate.”
- * We [each] have one advisor teacher. They always ask: “How is your school day? How is your family? How are you doing in your life?” They also ask lots of questions when you get a low grade on your report card; they ask you what happened. Sometimes I like it and sometimes I think, “Why are you asking so many

questions?"... but sometimes I feel good because they are caring for us like their children.

While officials and the media may believe that APA students are all on track for a post-secondary education, many struggle with courses while others have trouble navigating the process because families lack knowledge about high school requirements and applying for college. Moreover, guidance support varies among schools. According to the New York State Department of Education, only 50 percent of Asian Pacific American (APA) students²⁵ are considered prepared for college and career.²⁶ For APA students in high needs urban-suburban areas, the rate drops to 35.2%.²⁷

- * *[Told that he was underprepared for an upcoming SAT subject test, a student recalls a private tutor said,] "What you're learning in your school is not enough." At first, I thought I was prepared for college. Now I realize I'm not at all.*
- * *In addition to regular class, we also have advisory, and they help us with financial aid, and apply for things before we graduate. They bring us to different colleges...*
- * *[If they spoke English, my parents] would know what kind of resources we would need or what requirements we need to graduate, and they would probably give us more help because they don't know what classes we need or how many credits we need to graduate so... I kind of have to just make my own decisions and do my best to graduate on my own without really a lot of help from them.*

The most positive feedback on support and guidance came from students from the handful of schools that focus on recently arrived English Language Learners.

APA STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

There can be only one APA valedictorian per year per school and most APA students applying to Harvard from Stuyvesant will fail to achieve that unrealistic goal. Nevertheless, the myth of the model Asian student continues to influence the expectations of not only educators and peers, but also the parents and students themselves.

Many focus group participants openly disagreed with their parents' narrow definition of success but at the same time felt ill equipped to communicate effectively their feelings to their parents or engage in a productive dialogue with family members. Students in focus groups reflexively portrayed their parents as clinging to a simplistic hard line on education and careers; as having an uninformed understanding of American schooling; and as possessing little capacity to assist them in navigating the reality of their public school education. As conversations progressed, however, students and parents displayed deeper insight into the real world sources of their tension. Both groups describe themselves as being confronted with structures that display little or no respect for the situation of students or parents and that admit no responsibility for solving problems those structures cause.

The students talked extensively about managing expectations of their families. As is the case with other immigrant groups, less educated, lower-income APA parents sometimes have greater difficulty with the acculturation process and are less equipped to guide their children's educational decisions or to provide them with adequate support at each stage of their educational careers.

All of our student respondents understood the tremendous sacrifices that their parents and family made to immigrate to the U.S. and provide their children with the opportunities that they themselves never had. Students manifest this internal and external pressure with a range of educational outcomes. They either spend their educational careers struggling to keep up, or push themselves to live up to or exceed expectations at all costs. In either scenario, students talk about the negative impact and toll that it takes on the parent-child bond and family relationships in general.

- * *They've expected me to go to an Ivy League ever since I was little...I feel a lot of pressure. If I get a B, I get mad. They also expect me to help my brother. They keep saying we are depending on you so that when we're older, we don't have to work anymore, and we can just depend on you.*
- * *They don't push me, saying you have to go [to college]but they go, "You are the only child, the only hope." So, that's why I feel pressured. It gives me a lot of stress. If you don't do good, they don't yell, but I feel bad.*
- * *Even though they expect us to get a high average, they don't support us. They won't go to the parent-teacher conference. They won't call our school to ask about our attendance. They just want your grades...They don't know anything about what happens in school.*
- * *...I guess our parents push us because they didn't get the opportunities we got, and they want us to do better than what they do over here because they don't have the same opportunities as people in a higher class do over here. So, they don't want us to face the same experiences.*

For more recent immigrant students such as the Fukienese, the burden of expectations is less about the pressure to achieve beyond expectations than the challenge of having to balance a need to contribute to their families financially with their own educational goals and aspirations. Many of the Fukienese students in our focus groups arrived as older adolescents of 18 and over. Their families face tremendous financial pressures including the need to earn enough money to meet their basic needs as well as to repay the cost of their trip to the U.S., which they sometimes owe to a combination human trafficker-loan shark known as a snakehead.

These students explained that, while they want to graduate from high school, go on to college, and fulfill career aspirations, their parents are largely unsupportive and encourage them to contribute to the family income and abandon their educational goals in the short-term. These young adults shared with us that bearing this tension is tremendously difficult because as they adjust to their new schools and see the options available to them, they begin to develop educational goals and career interests that go against their parents' wishes as well as what is acceptable in their families' culture.

- * *My parents just say that they want me to go work in the restaurant because I'm too old to go to college. I came here when I was 19 and I will graduate high school in another year. They say that we are girls, so I will get married and then be someone's wife and then I will be working for my husband's family, so why spend the time and money to go to college? My parents feel like they don't benefit if I go college. They need my help with making money right now.*
- * *When I talk about school and going to college, [my father] said,*

²⁵ Op.cit. Otterman, Sharon (February 7, 2011).

²⁶ Ibid. According to the New York State Department of Education College and Career Ready is defined as achieving a grade of 80 on the Math Regents, and a 75 on the English Regents. It is important to note that by their calculations, these grades merely predict a C grade for college level courses in these same subject areas.

²⁷ Ibid.

“You are not bringing home any money and you need to go work.” But, I love learning and school, and I know that I need to respect my father, so it’s hard...

** I want people to know that the life of a restaurant worker is very difficult and it’s very hard on the family... Making money is more important here because you need to be able to live. They want us to do well in school, but that’s not a priority. Priority is for us to make money and be able to support ourselves.*

APA students in focus groups reported that despite the fact that their parents emphasized academic achievement, few of their parents are able to provide them with informed guidance and support around basic but critical educational decisions such as high school admissions, course selection, college financial aid, and admissions. Students reported that parents were overburdened with long work hours, were unfamiliar with the school system, or faced English language barriers and, as a result, did not regularly attend parent-teacher conferences or school events. While many students would welcome greater parental guidance, the majority also concluded that their parents were unprepared to provide them with the support that they need.

“No one really cares about the myth.”

** I think it’s just the way they (parents) grew up and what they are used to. They didn’t have the opportunity to go to college. In the West Indian community, they have this [attitude about] what they expect their children to be. So, if you step out of it they react negatively. Best to be something recognized by the community like a doctor or lawyer. My dad did not know that much about being a nurse.*

** My parents aren’t really involved. They just tell me to do my best and get good grades and do my homework. They don’t know English. [If they did] then they could actually attend those PTA meetings and talk to our schoolteachers and counselors and know about how we’re doing. Also, if they knew technology... they could actually go online to check our grades and talk to our teachers, but because they don’t [know English or computers], they can’t get involved.*

** My parents don’t have time for us because they are working. Mostly I talk to my dad because my mom comes home after 9:00 p.m. and we are sleeping. Sometimes, we feel like we don’t want to bother them because sometimes if we get a low grade, they get very depressed and very sad and they feel like “my child is not useful.” I feel so sad [that] sometimes we get a very low grade... and I don’t want them to feel bad. Sometimes I hide the report card under the pillow.*

** Yes, I would like for my parents to be in more involved in school because then they can [advocate for us]. In our school sometimes, the Spanish students and Chinese students are treated different. Maybe the Spanish students’ parents go to school and teachers think that Spanish parents think that their children are important and maybe they might think that Chinese parents don’t think their children are important.*

Like most parents, our adult focus group participants felt that educational achievement is a priority that they hold in high regard

for their children. Many parents in our focus groups were raising second generation APA children. Note that the majority of these parents had children who were in elementary or middle school, and only a few had high school aged students. Another interesting feature of our parent respondents was that one group was from one of the city’s largest, most established APA communities (Chinese) and the other was from one of the newest and relatively smallest (Nepalis).

Participants in our parent focus groups reported that there were significant differences between the educational systems in the U.S. and their home countries (e.g., pedagogical style, expectations for parental engagement, and coursework). Such differences make it difficult for them to understand how best to help their children navigate the school system and make decisions about their schooling. Many parents spoke of relying on informal networks of friends and other parents or consulting with their local community-based organization for information about admissions, extra-curricular activities, and other school-related news. Still others searched the web for information about school performance and admissions.

** The main difference is that in America, children have more freedom and you have to take their opinions into consideration; in China, you just tell them to study, memorize. There are good and bad sides to both systems. In China, it’s more strict; in US there is more freedom of thought which can be good.*

** My tenant, a young guy, does computer work, and he sometimes helps us look online to see which schools are the best high schools in the area for example. My grandson is going to Cardozo and that’s because I asked my tenant about the school and how to get in.*

Parents described some of the challenges that complicate their involvement in their child’s education, including limited time, lack of communication from their children and the school, and the strained parent-child relationship.

** Sometimes I have no idea whether my child is doing what they are suppose to do in school, and I want the teachers to write more notes home so I know whether they are telling the truth or not.*

** When they reach junior high, the kids are all in love with being independent, and they don’t want their Mom to be waiting for them—my son will say, “Wait for me two blocks away and you need to respect that because otherwise it will increase the tension between us, you have to understand.” In high school, you are old enough to be independent, but at that time you just need to have a good relationship with all the teachers...*

** I’m not that involved. I do check report card, and I ask him every day, but he doesn’t want to talk about school. I need to be more involved, but sometimes I just don’t have time.*

Parents said that, while they have many unanswered questions about their child’s school and progress, they often did not express their concerns because they did not feel comfortable talking to teachers or school leadership. In particular, they were interested in having a better understanding of U.S. pedagogical approaches and curricula. They had other substantive questions related to classroom instruction, school environment, resources, and budgets.

** The schools need to be more strict. I want the teachers to give students more individual attention. Different teachers do different things. There should be more uniform policies; for example, all students need to have homework reviewed by the parents.*

** I want my child to be bilingual. It’s a challenge for me, I think, because when I go see my child’s teacher, he would ask me “What language do you speak to him at home?” I say Chinese. He asks—*

why don't you speak English to him at home? I told him I want my child to know the native language. But, he says my child is old enough to know the native language, so you should just speak to him in English at home. But, I am still debating whether this is right...?

* My daughter only gets gym second half of the year. So, they have to take turns. I don't know why they use the gym for other purposes. 600-700 students in the elementary school, average 26 to 27 in each class. I heard the art teacher has just retired, so I am hoping they will hire another art teacher. I just worry with the budget cuts. They are cutting these important classes.

* I don't like to talk to the principal about the teachers, but I wonder: Do they evaluate the teachers? When I found out that they have other kids evaluate the homework, I think that's wrong... You miss the teacher's comments—so the student can know how they can do better.

Clearly, our cross section of students is larger and more diverse than our group of parent respondents. Together, however,

they begin to expose the inaccuracies and sometime damaging flaws in the Model Minority Myth. What comes across as persistence and self-sufficiency may be the result of being left to academically sink or swim desperately in under resourced schools. What seems to be APA parent disinterest is often rooted in the same issues many low-income immigrant parents face: grueling work schedules; language barriers; and inaccessible, culturally incompetent bureaucracies. Finally, as we will see in the remainder of the report, the academic success of APA students, like that of other students, particularly low-income students of color, is often contingent on variations in their school's climate and whether or not their schools receive an equitable share of the educational resources their non-monolithic needs require.

As the previous stories demonstrate, APA students can be both pointed and poignant when critiquing the education environment they occupy. We hope that their input adds to the resonance of the facts and figures that make up much of "We're Not Even Allowed to Ask for Help."

TABLE 1: SCHOOLS REPRESENTED IN FOCUS GROUPS AND INTERVIEWS

Schools*	Borough	Total HS Students	Total APA	% APA	% 2006 Cohort with 4 yr Regents Diploma	% 2005 APA Cohort with 4 yr Regents Diploma	% Free Lunch	% FRPL**	% LEP**	Attendance '08-'09	% '08-'09 Suspensions
Lower East Side Prep	M	551	501	91%	64%	37%	79%	89%	85%	92%	0%
Stuyvesant	M	3,277	2,278	70%	101%	96%	28%	41%	0%	97%	1%
Bronx School of Science, Inquiry & Investigation	BX	2,941	1,871	64%	99%	99%	24%	32%	0%	97%	2%
Emma Lazarus	M	150	93	62%	0%	N/A	100%	100%	67%	N/A	N/A
Baruch College Campus	M	440	260	59%	95%	100%	53%	63%	0%	97%	0%
Brooklyn Tech	B	4,949	2,922	59%	98%	90%	49%	64%	0%	95%	1%
East-West School of International Studies	Q	323	306	56%	79%	N/A	58%	69%	16%	93%	11%
Townsend Harris	Q	1,108	601	54%	100%	100%	25%	39%	0%	97%	0%
Francis Lewis	Q	4,462	2,233	50%	68%	73%	46%	57%	13%	92%	3%
Bayside	Q	3,576	1,756	49%	86%	80%	46%	61%	8%	92%	2%
Flushing International	Q	393	191	49%	44%	62%	89%	97%	89%	91%	3%
Richmond Hill	Q	3,179	1,051	33%	46%	37%	57%	65%	17%	80%	10%
Hillcrest	Q	3,123	935	30%	42%	55%	64%	76%	14%	86%	0%
International High School at Prospect Heights	B	437	126	29%	49%	35%	80%	87%	93%	92%	10%
Millennium	M	619	177	29%	92%	91%	56%	70%	0%	95%	1%
N.Y.C. Lab School for Collaborative Studies	M	520	152	29%	86%	94%	19%	24%	1%	94%	5%
High School of Economics and Finance	M	827	234	28%	66%	61%	68%	78%	6%	88%	6%
Manhattan/Hunter Science	M	437	124	28%	93%	100%	49%	64%	2%	96%	3%
Forest Hills	Q	3,860	937	24%	69%	69%	39%	50%	10%	90%	4%
Jamaica	Q	1,478	356	24%	48%	45%	53%	58%	18%	80%	29%
Aviation Career and Technical	Q	2,098	485	23%	81%	65%	61%	77%	3%	94%	3%
Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music	M	2,527	497	20%	99%	98%	18%	26%	0%	95%	2%
Manhattan Center for Mathematics and Science	M	1,696	325	19%	88%	87%	79%	79%	6%	94%	3%
Flushing	Q	2,758	507	18%	55%	64%	69%	77%	24%	83%	6%
Susan E Wagner	SI	3,310	498	15%	66%	81%	37%	48%	4%	88%	6%
Jacqueline Kennedy-Onassis	M	709	39	6%	57%	N/A	68%	76%	8%	83%	17%
Chelsea Vocational	M	617	23	4%	33.50%	N/A	68%	79%	5%	78%	14%

*Ranked by APA enrollment. Undated data: 2007-2008 **FRPL=free + reduced price lunch. LEP=Limited English Proficient, B=Brooklyn, BX=Bronx, M=Manhattan, Q=Queens, and SI=Staten Island

METHODOLOGY

In addition to our extensive qualitative work interviewing APA parents and students reviewed in the preceding framing chapters, we employed quantitative tools that allowed us to drill below the surface of “Asian” to uncover information about, and input from, less frequently consulted communities.

Most of the data examined for this study were at the school level. For the most part, the analyses performed and presented in this report refer to:

- Differences among schools relative to their concentration of APA students
- Differences among different groupings of schools defined by various criteria (described below) that allow us to compare APA students to non-Asian groups
- Differences among APA subgroups

Calculations, estimates, and observations discussed in this report are based on datasets compiled by the New York City Department of Education (DOE), the New York State Education Department (NYSED), the U.S. Census Bureau, and secondary sources such as the *New York Times*.

We use test scores frequently in this report. We acknowledge there are multiple academic and policy perspectives about tests and testing policy and whether they provide a robust evaluation of student academic achievement or the educational success of a school system. Because test scores are often the most accessible and comparable outcome data, we hope that they will at least point the way to issues requiring additional exploration.

Our analyses also benefitted from customized databases previously prepared for CACF by DOE and from additional input from other sources. Chief among these were files generated by DOE from their Home Language Survey (HLS) that identified schools where at least ten percent of students come from homes where a language other than English is spoken. Other files included the distribution of language groups by Community School District and country of origin with notations on poverty and ELL status.

In most cases, we have used data for the 2007–2008 school year, which were the most current available when this project began in 2009. When we have made comparisons using data from a slightly earlier or later year, we have only included schools that existed in both that year and in 2007–2008.

STRATEGIES

In our search for clues about the educational experience of individual APA students, we compared schools and students from a number of perspectives:

- Distribution by grade levels served and borough and home language classifications
- Universe of all schools in the system for which a particular variable is available
- Threshold levels (ten percent) of one or more non-English home languages
- Statistically-generated clusters of schools
- Focus groups of students from a variety of APA ethnicities and school climates discussed in the previous chapter
- Geo mapping of school age children and youth by ethnicity and Community Planning District

- Geo mapping of distribution of New York City Out-of-School Time (OST) Programs by zip code and Asian enrollment

We examined the distribution of Asian enrollment and APA residence by school type defined as elementary, K-8, K-12, middle/intermediate/junior high, middle-high, and high school as well as by borough location.

For some comparisons, we used the universe of schools for which adequate data were available for the desired calculation. The larger the number of cases a dataset has—which for this discussion usually means schools—the higher the level of confidence there is for some statistical measures.

ANALYTICAL TOOLS

Means, more commonly known as *averages*, provide a useful indicator for quickly summarizing quantitative variables and providing values that can be considered typical for that variable. Comparing means, means of means, and differences among means can also serve as a first step to identify possible differences between and among sub groups. Means are also building blocks for more sophisticated inferential statistical estimates. In some instances where an average is influenced by outliers or the group size is too small, we used the median, which is a value that separates the variable values into two halves with an equal number of members. The median helps clarify the distribution of the data.

We generated correlations and partial correlations. Where appropriate, we also used inferential analysis, including analyses of covariance (ANCOVA) and multiple regressions. In some cases, we translated group means into standardized scores to simplify comparisons across variables. The goal of these analyses was to obtain a concrete set of conclusions regarding the status of APA students in the New York City school system. We will refer to the results of these analyses throughout the report. A separate technical appendix will contain additional formal detail and tables for those interested in the underlying technical aspects of our methodology.

To examine quality of school climate, instructional resources, and academic outcomes as functions of varying ethnic enrollment distributions and school poverty levels, we used a cluster analysis to obtain groups of schools that are similar based on the following variables:

- Percent of Asian enrollment
- Percent of White enrollment
- Percent of Black enrollment
- Percent of Hispanic enrollment
- Poverty rate
- Total enrollment

This approach generated a group of nine clusters with distinct combinations of Asian, Black, Hispanic, and White enrollment and school poverty rates. Sorting schools in this way helped to identify a variety of educational contexts in which APA students find themselves.

CLIMATE, RESOURCE, AND OUTCOME MEASURES

The table on page 20 summarizes the variables used in our various analyses. Note also that, given the sometimes circular relationship of climate, resources, and outcomes, some variables could usefully be considered under more than one heading (e.g. attendance, Regents graduation rate). While there are relationships among these three families of variables, columns should be considered separately as rows do not necessarily imply any relationship.

CONSTRAINTS ON ANALYSIS

Some final points on the limitations of test scores as indicators of Asian student success are necessary:

- DOE does not report many APA test results (i.e., average school test scores for Asian students for some schools) because of disaggregation policies for small-group test results.

Not only do these policies hinder comparison of schools enrolling small numbers of APA students, they also result in underreporting the progress or lack of progress of Asian students in a huge number of schools. Such schools are responsible for the education of thousands of APA students across the city.

For example, of the 88 schools reporting “all-student” scores in a cluster whose enrollment is overwhelmingly Hispanic and Black, the average school score for *Asian student* performance on the fourth grade English Language Arts (ELA) exam in that cluster is calculated using only nine schools. In the primarily Black enrollment cluster, average Asian student results for third grade math are calculated using just 18 of 208 schools. Clusters we have labeled Hispanic II and White also display less pronounced but serious levels of missing results for Asian students. (We use clusters in a later chapter to contrast issues of school culture, resources, and outcomes.) Given that fewer than 200 schools citywide have no APA students, these missing data are not related only to schools with zero APA students.

In short, the academic fate of huge numbers of Asian students is underreported in publicly available data. Some important questions, however, require analysis of child-level data that are not readily available. Our recommendations will include an initial effort on DOE’s part to disseminate child-level data disaggregated by APA ethnic group, which we will analyze for a follow-up report. (See side bar)

- The current approach to academic outcomes does not take into account the wide linguistic, economic, and cultural differences among New York City’s Asian communities.

There is no way to distinguish the academic progress of recently arrived Nepalis from the growing Filipino population or the more established Chinese enrollment. We know that poverty levels vary by family but also, on average, between Asian ethnicities. However, with the exception of the ten percent home language data mentioned above, we have no information about the ethnicity any school’s Asian enrollment or how APA students factor into the schools’ average poverty rates.

Where Did Our Kids’ Scores Go?

The Federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, the New York State Regents, and the Mayor of New York have decided that they will measure both learning and improvement in the City’s schools with standardized tests and graduation and dropout rates. In the past, schools and school districts with small numbers of students confronting academic challenges could hide their results, or lack of results, in the overall averages. Burying the academic outcomes of groups of students is more difficult in New York City. The majority of students are from low- and very low-income communities and traditionally marginalized communities of color. Substantial numbers of students have additional special needs related to learning disabilities, English Language Learner status, recent immigration, and homelessness. Nevertheless, it happens in New York, too.

For accountability reports, therefore, Federal rules require the State and City to break out test results and other measures for students who are Asian, Black, Hispanic, Multi-Racial, Native American, White, economically disadvantaged, limited English proficient (LEP), and identified as having learning disabilities. Results for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) benchmarks must be provided for any of these groups with 30 or more members; at least 95 percent of any such group with 40 or more students must be tested. In some cases, DOE does report results for groups smaller than 30 but does not release results for groups of fewer than five students.

The official rationale for this is the protection of student privacy. Although half of the APA enrollment is concentrated in just 97 schools, the other half is spread across roughly 1,327 schools frequently with only a few APA students per grade.

In addition, whenever school officials apply that standard, they also suppress the results for the next smallest group of students that they are reporting. As the school system’s second smallest designated racial grouping, APA students are in double jeopardy for having their scores hidden. (Approximately 88 schools have no Asian enrollment.)

Because of data suppression policies, the parents of thousands of APA students in hundreds of schools have no way to tell how their children are doing compared to other groups.

Across all 16 NCLB accountability tests for grades 3-8, we have more schools where the Asian-student test scores are suppressed than we do schools where they are provided. For example, for one test there were 302 suppressed schools versus at least 232 reporting schools. The difference varies by test, but there are always more schools not reporting a test score average for APA students than there are reporting.

For tests in grades 3, 4, and 5, this means 293-302 non-reporting schools. For tests for grades 6, 7, and 8, this means 184-223 schools.

The number of suppressed APA tests ranges from 791 grade 8 Science exams to 1,389 grade 3 English Language Arts exams.

We have, for example, nearly 1,400 APA third graders whose reading skills cannot be compared from one school to the next, or, for that matter, within their own schools. We have a different group of almost 1,400 fifth graders whose progress in social studies is not available to their parents, let alone advocates, policy makers, and other stakeholders.

Until the data that are eliminated from review by data suppression are available, public and especially parent evaluation of student outcomes will be incomplete.

Chart One: **VARIABLES USED IN THIS REPORT**

School Climate	Resources	Outcomes
% APA enrollment	% Core classes not taught by highly qualified teachers	Average All-student* test scores and pass rates** for English Language Arts, Grades 3-8.
% Hispanic enrollment	% More than 5 years teaching anywhere	Average Asian*** student test scores and pass rates for English Language Arts, Grades 3-8.
% Black enrollment	% Teachers fewer than 3 years of experience	Average All-student test scores and pass rates for Math, Grades 3-8.
% White enrollment	% Teachers no valid certificate	Average Asian-student test scores and pass rates for Math, Grades 3-8.
Poverty Rates	% Teaching out of certification	Average All-student test scores and pass rate for Science, Grades 4 and 8
% LEP (Limited English Proficient)	% Classes not taught by teachers with appropriate certification	Average Asian-student test scores and pass rate for Science, Grades 4 and 8
Non-English home language for at least 10% of students (indicator)	% Teachers with masters degree or higher	Average All-student test scores and pass rate for Social Studies, Grades 5 and 8
Attendance Rate	% Utilization of building capacity	Average Asian-student test scores and pass rate for Social Studies, Grades 5 and 8
Suspensions per 100 students	Attendance Rate	% of all test takers scoring above proficient on each Regents exam for English, Global Studies, History, Math, and Science
% graduating		Percentage of Asian test takers scoring above proficient on each Regents exam for English, Global Studies, History, Math, and Science
% four year cohort All-student Regents diplomas		Average All-student Reading SAT score
% four year cohort Asian Regents diplomas		Average All-student Math SAT
% students in temporary housing		Average All-student Writing SAT
% recent immigrants		Average All-student SAT (Reading + Math + Writing)
		Average All-student Reading + Math
		% four year cohort All-student Regents diplomas
		% four year cohort Asian-student Regents diplomas

* All = all students in a school taking a test

**Early calculations examined percentage of students passing various tests. When they became available, we emphasized mean school-level test scores which provided a sharper understanding of differences among schools.

***Asian = value for APA students taking a test in a school.

WHO AND WHERE ARE THE APA STUDENTS?

If the more than 136,000 students classified as Asians by the New York City Department of Education formed their own school district, its enrollment would rank number 17 in the nation, ahead of entire school systems in Albuquerque, Austin, Baltimore, Boston, Detroit, Memphis, Milwaukee, San Diego, and San Francisco, among others.²⁸

Recently released 2010 Census data document that the number of Asian New Yorkers has now topped a million people as foreseen by an earlier CACF report issued in 2006:

Asian Pacific Americans are by percentage the fastest growing group in New York City. At least 16 different Asian Pacific American ethnicities are represented in New York City. Almost half of Asian Pacific American families do not have an adult who can speak English well. More than half of Asian Pacific American children in New York City are born into poor families. Over 95 percent of Asian Pacific American children are born to immigrant parents.²⁹

APA CHILDREN AND POVERTY

Estimated³⁰ poverty among Asians under 18 years old rose somewhat mid decade to at least 25.6 percent, while child poverty rates for other young New Yorkers “were relatively constant.” While the poverty rate for APA children was slightly lower than the city’s overall child poverty rate, the rate of APA children in the “low-income” (under 200 percent of poverty threshold) category was slightly higher.³¹

Note that the number of poverty households to which child-related data are assigned is artificially low because Asian households frequently have more employed members than an average New York City household, even if they are low-wage workers. This can result in apparently higher total household incomes even though the employed youth and adults may be working for poverty level wages.

NEW YORK “ASIAN” FAMILIES AND NATIONALITY

The 2005-07 U.S. Census American Community Survey (ACS) allows for an even more granular understanding of the residential distribution of a wide variety of school age APA students and their families. ACS estimates identify at least 42 mostly national categories that might be considered Asian or Pacific Islander, although a few of these are catch-all labels (e.g., Other

Pacific Islander).

Who are these Asians and Pacific Islanders? Are they, in fact, all Asians or Pacific Islanders? Given an opportunity by the Census to self-identify as Asians, most Pakistanis do while most Afghans do not. New Yorkers from the Pacific Island nation of Fiji overwhelmingly affiliate Asian. People from Turkey, whose language and cultural roots are generally understood to derive from Central Asia, overwhelmingly do not see themselves as Asian. Only ten percent of New York’s Guyanese population feels Asian, but that is enough to place Guyanese of Asian descent in the middle tier of New York’s Asian populations. Nearly three quarters of “Pacific Islanders” identify as Asian, but none of the “Other Pacific Islanders” do.³³

Meanwhile, official descriptions of school enrollment avoid these issues by squeezing the wide diversity of New York’s APA communities into “Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander.” New York State presentation of DOE data further compresses their data into NAsian and PAsian. (A major exception, which we use extensively, is information gathered by the Home Language Survey that allows us a glimpse of the diversity obscured in other datasets.)

Races are social constructs preserved both by the people who identify with a given race and by other groups who gain some advantage by categorizing people according to real or sometimes even imagined physical or other characteristics.³⁴ State-level “not one drop” rules imposed a Black identity on people with any African ancestry to subject them to Jim Crow laws in post-Reconstruction South. The Supreme Court-validated Executive Order 9066 stripped Americans with Japanese parents or grandparents (as well as first generation Japanese immigrants) of their civil rights and put them in concentration camps following Pearl Harbor. Following 9/11, Federal agents imprisoned at least a thousand Arabs and South Asians under harsh lock down conditions for as long as a year with little if any legal representation, largely on the strength of their appearance, language, alleged minor offenses, or names. Meanwhile, on the streets of New York and other cities, “real” Americans were

Mid decade child-poverty estimates ³² for some larger APA communities	
Bangladeshi	42.4 percent
Pakistani	28.1 percent
All NYC children	27.8 percent
Chinese	23.1 percent
Indian	20.9 percent
Korean	12.0 percent
Japanese	4.5 percent
Filipino	3.3 percent

²⁸ *Largest School Districts by Enrollment [2007-08]* (referenced 9/9/11). American School & University. Penton Media Inc. <http://asumag.com/asu100/2009/enrollment/>

²⁹ Ho, Wayne H. and Liwanag, Myra O. (2006). *The Coalition for Asian American Children and Families Triennial Report 2003-2005*.

³⁰ Estimates are based on data derived from additional statistical calculations applied to the basic sample of the American Community Survey. As such, they should be considered suggestive rather than specific, particularly for smaller populations.

³¹ *Working but Poor: Asian American Poverty in New York City* (Oct. 2008). Asian American Federation. <http://www.aafederation.org/doc/WorkingButPoor.pdf>.

³² Drawn from Asian American Federation Census Information Center Ethnic Profile collection. At the time we assembled data for this report, “The 2009 edition profiles are the most current profiles and cover 2005-2007 American Community Survey data.” <http://www.aafederation.org/cic/ethnic.asp>

³³ Categories for this list and for the mapping of school age children and youth below use a Census category that emphasizes national origin. The estimates are for Public Use Microdata Areas (PUMA), which in New York City are, with noted exceptions, mostly roughly the same as Community Planning Districts. Population figures are statistical estimates using the mid-decade American Community Survey sample. As such, they should be considered suggestive rather than specific, particularly for smaller ethnic populations. Ethnic categories in other sections of our discussion tend to emphasize language, regardless of national origin.

³⁴ See, for example, Omi, Michael and Winant, Howard (1994). *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1990s*. Routledge. New York.

avenging 9/11 by attacking Sikhs, who are neither Arabs or Muslims, and young women wearing the hijab. It is difficult to examine the reality of APA public school students and not see

the impact of structures and practices that are influenced by race-based attitudes and assumptions that directly or indirectly disadvantage APA students.

Chart Two: U.S. CENSUS NATIONAL/ETHNIC LABELS ACS RESPONDENT SELF-IDENTIFICATION

ASIAN	CENTRAL ASIAN	EAST ASIAN	SOUTH ASIAN	SOUTHEAST ASIAN	PACIFIC ISLANDER
Asian	Mongolian	Cantonese	Afghan	Burmese	Chamorro Islander
Amerasian	Turkish	Chinese	Bangladeshi	Cambodian	Fijian
Eurasian		Japanese	Bengali	Filipino	Guamanian
Other Asian		Korean	East Indian	Hmong	Hawaiian
		Taiwanese	Guyanese	Indonesian	Micronesian
			Indian	Laotian	Okinawan
			Iranian	Malaysian	Other Pacific
			Nepali	Thai	Pacific Islander
			Pakistani	Vietnamese	Polynesian
			Punjab		Samoa
			Rom		Tongan
			Sri Lankan		
			Tibetan ³⁵		

DISTRIBUTION OF ASIAN ENROLLMENT

Students classified as Asian are just under 14 percent of the total New York City public school enrollment in our main data year of 2007-2008. However, they are unevenly distributed across the city both as a population and as a percentage of borough enrollments. Public schools in Queens and Brooklyn serve a little over half of New York City’s public school students but enrolled over three quarters of our APA students. On the other hand, less than ten percent of APA students attend school in the Bronx and Staten Island, which serve over a quarter of the City’s students.

Using DOE’s broad labels, the following tables describe the distribution of Asian and other students by the borough in which their schools are located.

BOROUGH	SCHOOLS	ASIAN	BLACK	HISPANIC	WHITE	TOTALS ³⁷
BRONX	367	8,484	66,964	126,443	8,336	210,227
BROOKLYN	475	36,916	140,512	81,701	41,640	300,769
MANHATTAN	302	17,823	41,713	76,830	19,237	155,603
QUEENS	303	67,909	61,064	91,846	36,405	257,224
STATEN ISLAND	65	4,570	9,165	12,617	31,148	57,500
TOTALS	1,512	135,702	319,418	389,437	136,766	981,323

Citywide, Asian students attend elementary, middle, and high schools in percentages roughly proportional to their overall enrollment. The percentages of total Asian enrollment attending K-8 and middle/high schools are somewhat lower than the percentage of Asian enrollment citywide. However, as Table 4 illustrates, APA enrollment and school type vary somewhat by borough.

The APA percentage of students in the District 75 schools (not shown separately) serving students with severe learning disabilities is much lower than their share of total enrollment (five percent of District 75 versus almost 14 percent citywide).

Table 4a in the Appendix shows the distribution of APA enrollment by borough, school type, and average enrollment for each type of school in a borough. In Queens, which serves half the Asian enrollment in the city, high numbers and percentages of APA students attend middle, middle/high, and high schools that are substantially larger than the citywide average for each type of school. Twenty of the 31 largest APA enrollment schools (the densest quartile) are also among the 31 largest schools in the system (2,572 - 4,469 students). Over half (17) of these schools are in Queens.

Staten Island schools enroll three percent of New York’s Asian enrollment. The middle and high schools in Staten Island

³⁵ We have added Tibetans and Guyanese to the basic ACS list. The Tibetan students we interviewed were most recently from Nepal. The Chinese government considers Tibet to be part of China. We include Guyanese, a Caribbean, not Asian, nationality because the number of Guyanese who self-identify as Asian is larger than many other Asian ethnic groups in New York City.

³⁶ Total Native American enrollment for our data year was 4,256 for the entire system, a number that unfortunately is too small to incorporate into our statistical analysis. We would hypothesize, however, that Native American students are subject to the same disadvantages of dispersal and isolation we will discuss below for APA students.

³⁷ Using data DOE submitted to New York State for 2007-08, we totaled all of the listed racial groups at 981,323, which is more than the total registration by borough for the same groups (910,693). Note that according to DOE, the unaudited Total Register by borough for 2010-11 is 1,002,463.

attended by slightly fewer than 2,500 APA students are also substantially larger than the citywide average.

Large and overcrowded are separate issues. In a more recent Independent Budget Office dataset, seven of the 31 most over-capacity (128 to 254 percent utilization) schools in the system are in Queens.

Although overcrowding eased in all five boroughs (sic), in the 2008–2009 school year 78 percent of students in large high schools in Queens and 63 percent of students in large Brooklyn high schools were in overcrowded schools...While the citywide gap between capacity and enrollment in large high schools (more than 500 students) has narrowed, large schools were still far more overcrowded than small schools in 2008-2009.³⁸

This year, over half of the city's 5,000 overcrowded high school classes are in Queens.³⁹

TABLE 4: ASIAN ENROLLMENT BY SCHOOL TYPE

School Type	Schools	Asian Students	% of total Asian enrollment	% of total enrollment in school type
ELEMENTARY	644	55,887	41.2%	14.9%
HIGH	341	43,028	31.7%	14.7%
K-12	16	474	0.3%	7.2%
K-8	148	7,917	5.8%	8.6%
MIDDLE	247	22,097	16.3%	15.2%
MIDDLE/HIGH	116	6,299	4.6%	9.1%

Finally, our examination of the distribution of Asian enrollment shows that, while some APA students are packed together in just few schools, thousands of others are isolated in schools each serving just a handful of APA students. We ranked schools in descending order by their Asian enrollment and divided them into quartiles of cumulative enrollment of the citywide Asian enrollment (N=135,702). Each quartile has roughly 34,000 Asian students. There are large differences in the concentration of Asian enrollment (N_{Asian}) in the schools of each quartile.

³⁸ NYC Independent Budget Office (August 2010). *High School Overcrowding Persists, Especially in Large Schools*. Note that this study employs DOE data which is extremely optimistic calculating floor space that is available for classroom activity.

³⁹ Phillips, Anna (September 22, 2011). *Union Claims Highest Number of Oversize Classes in Decade. Back to School*. Chapman, Ben (September 23, 2011). *7,000 classrooms overcrowded as teachers union plans protest*. Daily News (Online).

FINDINGS

Child poverty is widespread but highly varied among Asian communities.

Half of New York City's APA children are in families with incomes below the 200 percent of poverty threshold.

Twenty-five percent of the APA enrollment is dispersed in relatively small numbers in each of nearly 1,200 schools.

A quarter of all APA students attend just 31 schools. Asian students are 42 percent of the total enrollment of these schools

Half of APA enrollment is concentrated in Queens. Queens is home to many of the largest and most overcrowded schools in the City.

A quarter of the APA enrollment is in Brooklyn schools.

Brooklyn is home to the Community Planning Districts with the largest variety of ethnic concentrations of school-aged APA New Yorkers.

More Asian students attend schools with home language concentrations of Spanish than attend schools with home language concentrations of Asian languages.

For all 16 K-8 No Child Left Behind (NCLB) accountability tests, there are more schools that do not release the test results of Asian students than provide the results.

Generally, DOE data presentations do not provide crosstabs that help the public understand the numbers or percentages of APA students in important categories such as Limited English Proficient.

The most densely packed group, mentioned above, has only 31 schools while roughly the same number of Asian students in the bottom or most dispersed quartile attended 1,199 schools.

(The 50 percent of Asian students in the two middle quartiles attend 194 schools.) The following table ranks the schools in the densest quartile by their APA enrollment.

**TABLE 5: ASIAN ENROLLMENT IN DENSEST QUARTILE OF ASIAN ENROLLMENT
N=31 SCHOOLS**

School Name	Type	Borough	N Total	N Total Rank	N Asian	N APA Rank	% APA
Brooklyn Technical High School	H	B	4,469	1	2,644	1	59.2%
Francis Lewis High School	H	Q	4,174	2	2,146	2	51.4%
Stuyvesant High School	H	M	3,125	18	2,026	3	64.8%
Bayside High School	H	Q	3,854	5	1,974	4	51.2%
Benjamin N Cardozo High School	H	Q	3,788	6	1,799	5	47.5%
Bronx High School Of Science	H	BX	2,670	28	1,600	6	59.9%
Franklin D Roosevelt High School	H	B	3,315	14	1,271	7	38.3%
Fort Hamilton High School	H	B	4,122	3	1,222	8	29.6%
Thomas A Edison Career & Technical HS	H	Q	2,616	30	1,095	9	41.9%
John Dewey High School	H	B	3,015	20	1,060	10	35.2%
PS 105 Blythebourne School	E	B	1,254	98	1,031	11	82.2%
Richmond Hill High School	H	Q	3,363	13	1,024	12	30.4%
Midwood High School	H	B	3,643	10	1,019	13	28.0%
Edward R Murrow High School	H	B	3,663	9	997	14	27.2%
MS 137 America's School Of Heroes	M	Q	1,765	51	968	15	54.8%
PS 130 Hernando Desoto School	E	M	1,058	161	938	16	88.7%
Hillcrest High School	H	Q	3,197	15	901	17	28.2%
PS 124 Yung Wing School	E	M	972	199	866	18	89.1%
John Adams High School	H	Q	3,022	19	862	19	28.5%
William Cullen Bryant High School	H	Q	2,950	24	841	20	28.5%
Forest Hills High School	H	Q	3,481	12	823	21	23.6%
JHS 216 George J Ryan	M	Q	1,219	107	775	22	63.6%
Newtown High School	H	Q	3,149	17	763	23	24.2%
JHS 201 Dyker Heights	M	B	1,682	55	761	24	45.2%
PS 108 Capt Vincent G Fowler	E	Q	1,237	104	729	25	58.9%
New Utrecht High School	H	B	2,738	27	724	26	26.4%
PS 20 John Bowne School	E	Q	1,257	96	723	27	57.5%
John Bowne High School	H	Q	2,850	25	712	28	25.0%
JHS 158 Marie Curie	M	Q	1,054	163	662	29	62.8%
IS 237	M	Q	951	210	657	30	69.1%
JHS 227 Edward B Shallow	M	B	1,254	99	654	31	52.2%
TOTAL			80,907		34,267		42.4%
Average Enrollment Per School			2,610		1,105		

The following table contrasts some characteristics of the schools in the quartile with the densest Asian enrollment and the quartile with the most dispersed Asian enrollment.

TABLE 6: SCHOOLS BY TOP AND BOTTOM QUARTILES OF ASIAN ENROLLMENT

VARIABLE LABEL	TOP 25% OF ENROLLMENT						BOTTOM 25% ENROLLMENT					
	N	MIN	MAX	MEDIAN	MEAN	STD	N	MIN	MAX	MEDIAN	MEAN	STD
Total Enrollment (from CEP and flatfile)	31	997	4472	3125	2754	1184	1199	24	3681	488	565	349
N of Asian Students	31	654	2644	938	1105	508	1199	1	183	11	28	38
% of Total Asian Students	31	23	90	46	46	20	1199	0	49	2	5	7
Poverty Rate - % of Enrollment	31	17	85	35	45	21	1140	2	100	73	69	20
% Teachers with masters degree or higher	31	25	75	57	54	11	1198	0	87	32	32	15
% Classes not taught by teachers with appropriate certification	31	0	23	8	8	5	1198	0	84	11	13	11
% Teachers fewer than 3 years of experience	31	2	24	9	10	5	1198	0	100	17	20	15
% more than 5 years teaching anywhere	31	45	82	67	65	8	1140	0	91	54	51	18
% Students Graduating w/Regents Diploma in 2008 (out of total enrolled)	20	22	99	55	58	24	256	1	99	39	41	23
Number of Suspensions per 100 students	31	0	23	4	6	6	1140	0	102	4	8	11
# Superintendent Suspensions	31	0	86	17	24	24	1140	0	148	6	11	15
# Principal Suspensions	31	0	619	96	141	148	1140	0	713	10	31	58

There are observable differences between the schools in the upper and lower quartiles in the isolation/concentration of Asian students, the size of schools they attend, resources available to them, and, in some cases, outcomes:

- Per school Asian enrollment in the densest quartile ranges from 654 to 2,644 APA students. Half of these schools have Asian enrollment greater than 938.
 - Per school Asian enrollment in the 1,199 schools attended by the most dispersed APA quartile ranges from one to 183 Asian students, and half of those schools have fewer than 11 APA students.
 - The range of school poverty is much wider in the more numerous group of bottom quartile schools.
 - At 73 percent, however, the median poverty rate in the larger group is twice the median poverty rate of the 31 schools attended by the densest quartile.
- In other words, DOE has identified roughly three quarters or

more of students in each of nearly 600 of the schools attended by the APA students in the most scattered quartile as low-income. Note that this finding describes schools but not whether the APA students in those schools come from families in poverty.

Because of data suppression policies we discuss in a sidebar, it is difficult to understand what happens to APA students in schools where they are only a small percentage of the enrollment. We are, however, able to discuss the variety of the schools that APA students, who are spread across 94 percent of the schools, attend.

Moreover, various analyses in later sections will demonstrate that schools with very small APA enrollments are frequently less successful in terms of all-student scores and other measures than schools with higher percentages of APA students relative to other racial groups.

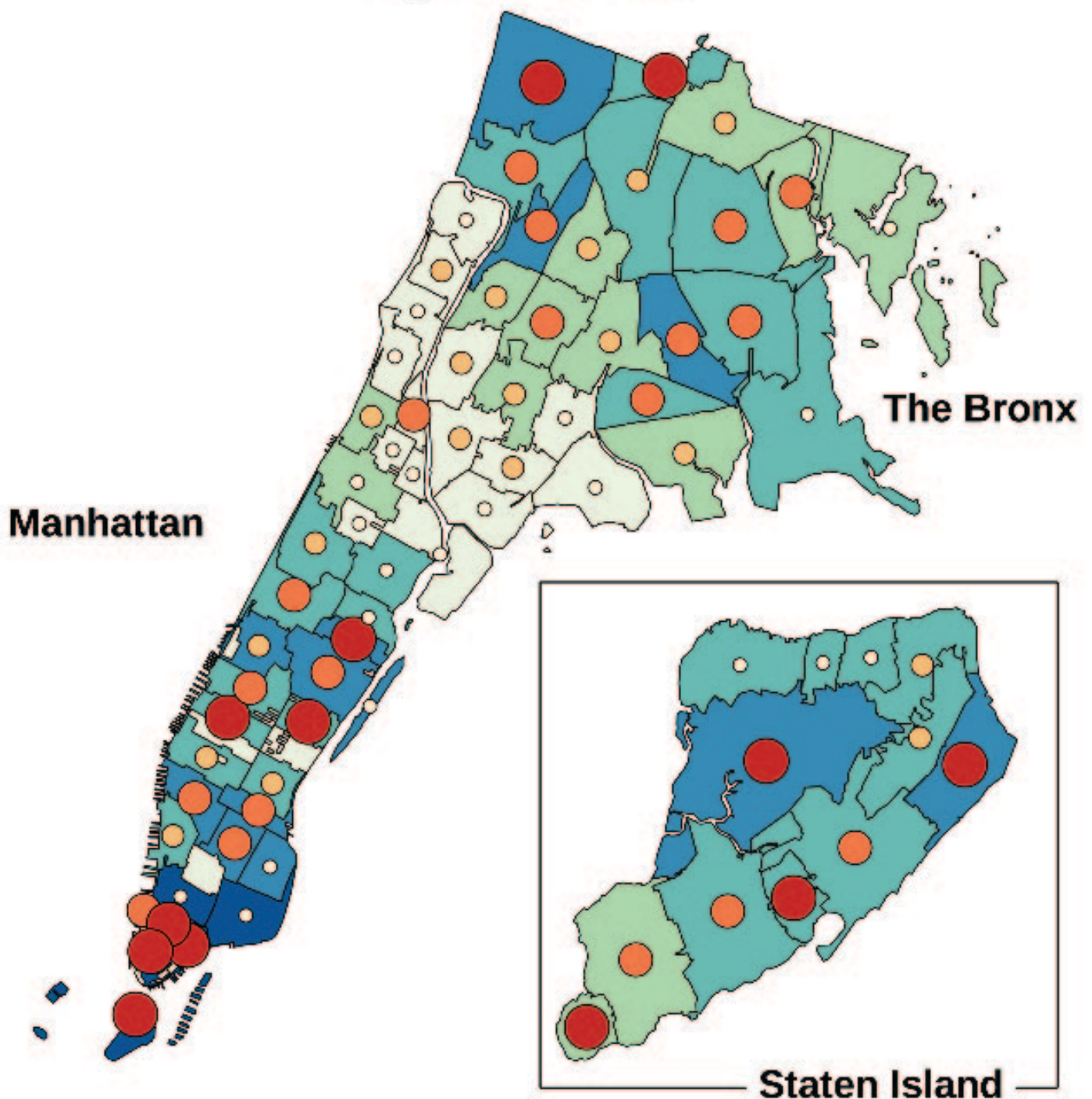
(See Technical Appendix for further detailed comparisons of the top, bottom, and all quartiles.)

YOUTH SERVICES

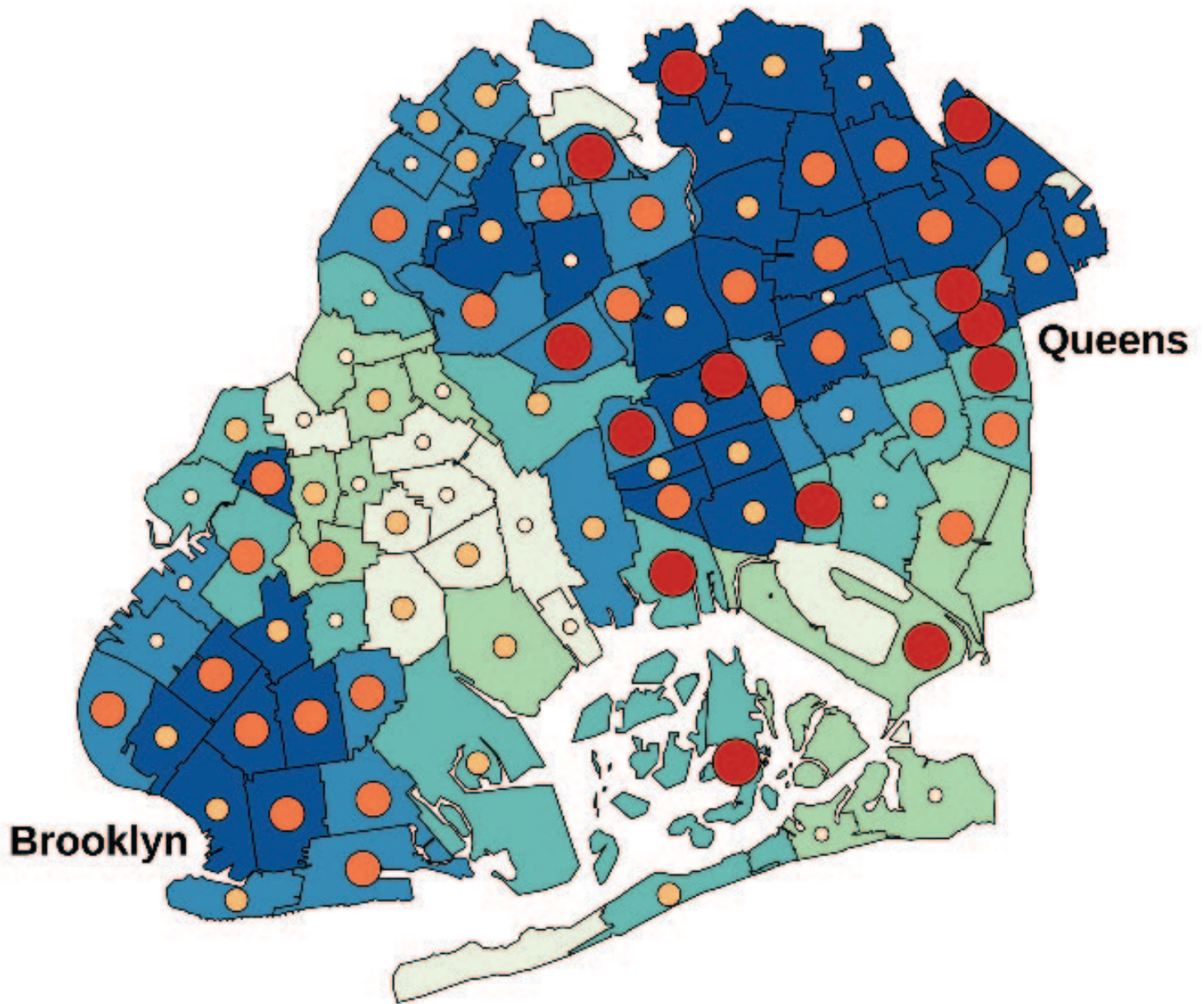
CACF co-leads the 13% and Growing Coalition, which has documented the tiny share (0.24 percent) of City social service contract dollars directed to Asian-led community based organizations. Out of School Time (OST) services are a key resource for working parents, who need supervised care and homework help for their children at the end of the school day and for students whose schools are increasingly unable to offer arts, sports, or other enrichment activities during the school day.

The following maps illustrate the uneven availability of New York City Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) funded after school services to APA students. The dots indicate the ratio of total public school enrollment to the

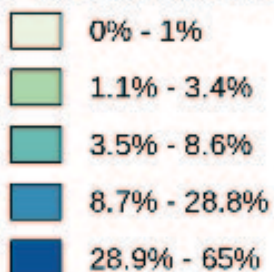
number of OST programs in each zip code. The shadings of the maps indicate the percentage of Asian enrollment in each zip code. Each shade represents one fifth of the zip code areas. For example, the combined Asian enrollment of the schools of each of the pale gray zip codes is one percent or less. The combined Asian enrollment in the fifth of the zip codes ranges from nearly 30 percent to 65 percent. Assuming that an after school program serves a few dozen to a few hundred students, the story the dots tell is that zip codes with higher percentages of APA students often have no DYCD programs (very big dots) or so few that the ratio of available students to available programs suggests that there are many more students than there are after school slots (big dots), particularly in neighborhoods where schools serve a high percentage of APA students.



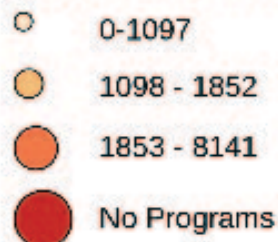
Distribution of Out of School Time Services by ZIP Code



Percent APA Enrollment



School Enrollment per OST Program



For ZIP codes with no programs and no students listed, no symbol for "School Enrollment per OST Program" is shown.

RESIDENCE

Our discussion thus far has described where APA students attend school, not where they live. Especially in the upper grades, New York City students frequently travel to schools beyond the neighborhoods and boroughs where they live. The following tables highlight the residential concentration of school age children from various ethnic subgroups.

In most cases, the geographic unit⁴⁰ used by the Census for the American Community Survey roughly coincides with New York City's Community Planning Districts (CPD), which are more familiar to many New Yorkers. The following maps highlight the residential concentrations by CPD of school-aged Asian and Pacific Islander children from many of the 44 Census categories listed previously. Concentration in a CPD is defined as 20 percent of an ethnic group with an estimated citywide youth population of no more than 1,000 school age children (e.g., Malaysians) and as ten percent of groups of more than 1,000 school-age children (e.g., Filipinos).

Brooklyn has by far the most Community Planning Districts with several different APA groups with concentrations of school age children and youth. Brooklyn Community Planning District 7 (Sunset Park, Windsor Terrace, Bush Terminals) has seven and CPD 2 (Brooklyn Heights, Atlantic Avenue, Boerum Hill, Ft. Greene), CPD 10 (Bay Ridge, Dyker Heights), and CPD 11 (Bensonhurst) all have concentrations of school age residents from at least five different APA communities.

Two areas of Queens have APA concentrations of three groups each: CPD 7 (Flushing, College Point, Clearview, Murray Hill) and CPD 11 (Douglaston, Bayside, Auburndale). Staten Island CPD 1 on the North Shore has concentrations of school-age residents from three APA communities. In The Bronx and Manhattan, the APA ethnic concentrations run from zero to two per CPD.

Manhattan

CPD Groups

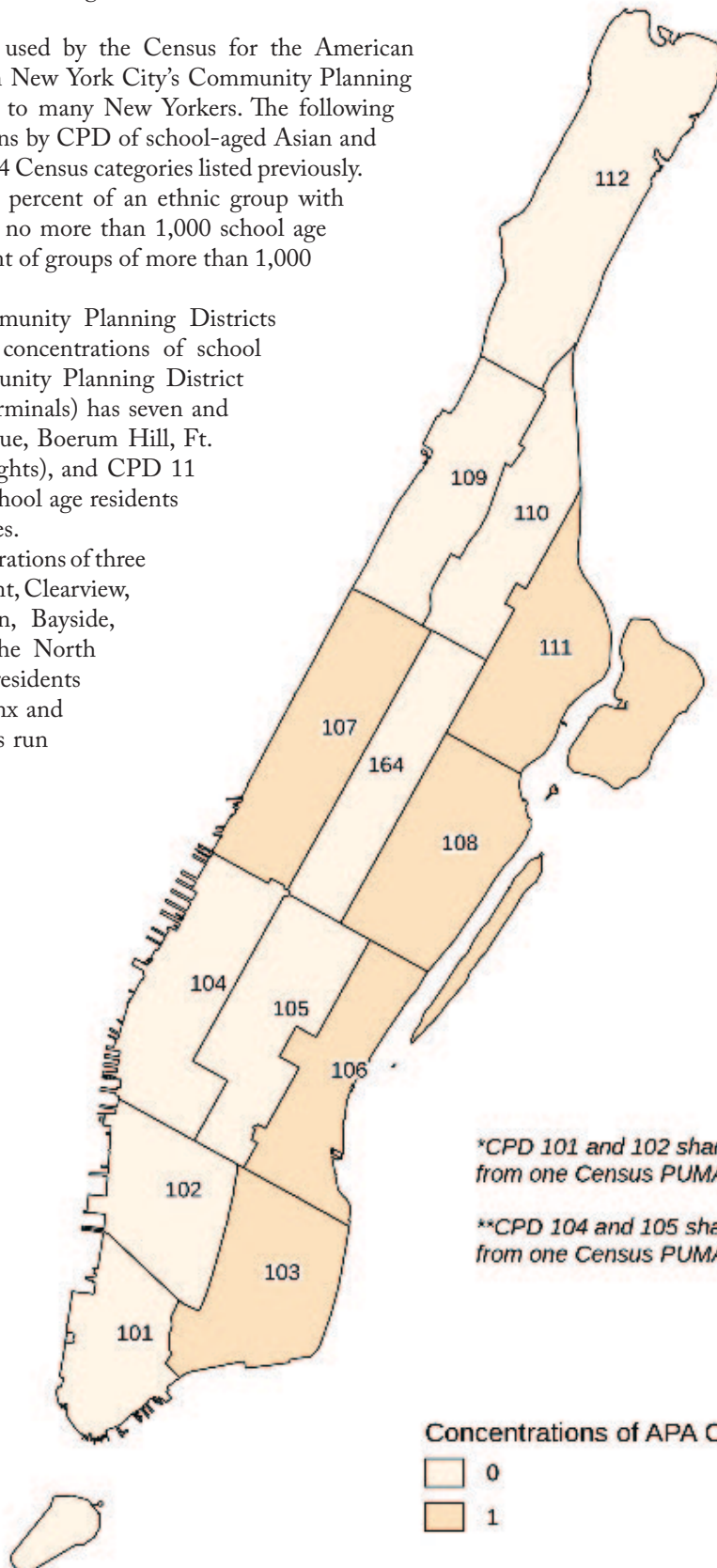
- 101 *
- 102 *
- 103 Chinese
- 104 **
- 105 **
- 106 Guamanian
- 107 Iranian
- 108 Thai
- 109
- 110
- 111 Indonesian
- 112
- 164

*CPD 101 and 102 share a total estimate from one Census PUMA unit

**CPD 104 and 105 share a total estimate from one Census PUMA unit

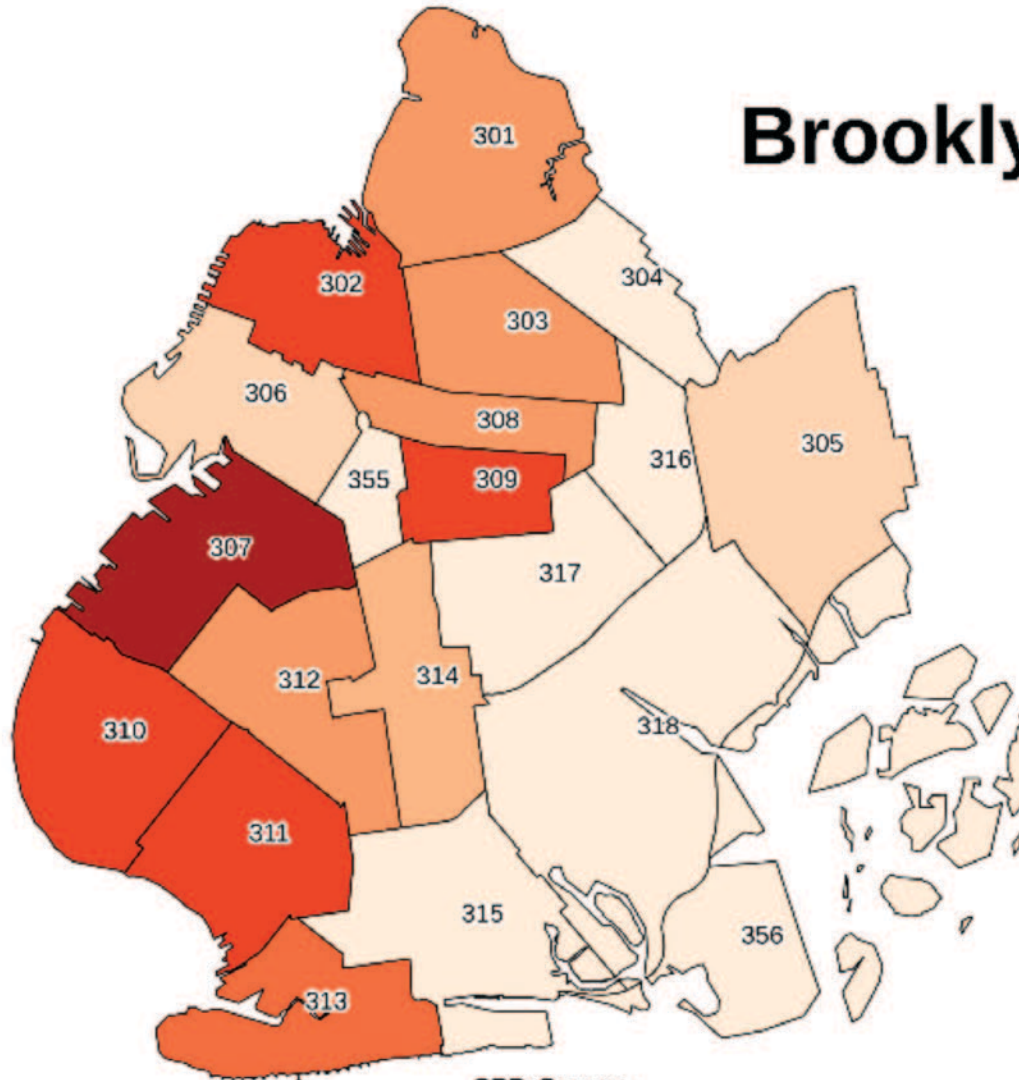
Concentrations of APA Children & Youth

- 0
- 1



⁴⁰ Public Use Microdata Area (PUMA)

Brooklyn



Concentrations of APA Children & Youth



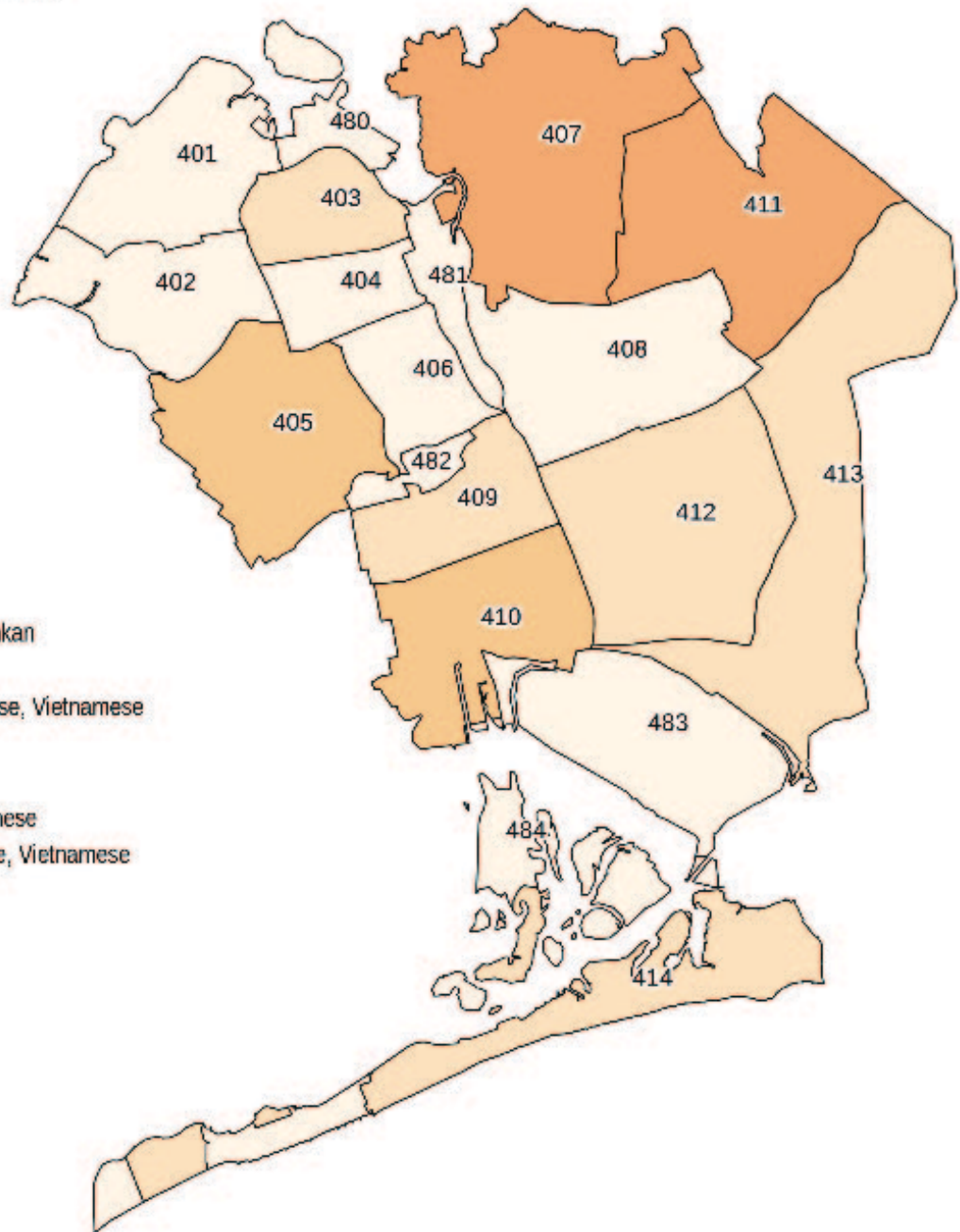
CPD Groups

- 301 Bangladeshi, Bengali, Indonesian
- 302 Turkish, Nepali, Bengali, Burmese, Thai
- 303 Bengali, Punjabi, Thai
- 304
- 305 Nepali
- 306 Sri Lankan
- 307 Iranian, Turkish, Afghan, Chinese, Taiwanese, Korean, Malaysian
- 308 Afghan, Sri Lankan, Pacific Islander
- 309 Iranian, Asian-Indian, Punjabi, Thai, Chamorro Islander
- 310 Guyanese, Asian-Indian, East-Indian, Indonesian, Hawaiian
- 311 Afghani, Taiwanese, Korean, Malaysian, Samoan
- 312 Guyanese, Hawaiian, Pacific Islander
- 313 Filipino, Malaysian, Thai, Pacific Islander
- 314 Afghani, Guamanian
- 315
- 316
- 317
- 318
- 355
- 356

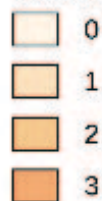
Queens

CPD Groups

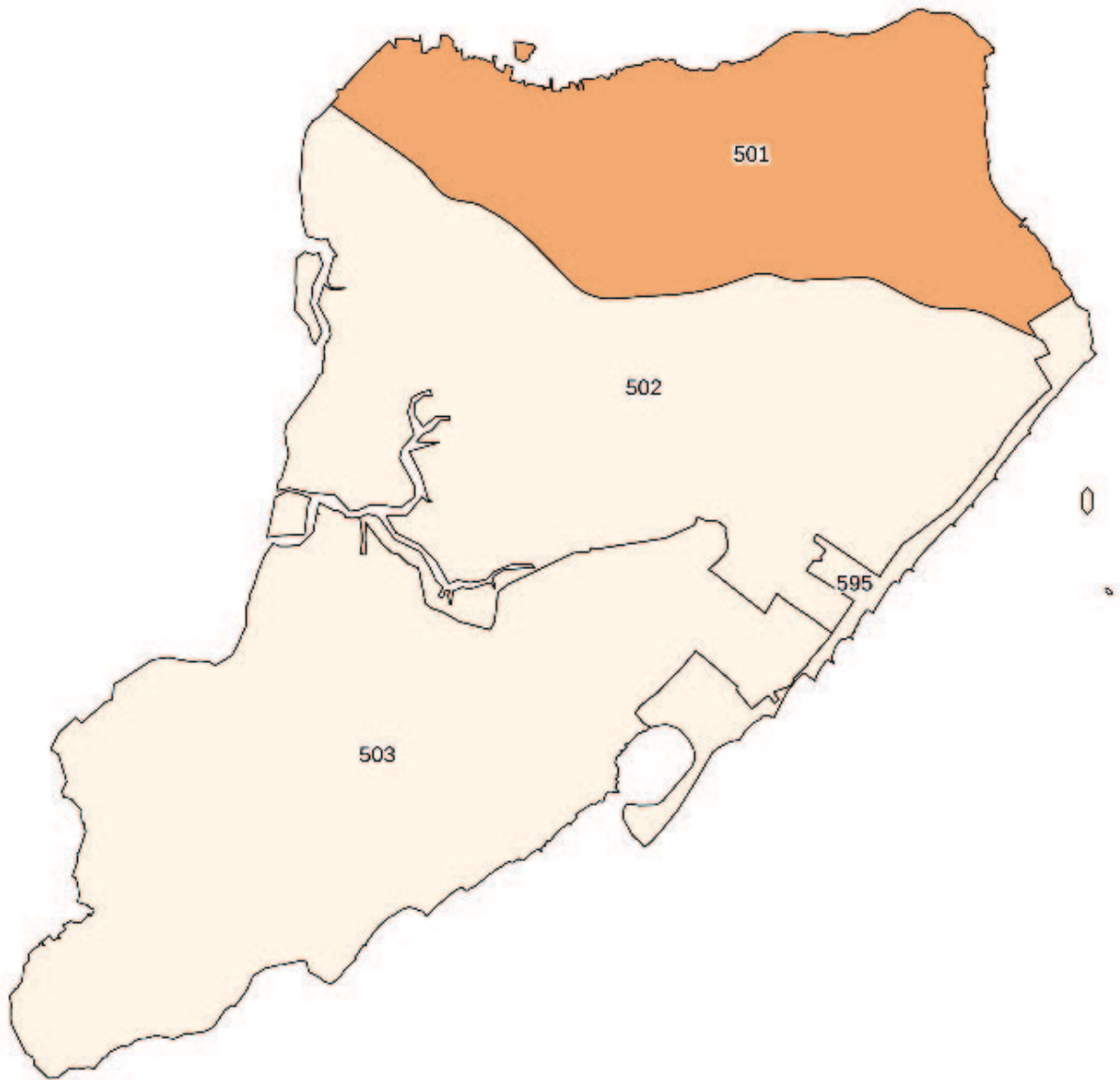
- 401
- 402
- 403 Hawaiian
- 404
- 405 East-Indian, Sri Lankan
- 406
- 407 Cantonese, Japanese, Vietnamese
- 408
- 409 Other
- 410 Cambodian, Cantonese
- 411 Chinese, Cantonese, Vietnamese
- 412 Japanese
- 413 Cambodian
- 414 Pakistani
- 480
- 481
- 482
- 483



Concentrations of APA Children & Youth



Staten Island



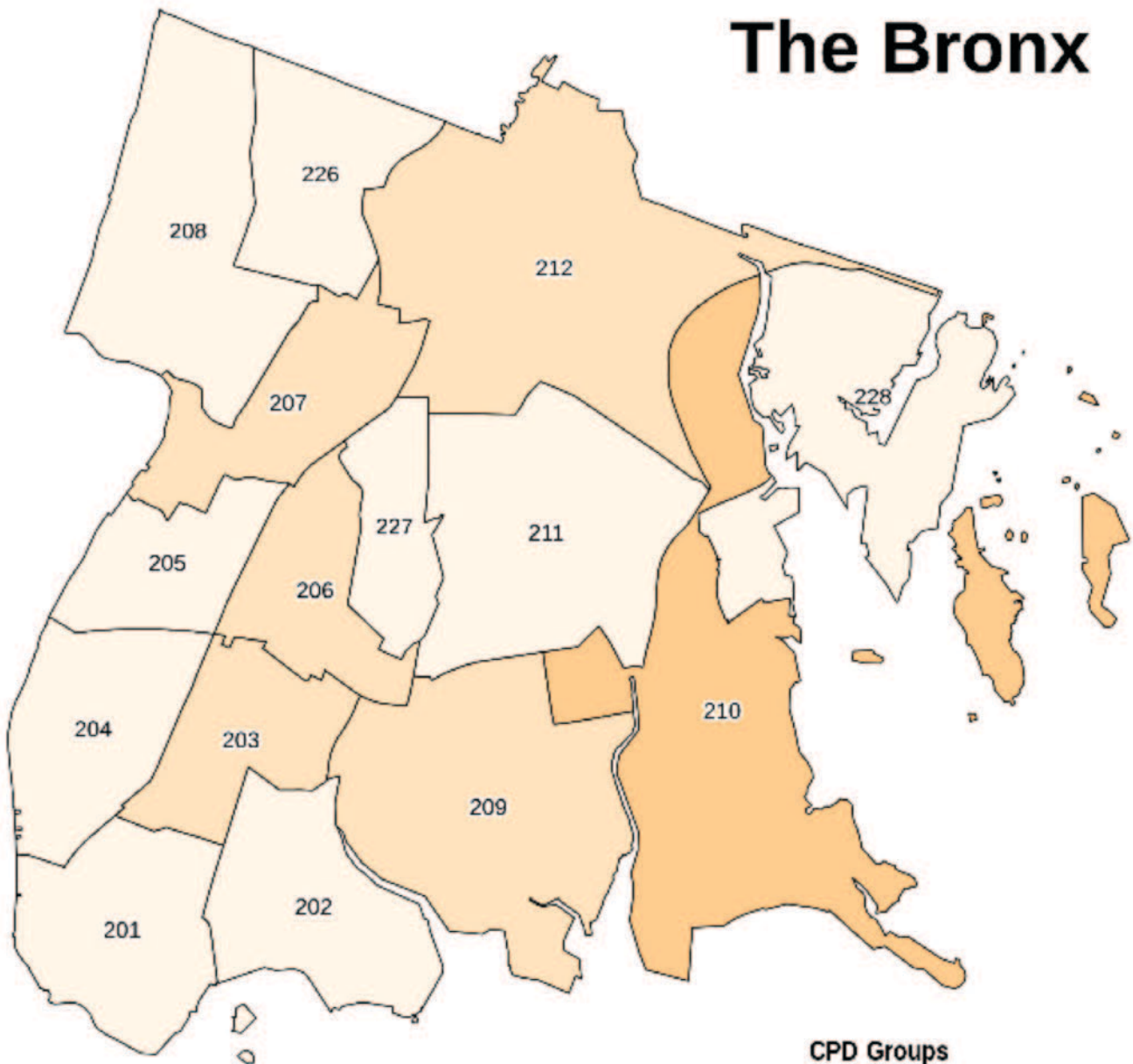
Concentrations of APA Children & Youth



CPD Groups

- 501 Sri Lankan, Hawaiian, Chamorro Islander
- 502
- 503
- 595

The Bronx



Concentrations of APA Children & Youth



CPD Groups

- 201 *
- 202 *
- 203 Vietnamese**
- 204
- 205
- 206 Vietnamese**
- 207 Cambodian
- 208
- 209 Sri Lankan
- 210 Cambodian, Hawaiian
- 211
- 212 Cambodian
- 226
- 227
- 228

*CPD 201 and 202 share a total estimate from one Census PUMA unit

**CPD 203 and 206 share a total estimate from one Census PUMA unit

SECOND WAVE MIGRATION

For a substantial number of APA New Yorkers, coming to the city was a *second* migration for their families. For example, the U.S. Census American Community Survey for 2004-06 provides population estimates for New Yorkers from 22 Caribbean basin nations and four collections of other jurisdictions (West Indian, Other West Indian, British West Indian, and Dutch West Indian.) Of these 26 possible sources of immigration, 18 have estimates suggesting that at least a few New Yorkers from each place self-identify as Asian. The following table shows the five Caribbean countries or groups sending the most self-identified Asian New Yorkers, who taken together contribute an estimated 34,000 plus Asian-descended New Yorkers to the APA population, with the largest percentage and number of them of Guyanese descent. (*See sidebar for more on Indo-Caribbeans.*)

TABLE 7: SECOND WAVE APA MIGRATION

National origin of Asian Caribbean, pop. > 1,000	Estimated NYC residents	Estimated Number of APA	Percent APA
Guyana	107,349	22,991	21.42%
Trinidad/ Tobago	69,832	4,203	6.02%
Puerto Rico	679,429	3,578	0.53%
West India	72,773	2,224	3.06%
Dominican Republic	549,389	1,456	0.27%
TOTAL	1,478,772	34,452	2.33%

Indo-Caribbean New Yorkers

“Some of us like to claim only part of that history, while others own our entire story.”⁴¹

• • • • •

Asian-identified New Yorkers from the Caribbean basin nations represent a special, though certainly not globally unique, category of second migration communities. Many are descended from migrant South Asians who arrived as far back as the early 1800s, in part as replacements for African and African-descended slave labor freed by the British-led emancipation movement. They may live within identifiably Asian subcultures that have been separated for generations from the traditional Asian cultures of countries on the other side of world. In addition, as descendents of a *first* migration, they come from places where the *dominant* cultures are defined by Latino and African roots with strong influences from British, French, and Dutch colonialism.

Referring to Toronto but presenting a perspective that could easily apply to New York, one study of Caribbean Asian immigrants bluntly states that: “Indo-Caribbean immigrants...have had their unique migration, settlement, and acculturation story negated.”

For Caribbean men and women of South Asian Indian descent, such views pose problems of invisibility in terms of their birthplace and cultural roots. Indo-Caribbean people living in Canada are often mistakenly classified with East Indians from Sri Lanka, India, or Pakistan based on their physical appearance. Most Indo-Caribbeans themselves, however, do not easily see themselves melding into these East Indian groups...⁴²

⁴¹ S., Nadeena, Op. cit.

⁴² Plaza, Dwaine (Jan-July, 2004). *Disaggregating the Indo- and African-Caribbean migration and settlement experience in Canada*. Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies. Toronto, Ontario.

HOME LANGUAGE CLASSIFICATION

Through the Home Language Survey (HLS), DOE identifies schools in which at least ten percent of students are from homes in which a language other than English is spoken. We accept the implied assumption of DOE that ten percent is a useful threshold for when a language group might begin to have an impact on school climate. We use these designations as one of several ways to sort and contrast the variety of factors that influence educational climate and, possibly, resources available to APA students.

As of the 2007-2008 school year, there were 1,075 schools where at least ten percent of students spoke at least one of 13 non-English languages at home the previous year. In many schools, there were two or more non-English home languages that met the ten percent threshold and 372 schools that had none.

We contrast the Asian home languages schools to Spanish home language schools, Spanish-and-Asian home languages schools, and No language concentration schools.

There were 149 schools where ten percent or more of the students spoke one of five Asian languages at home. In contrast, the largest group of 1,000 schools had least ten percent of their students speaking Spanish at home. Of these, there were ninety-four schools that had both a concentration of Spanish home language users *and* at least one of five Asian home languages.

We also sort and contrast this group of five Asian home languages schools meeting DOE's ten-percent threshold: Chinese,

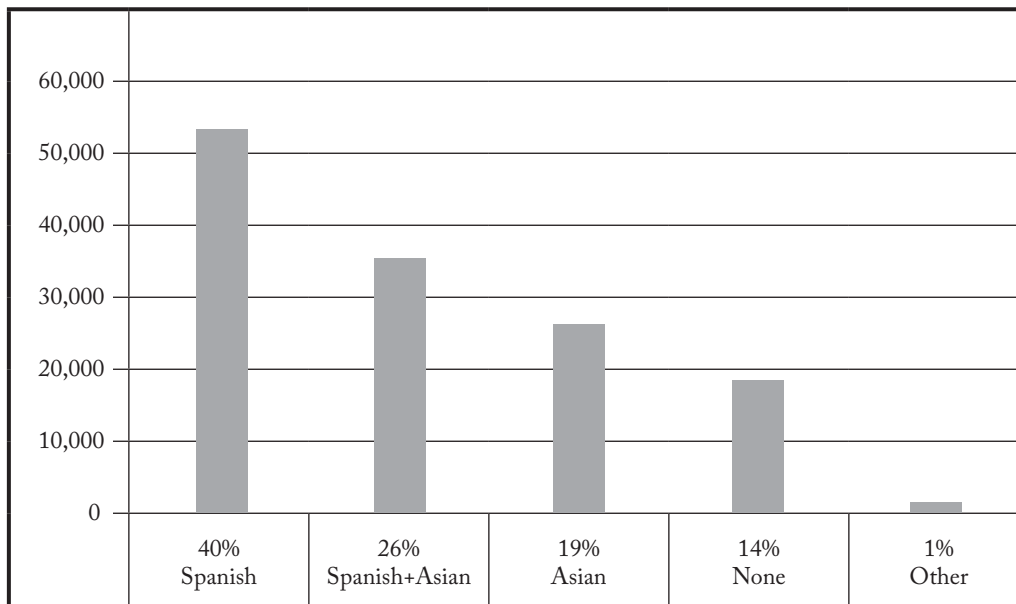


Figure One: Distribution of APA Enrollment by School Home Language Concentration

See appendix for table showing the distribution by borough of the Asian home languages schools.

⁴³ Like many of the school-level variables, the home language classification is a very coarse indicator. It tells us that at least ten percent of a school's students belong to a particular home language group. In the case of APA students, the upper limit for an Asian language group would be the figure for undifferentiated Asian enrollment, assuming—which we cannot—that there were only one Asian home language group in the school.

TABLE 8: DISTRIBUTION OF APA AND OTHER STUDENTS BY SCHOOL LANGUAGE CONCENTRATION (= >10%)

School Language Concentration	N Schools	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White	Total Enrollment % Enrollment
Spanish	906	53,640	172,282	318,928	52,065	596,915
Percent of Spanish		9.0%	28.9%	53.4%	8.7%	62%
Spanish + Asian	94	35,369	8,449	29,947	19,236	93,001
Percent of Spanish + Asian		38.0%	9.1%	32.2%	20.7%	10%
Asian	55	25,695	4,460	4,832	12,065	47,052
Percent of Asian		54.6%	9.5%	10.3%	25.6%	5%
None*	372	18,412	122,295	28,025	45,480	214,212
Percent of None		8.6%	57.1%	13.1%	21.2%	22%
Other	20	1,810	6,260	2,030	7,135	17,235
Percent of Other		10.5%	36.3%	11.8%	41.4%	2%
Total	1,447	134,927	313,747	383,763	135,982	968,415
Percent of Total		13.9%	32.4%	39.6%	14.0%	100%

*Refers to schools with no non-English speaking concentrations equal to or greater than ten percent.

Bangla/Bengali, Korean, Punjabi, and Urdu.⁴³

The chart below indicates that twice as many APA students attend Spanish home language schools as attend Asian home language schools. We will discuss differences in the average school-level all-student academic outcomes for students attending Spanish home language schools and for those attending Asian home languages schools. In some cases, we will see a difference in outcomes for APA students attending different home language schools as well.

We will also see that there are differences between the Asian home languages schools and the No language concentration schools. The enrollments for three quarters of these schools are three percent Asian, three percent White, 79 percent Black, and 77 percent low-income free lunch eligible (FLE). The enrollments for the remaining No language concentration schools are 16 percent Asian, 59 percent White, nine percent Black, and 33 percent FLE.

Although broad, the home language classifications reveal a level of relevant, sometimes statistically noteworthy, distinctions among schools serving concentrations of students from specific APA cultures that are unavailable in other publicly available data-sets.

THE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE OF APA STUDENTS

While knowing where APA students live and where they attend school is an important step in understanding their reality, the central concern of this investigation is: What happens to APA students *inside* those schools?

Despite the constraints of dealing with mostly school-level information, this project has made important progress toward a clearer picture of the range of situations APA students face on a daily basis. To accomplish this, we analyzed⁴⁴ a variety of data that we organized under three broad headings:

- **SCHOOL CLIMATE**

School climate is the product of the cultures and personalities of students, staff, and administrators; the policies and decisions that set the tone for interactions in the school community; and approaches to learning and instruction taken by faculty and students.

- **RESOURCES**

These are the services, facilities, personnel, and “instrumentalities of learning” used to deliver and define a school’s educational program.⁴⁵

- **EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES**

This report relies on average school No Child Left Behind accountability test scores as well as Regents exams and SAT scores grouped by sorting schools in various ways and considering scores at the school level in terms of the demographics of the students and the resources in those schools.

SCHOOL CLIMATE

While educational resources and outcomes might logically seem to be directly related, in this study, their most obvious connection is through their shared relationship to what we call school climate.

APA students attend 94 percent of the schools in the New York City public school system. The concentration of APA students varies widely: There are nearly 100 schools with only one APA student but also a school with over 2,600 APA students. Each student attends a school with a distinct climate.

As we heard from our student focus groups, race-based identities and perceptions, cultural and economic differences, and school-level leadership contribute to the variety of environments

with a range of educational outcomes. Decisions from external forces such as DOE, the state legislature, or a segregated housing market also make their contributions. While a school’s climate often incorporates such influences from the outside world, policy makers and school administrators also make decisions about how those influences interact with each school’s educational program. Additional dimensions of school climate might include student attendance, approaches to discipline, or high expectations for student achievement as expressed by support for challenging course work and availability of appropriate educational resources (e.g., science labs or a licensed librarian).

We refer to school *climate* instead of school culture because the discussion of school climate includes information about race, language, ethnicity, and poverty partially describing the many and diverse cultures from which students, faculty, and staff come. To avoid confusion, therefore, we use school climate to mean a *school’s* culture. For purposes of this discussion, therefore, school *climate* draws on two definitions of culture:

“the customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group; also: the characteristic features of everyday existence... *shared by people in a place or time...*”

“the set of shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterizes an institution or organization...” (Merriam-Webster, 2010)⁴⁶

In addition, according to a second useful definition from a more academic source:

“...culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, and on the other as conditioning elements of further action.”⁴⁷

Defining a specific climate for each public school is beyond the scope of this report. School to school comparisons, however, do suggest a range of difference and similarity within individual climate factors that allowed us to assume that schools can share enough features to group schools according to similar climates. First, we explored some of these factors individually.

“You have to go through metal detectors. The campus is scary. It doesn’t make you have school spirit. You just want to leave.”

⁴⁴ We used a variety of analytical tools in our analyses including (partial) correlations, standardized group differences, analysis of covariance, and regressions. Relationships between variables reported using correlations (adjusted for poverty levels) were considered noteworthy if they had a magnitude of at least 0.3. If they were from 0.2 to < 0.3 (a weak correlation) they are noted to indicate the direction of the relationship (positive or negative). For standardized differences, a substantial difference between two group means indicates a difference of at least two standard deviations; we sometimes flag standardized differences of 1.5 -- and occasionally lower when context seems appropriate -- as having possible relevance. Regression results were considered either statistically significant or not; the effect sizes were not analyzed. Complete tables and technical notes are in the appendix.

⁴⁵ After nearly 20 years of related litigation, the Campaign for Fiscal Equity decision of New York State’s highest court, the Court of Appeals, affirmed the right of the state’s children and youth to a —sound basic education, declared that the state’s formula and amount of state aid to New York City public schools did not comply with that definition, and affirmed earlier decisions that broadly set forth specifics describing the educational resources required for a —sound basic education defined as —a meaningful high school education, one which prepares them to function productively as civic participants. These resources included: —minimally adequate physical facilities and classrooms which provide enough light, space, heat, and air to permit children to learn, minimally adequate instrumentalities of learning such as desks, chairs, pencils, and reasonably current textbooks, and —minimally adequate teaching of reasonably up-to-date basic curricula such as reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies, by sufficient personnel adequately trained to teach those subject areas.” Decision by Chief Judge Judith Kaye, CFE v. State of New York, June 26, 2003.

⁴⁶ <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/culture> Downloaded 9/12/11

⁴⁷ —Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; *culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, and on the other as conditioning elements of further action.*” (Emphasis added.) Kroeber, A.L., & Kluckhohn, C. (1952). *Culture: A critical review of concepts and definitions*. Harvard University Peabody Museum of American Archeology and Ethnology Papers 47. Cited at <http://www.carla.umn.edu/culture/definitions.html>. Downloaded 9/12/11.

RACE

In general, higher Asian enrollment tends to be associated with higher White enrollment and to be inversely associated with Hispanic and Black enrollment. In a later section, we will see how all-student and, in some cases, Asian-student outcomes vary with the degree and type of racial diversity in schools. This initial sorting by race is just one layer of complexity that defines school climate.

LANGUAGE

We use categories drawn from DOE home language surveys that identify schools in which at least ten percent of students speak a language other than English at home. As broad as these categories are, they still allow a more granular perspective than that provided by DOE's standard broad racial categories. Specifically, the home language designations allow us to distinguish among schools with a threshold enrollment of at least ten percent of students who speak at least one of five different Asian languages of the many spoken at home by New York City public school APA students and their parents. This improvised indicator allows us to identify differences among schools serving different APA ethnicities.

We also compared schools where at least ten percent of students speak an Asian language at home to schools where ten percent or more speak Spanish, where ten percent or more speak Spanish *and* ten percent or more speak an Asian language, and where no non-English language group meets the ten percent threshold. On average, the Asian home languages schools have higher *percentages* of Asian students than do Spanish home language and No language concentration schools. However, total enrollment of APA students in the group of 906 Spanish home language schools is greater than in the 55 Asian or in the 94 Spanish-and-Asian home languages schools.⁴⁸

Compared to the Asian home languages schools, the average Black enrollment is much higher in the Spanish home language and No language concentration schools, and average White enrollment is lower in those schools.⁴⁹

LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

Three quarters of our public schools have a concentration of students who speak a language other than English at home. DOE data, however, do not provide information on English language proficiency in terms of ELL students' home language or other circumstances such as poverty.

However, according to the Asian American Federation analysis cited earlier:

Poor and low-income [New York City] school-age Asian children (age 5 to 17) are about twice as likely to face language obstacles as school-age city children are

overall in those income categories... Almost one-third (32 percent) of poor school-age Asian children were limited English proficient, compared with 15 percent of all city children in that age group, in 2006. For low-income school-age children, 28 percent of Asians and 14 percent of all children had limited English skills.⁵⁰

In an earlier section, we noted the wide variation in child poverty among the larger APA communities in the city.

While coming to school from a non-English speaking home might conceivably convert to a cultural asset, by definition, LEP status suggests a beginning level of linguistic competence that might isolate students or attract prejudiced behavior from adults or other students. In fact, our focus groups with APA students

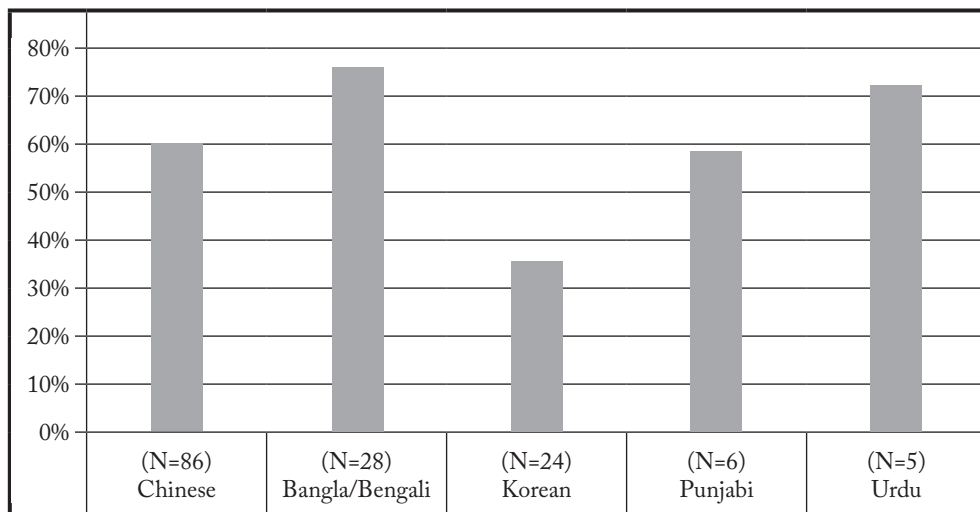


Figure Two: Average School Poverty by Asian Language Concentration

described their experiences with the bullying and exclusion. We assume that language concentration and higher numbers of people who are not yet English-proficient would contribute to variations in school climate.

Among the broad ten-percent home language categories, the percentage enrollment considered to be of Limited English Proficient (LEP) varies widely. The Spanish home language and Asian home language schools have higher average percentages of LEP students (16 and 18 percent, respectively) than the schools designated Other and No language concentration. On average, the percentage of LEP students in the Korean and Punjabi home language schools is roughly half that of the Chinese, Bangla/Bengali, or Urdu schools. The schools that meet the DOE threshold for Chinese, Bangla/Bengali, and Urdu home languages have average LEP enrollment of 25 percent.

POVERTY

Poverty is an influential component of school climate; it complicates our analysis in interesting ways. For instance, when we hold poverty constant and compare the Chinese, Korean, and combined group of South Asian home language schools (Bangla/Bengali, Punjabi, Urdu), differences among percentages of LEP students mentioned in the previous section disappear.

⁴⁸ New York City Department of Education (2007). *Non-English Languages that Represent at Least 10% of Schools' Population*. [Based on Home Language Survey, October 2006.]

⁴⁹ The No non-English home language schools comprise two distinct groups of schools. Three quarters have enrollments that are disproportionately Black, but one quarter has White enrollments that are relatively large.

⁵⁰ Op. cit. Working But Poor (October 2008). At the time of publication, the Asian American Federation used American Community Survey estimates to determine that over half of New York's Asian children were "lowincome" (less than 200 percent official poverty threshold).

Such a result suggests that, in the abstract, poverty might explain more than ethnicity in a student's need for targeted language instruction. When considering such a statistical effect, however, it is important to remember that the *actual* differences in the poverty levels of those schools, the poverty levels of those different APA communities, and the percentage of students needing LEP services are real. Addressing the language acquisition needs of their students requires consideration of both ethnic and economic differences.

APA students in schools with relatively few APA students are typically in a higher poverty climate than schools with more APA students. In the quartile of schools with the widest dispersion of APA students, the mean poverty rate is 69 percent (N=1199, median=73 percent). In contrast, in the quartile of schools with the most concentrated number of APA students, the mean poverty rate is 45 percent (N=31, median=35 percent).

Furthermore, school poverty rates are, on average, higher in Spanish, Spanish-and-Asian, and No language concentration schools than in the Asian home languages schools.

Within the Asian home language groups, the average poverty rate for Chinese home language schools is higher than the poverty rate for Korean schools but lower than the poverty rate for the combined South Asian home languages schools (Bangla/Bengali, Punjabi, Urdu). There are also substantial differences between the Korean schools' average poverty rate and those of the Bangla/Bengali and Urdu home language schools. The following chart compares poverty rates in groups of schools where at least ten percent of students speak one of five Asian languages.

The relatively small number of the specific Asian home languages schools hinders significance testing. The day-to-day reality for these schools in our data year (2007-08), however, indicates some striking differences. For instance, the average poverty rate in the 24 Korean home language schools is 34 percent, and half those schools have poverty rates below 30 percent. In contrast, the average poverty rate for the 28 Bangla/Bengali home language schools is 76 percent and half of those schools have poverty rates over 75 percent.

Although the child poverty rates listed earlier for some APA ethnic groups seem to dovetail with these figures, it is important to note that the DOE school poverty rate for any school is blind to which children are poor. The underlying assumption of Title I funding, however, is that high concentrations of student poverty influence overall school outcomes regardless of an individual child's poverty. With child-level data, however, DOE could determine whether family poverty varied among children from different ethnic or language groups and LEP and special needs status.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is another powerful factor in school climate.⁵¹ "New York City schools with high student attendance tend to have low suspension, dropout, and ninth grade repeat rates."⁵² Further, schools with more qualified teachers and a range of other educational resources averaged higher student attendance.⁵³

The dated but still relevant study cited above further found that, "[s]chools with fully functioning libraries and modern

⁵¹ Given sometimes circular definitions of school climate mentioned above, attendance can also be considered an output.

⁵² Eskenazi, Eddins, Beam (October 2003). *Equity or Exclusion: the dynamics of resources, demographics, and behavior in the New York City public schools*. National Center for Schools and Communities Fordham University, New York, New York.

⁵³ Ibid.

FINDINGS: SCHOOL CLIMATE

The largest segment of APA students is enrolled in schools where Spanish is the dominant home language.

Most LEP students citywide receive "ESL services only." However, the average rate of students in Spanish home language schools receiving Transitional Bilingual Instruction is over twice the average of the rate of students in Asian home language schools.

Average school poverty rates vary among the five Asian home languages schools identified by DOE: Bangla/Bengali, Chinese, Korean, Punjabi, and Urdu.

Schools where the dominant home language is one of five Asian languages have significantly stronger pupil attendance rates than the other home language schools in this report.

School suspensions rates tend to be lower with higher White enrollment, and higher with higher Hispanic and Black enrollment.

Despite a generally high rate, average school Asian-student Regents diploma graduation rates vary widely across schools.

According to a *New York Times* analysis, roughly one in three of those APA graduates is not ready for college-level work.

There are striking differences in average poverty rates of schools with the densest APA enrollment (mean: 45, median: 35) and the schools of the most widely dispersed quartile of APA students (mean: 69, median: 73).

The Asian home language schools have lower average poverty rates than the other large home language groupings.

Average school attendance and measures of instructional quality tend to be related. Average school attendance and test outcomes tend to be related. Average school attendance can affect Asian-student test scores regardless of Asian attendance rates.

Asian home language schools have higher all-student and Asian-student four-year Regents diploma rates than the Spanish and Spanish-and-Asian home languages schools.

More than one in three 2009 APA Regents diploma graduates passed Regents exams but with scores that predicted they would need remedial classes before tackling college coursework.

computer resources averaged better attendance” and that “[s]chools at all levels with certified librarians averaged better attendance than schools with no librarians.”⁵⁴

After adjusting for varying levels of poverty, which is also associated with the educational resources available in schools, the average school wide pupil attendance is still significantly higher for the Asian home languages schools than for the Spanish, Spanish-and-Asian, and No language concentration schools. There are no noteworthy differences in attendance rate among the Chinese, Korean, or South Asian home language schools.

APPROACH TO DISCIPLINE

Suspension statistics merge two distinct sets of activities. One is alleged or perceived student behavior. The second is the combination of definitions and administrative action applied to that behavior by adults. We know suspensions say something about a school, but this variable does not clarify the mix of student and adult action. We do know that the average number of suspensions per 100 students is significantly lower for the Asian

“I thought [this school] would be bad but then, when I came here, I was so impressed that no one made fun of each other and they were kind to each other.”

home languages schools than for the Spanish home language and No language concentration schools.

DOE does not include information about the race of suspended students in their more recent annual reports. With the available school-level data, we see only very mild indications that aggregated suspension rates at the school level tend to be lower with higher White enrollment and higher with higher Hispanic and Black enrollments. Research conducted when suspension figures were disaggregated by race documented that the suspension rate for Asian students (9.4 percent) in majority Black and Latino schools was nearly four times higher than the Asian student suspension rate for schools with majority White or Asian students.⁵⁵ This suggests that APA students are immersed in, not isolated from, their school’s climate which may not allow the social space and learning environment required for the role of model immigrant student.

TYPE OF SCHOOL

Time considerations, space, data quality, and data suppression issues (see sidebar on page 17) limited our analysis of school type.⁵⁶ However, an example of its possible impact is raised by a

recent Columbia University study using a New York City schools dataset that suggests that math and English Language Arts (ELA) test scores drop off less between elementary and middle grades for K-8 students than for students who change schools for their middle grades.

What we found bolsters the case for middle-school reform: in the specific year when students move to a middle school (or to a junior high), their academic achievement, as measured by standardized tests, falls substantially in both math and English relative to that of their counterparts who continue to attend a K-8 elementary school. What’s more, their achievement continues to decline throughout middle school. This negative effect persists at least through 8th grade, the highest grade for which we could obtain test scores.⁵⁷

As we pointed out in Chapter V, the APA percentage of K-8 enrollment citywide is smaller than the APA percentage of total citywide enrollment. Determining whether APA students are underrepresented in K-8 schools would require disaggregating APA enrollment by grade across all school types that include grades six through eight.

EXPECTATIONS AND OPPORTUNITY

We speculate that the relative numbers and rates of students graduating with New York State Regents diplomas provide a useful gauge of the opportunities and positive expectations present in a school. We measured Regents graduation activity by calculating the percentages of the total four-year all-student cohort and of the Asian student sub-cohort who graduated with a Regents diploma. While the differences are not statistically substantial given small group sizes, the average four-year Regents diploma graduation rates for the entire cohort and for the APA student sub-cohort from the Asian home languages schools are markedly higher than those for the Spanish-and-Asian and Spanish home languages schools (i.e., 85, 64, and 61 percent, respectively for the APA cohort).

In the cross-section of schools attended by our focus group participants (Table 1, page 17), the per school four-year Asian cohort Regents diploma rates ranged from 35 to 100 percent (N=24, year 2005)⁵⁸ and the all-student rate at the same set of schools ranged from 0 to 100 percent (N=27, year 2006).

However, public and media attention given to the Asian enrollment in the highly competitive “science highs” distracts from a fuller understanding of the wide variety of high school situations and outcomes experienced by APA youth across the city. According to the *New York Times*, in 2009, of New York City APA general education graduates (2005-06 cohort), more than one in three were deemed not college-ready, meaning they passed their Regents exams but with scores that predicted they would need remedial classes before tackling college coursework.⁵⁹

RESOURCES

The uneven distribution of important instructional resources not

⁵⁴ Ibid. Note that the second finding was only significant for high schools, which are required by state regulations to have a licensed librarian, but the positive association of library resources to attendance was apparent at all levels of school.

⁵⁵ Op. cit. Eskenazi et al (October 2003).

⁵⁶ Elementary, middle, junior high, K-3, K-8, K-12, middlehigh, and high.

⁵⁷ Rockoff, J and Lockwood, B. (June 2010). *Stuck in the Middle: Impacts of Grade Configuration in Public Schools*. Education Next. Fall 2010 / Vol. 10, No. 4. <http://educationnext.org/stuck-in-the-middle/> [3/21/11]

⁵⁸ 2009-2010 NYSED Report Card data did not disaggregate the 2006 Asian Regents diploma cohort.

⁵⁹ Myles Tanzer (Tue., Feb. 8 2011 @ 12: 44PM). *New York Students Not Ready For College; Regents Are to Blame*. New York Times. Asian diploma versus college ready rates defined as 80 percent on math/75 percent on English.

only disadvantages Black and Latino students but also the largest group of APA students with whom they share their schools.

Even after an adjustment for the influence of school poverty rates on our calculations, compared to the Asian home languages schools, Spanish home language schools and the No Language Concentration schools have substantially:

- Larger average percentages of teachers with no valid teaching certificate
- Larger average percentages of teachers teaching outside of their certification
- Larger average percentages of *classes* being taught by teachers with inappropriate certification
- Lower average percentages of teachers with at least a Master's degree
- Larger average percentages of teachers with fewer than three years of experience*, and
- Lower average percentage of teachers with more than five years experience*⁶⁰

As we have noted throughout, thousands of APA students are in hundreds of schools with very low Asian enrollment. To take a snapshot of the APA student experience in schools with low Asian enrollments, we examined the schools serving the top and bottom quartiles of Asian student enrollment (schools with the most APA students versus schools with the fewest APA students).

A comparison of these groups of schools showed disparities in resources suggesting two different APA student experiences. For example, in the top group of schools, an average of 54 percent of the teachers have a Master's or higher degree, while in the bottom group of schools, only 32 percent do. Such comparisons push us to think about the APA student experience from a perspective that differs from the usual stereotype of well supplied, expertly mentored APA student working on an Intel science competition project. Descriptive statistics like these could remind policymakers that in determining the needs of APA students in the New York City school system they must consider the resources available to APA students who are relatively isolated in all sorts of schools.

A different dynamic in the resource equation occurs in the distribution of services for Limited English Proficient (LEP) students:

- The type of English language instruction ELL students receive can vary with the particular language concentration in a school although most are tallied under a "English as a Second Language (ESL) Services Only" format.

Officially, New York City public schools employ three different instructional approaches for English Language Learners (ELL) designated LEP. Transitional Bilingual Instruction (TBI or bilingual) provides subject matter instruction in a student's first language plus English Language classes. Dual Language, which tends to happen in schools specifically organized for that approach, aims to make students equally fluent in English and one other language (e.g., Spanish, Mandarin, French). English as a Second Language (ESL) Services Only places students in regular classes conducted in English and provides English language instruction in various other formats.

Although these are the categories of instruction reported by DOE, educators in the system point out that there are other instructional modalities in use that are counted under these labels. In addition, in some schools, instructional and programmatic

FINDINGS: RESOURCES

Asian home language schools have significantly lower average percentages of teachers without appropriate credentials and of classes being taught by them.

Spanish home language and No language concentration schools have higher average percentages of less experienced teachers and lower averages of teachers with Masters degrees.

Most LEP students receive "ELL Services only" (most subjects taught in English, pullout for English language instruction).

Students in Spanish home language schools are somewhat more likely to have Transitional Bilingual instruction than those in Asian and Asian-and-Spanish home language schools.

approaches overlap; that is, ESL Services Only programs might provide considerable native language supports and bilingual programs might teach most subject matter instruction in English. The following remarks summarize national trends that are applicable to instructional resources available to New York City's Limited English Proficient APA students.

In the era of the *No Child Left Behind Act* (2002), bilingualism as a resource and tool in the education of emergent bilinguals has been increasingly marginalized (Crawford, 2004), as English-only high-stakes tests become the only measure of academic accountability (Menken, 2008). Transitional bilingual education programs are under attack, and in decline in terms of enrollments, although they are tolerated. In the past, most bilingual education programs at the secondary level have been transitional. Meanwhile, developmental bilingual education programs where language minority students, usually at the elementary level, are taught in two languages throughout schooling, have mostly disappeared. Instead, so-called "dual language" bilingual education programs have been scarcely implemented. At the secondary level, dual language bilingual education programs are almost nonexistent. In NYC, for example, there is currently only one dual language bilingual education program at the high school level in Mandarin-English.⁶¹

Variations on implementation and fidelity to model to the side, the formal distribution of resources for APA and other Limited English Proficient students follows:

- Citywide, an average of 87 percent of all ELLs in the city have ESL Services Only.
- Less than 11 percent are in TBI programs.
- Less than two percent attend Dual Language schools.

There are strong positive correlations between both a school's percentage of LEP students and its number of ELL students and the percentage of ELLs receiving bilingual instruction, which requires a minimum group of 20 students sharing the same non-

⁶⁰ Significant for both groups of schools except for items marked * which indicate a directional but not a significant difference for No language concentration group.

⁶¹ García, Ofelia, Flores, Nelson and Chu, Haiwen (2011). *CEExtending Bilingualism in U.S. Secondary Education: New Variations* ., International Multilingual Research Journal, 5: 1, 1 . 18. To link to this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/19313152.2011.539486>

English language.

There is a strong inverse relationship of these two figures with ESL Services Only, meaning that a lower LEP percentage and lower ELL enrollment suggest a higher percentage of ELL students in this approach.

In the Asian home languages schools and the Asian-and-Spanish home languages schools, an average of six percent of LEP students receive Transitional Bilingual Instruction (TBI). In contrast, an average of 15 percent of LEP students in the Spanish home language schools have Transitional Bilingual Instruction classes.

However, even though the largest block of APA students attends Spanish home language schools, they might not benefit from this distribution. The relationship between enrollment and a school's percentage of Limited English Proficient students is stronger for Hispanic enrollment than for Asian enrollment. Despite their large number relative to other subsets of Asian enrollment, APA students are only nine percent of the enrollment in Spanish home language schools and not all of them require ELL support. Therefore, the more dispersed APA LEP students may have less access to Transitional Bilingual Instruction. In addition, APA students who are English Proficient may find themselves in an environment in which non-APA LEP students are an important part of the mix.

Finally, the number of Black students is inversely related to LEP enrollment. That is, schools with more Black students tend to enroll fewer LEP students. APA students, not all whom are Limited English Proficient, are less than nine percent of the No language concentration schools, which mostly have disproportionately high Black enrollment. Here, too, the full range of English Language Learner supports may not be available to isolated APA LEP students. More than 18,000 APA students attend No language concentration schools.

According to Dr. John King, New York State Commissioner of Education, in 2010 “some parents were being deprived of their legal right to choose what kind of program they wanted for their children, whether a bilingual program... or all classes in English, with some extra help.”⁶²

The availability of cross-tabulated data (LEP students subdivided by ethnic group) would advance our understanding of the language acquisition supports available to isolated APA ELL student.

OUTCOMES

The analysis summarized in this section using school-level data suggests that school climate and resource factors are related to the academic success of APA students in New York City schools, as measured by standardized tests and other indicators. A more robust understanding of these relationships will require a commitment on DOE's part to conduct system-wide analyses of child-level data or to develop protocols that will allow independent researchers to do the work while protecting individual student privacy. Meanwhile, the following points are already clear:

- There are important differences in average school scores among the different home language groupings.

For all test takers, averages for most elementary and middle

school NCLB accountability exams are significantly lower in the Spanish home language and No language concentration groupings—where over half of APA students are enrolled—than in the Asian home languages grouping attended by just 19 percent of Asian enrollment.⁶³

In addition, compared to the Asian home languages schools, the average school Asian-student grade 4 math score was lower in the Spanish home language schools. The average Asian-student grade 5 math score was lower in the No language concentration schools.

At the high school level, we compared the percentages of all students and of Asian students passing Regents exams with a 4 (Exceeds Proficiency Standard). The Asian home languages schools generally fared substantially or noticeably better than both the Spanish home language and the Spanish-and-Asian home languages schools and sometimes better than the No language concentration group.⁶⁴

- Across all upper grade schools, outcomes are associated with the average enrollment of students from various racial groups. Schools that have larger Asian enrollment tend to have higher average scores on the all-student SAT scores (Reading, Math, and Writing), although only the relationship with the Math score is statistically significant when we control for poverty and other races.

Holding race and poverty constant, a school's average total SAT score *increases* by about 2.7 points for each ten percent increase in Asian enrollment. It *decreases* by roughly the same amount for each ten percent increase in Black enrollment. Finally, it *decreases* by about 5.4 percent for each ten percent increase in Hispanic enrollment. (All differences are significant to <.001.)

The preceding finding demands context. We reiterate our earlier finding that, compared to the Asian home languages schools, the schools sorted as Spanish home language schools and the No language concentration schools (which have disproportionately high Black enrollment) tend to receive fewer instructional resources as measured by DOE metrics. We will see similar resource disparities in the exploration of clusters based on demographics below.

SAT performance is also strongly related to schools' percentage of the four-year cohort graduating in 2008 with Regents diplomas.

Consistent with the positive relationship of Asian enrollment to SAT scores are the differences between the average SAT scores for Reading (464), Math (508), and Writing (459) in the 20 schools attended by upper grade APA students in the densest quartile and the corresponding scores for the 204 schools attended by upper grade APA students in the most dispersed quartile of Asian enrollment: Reading (404), Math (405), and Writing (397). While these differences are not statistically significant, in the college application process, such differences for an individual student could decide whether a school accepts her, particularly given the research discussed in our introductory chapter documenting the higher test scores threshold for APA students compared to other groups of applicants to very selective universities.⁶⁵

- Poverty strongly influences APA test results.

This set of findings provides yet another suggestion that variation in family poverty is an important distinguishing

⁶² Op. cit. Otterman, Sharon (October 13, 2011).

⁶³ Of the 16 tests administered to grades 3-8 all but three* showed significant differences in the No non English home language grouping comparison. *Grades 3 and 6 ELA and grade 8 Science.

⁶⁴ Substantially better Spanish and Spanish-and-Asian for Asian English, Global Studies, History, and Science and for All-student Math and Science. Noticeably better than Spanish and Spanish-and-Asian for Global Studies, History, and Science. Substantially better than No non-English add:concentration for Asian History and Math and noticeably better Asian Global Studies.

⁶⁵ Op. cit. Espenshade, Thomas J. and Walton Radford, Alexandria (2009).

According to DOE figures:

53,640 Asian students attend 906 schools where Spanish is the dominant home language.

35,369 Asian students are in 94 schools where at least ten percent of students speak Spanish at home and ten percent speak one of five Asian languages at home.

25,695 Asian students enroll in 55 schools where the dominant home language is one of five Asian languages.

18,412 Asian students go to the 372 schools where no non-English language concentration meets DOE's ten percent threshold.

1,810 Asian students attend 20 schools where one of several other languages is the dominant home language.*

characteristic among different APA student ethnicities in New York.

In the Korean and Chinese home language schools, the average school scores of Asian test takers are always higher than in the Urdu home language schools, and for some standardized tests they are substantially higher.^{66 67}

Because the Urdu and Bangla/Bengali groups are small, we combined the three South Asian home language schools and compared that group to Chinese and Korean home language schools. We found significant differences in the school poverty levels.

When we adjusted for poverty, and compared Chinese and Korean to the South Asian schools, we found no large differences in outcomes. In some cases, South Asian outcomes were somewhat better than those of the Chinese and Korean home language schools.

In fact, when we held enrollment by ethnicity constant, as school poverty rates went up, school averages for Asian-student scores across grade levels in ELA, math, and other subjects tended to move downward.⁶⁸ In other words, an increase in school-level poverty is associated with weaker average school-level test results for Asian students. (This relationship is even more frequently true for the school average all-student test scores.)

In addition to their relationship to state-mandated tests, school poverty rates have a significant negative relationship with schools' average SAT scores in Reading, Math, Writing and the two ways in which SAT overall results are reported.^{69 70}

That said, in some cases, even when we corrected the strength of the correlation for poverty, some marginal correlation with ethnicity remained.

- Attendance matters.

Our analysis suggests, and there is other research to support⁷¹, the possibility that average *school* attendance has a direct relationship to Asian test averages. Even after correcting for poverty, there are moderate correlations between average school attendance and the average rates of Asian students achieving Exceeds Proficiency Standard rates of Regents exams as well as the scores on middle and elementary tests. In other words, the lower a school's overall attendance rate is, the lower, generally speaking, the average test results for Asian students are likely to be across most grades.⁷²

Some research suggests that such correlations are strongest for high school tests and central city schools.⁷³ Lower grade attendance, however, is also, "one of the best-known predictors of future dropouts....and...a driver of the city's low test scores."⁷⁴

Analysis of attendance and testing records of 64,000 New York City fourth graders by the Campaign for Fiscal Equity, "found that as attendance improved, so did performance on state tests." Importantly, from the perspective of APA students who tended to have better than average individual attendance, the study, "also found that the attendance environment at the school mattered: At schools with high absentee rates, students who improved their individual attendance got less of an achievement bump than those at schools with near-perfect attendance."⁷⁵

⁶⁶ Substantial differences between Korean and Urdu include (i) All students: grades 3-5 ELA and Math Grades, grade 5 Social Studies; (ii) Asian students: grades 3 and 5 ELA and Math, and grade 5 Social Studies. A substantial difference was found between Chinese and Urdu for grade 5 Math.

⁶⁷ Note that there are only five Urdu home language schools thereby limiting our comparison of average test scores between Urdu schools and other groups to purely descriptive measures.

⁶⁸ ELA and Math in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8*; science in grade 4; Social Studies in grades 5 and 8. *Grade 8 from difference of means comparisons.

⁶⁹ English, Math, Writing, English+Math, English+Math+Writing.

⁷⁰ Archival download of locally republished NY Times table of SAT results (retrieved ~ November 10, 2010).

⁷¹ Barrington, B. & Hendricks, B. (1989). *Differentiating characteristics of high school graduates, dropouts, and nongraduates*. The Journal of Educational Research, 82, 309-319 cited in Roby, D. E. (2004). *Research on school attendance and student achievement: A study of Ohio schools*. Educational Research Quarterly, 28, 3-14.

⁷² High school English, Global Studies, History, Math, and Science; ELA for grade 7 and 8; Math for grades 4 through 8; grade 8 Science; Social Studies for grades 5 and 8. In addition, there are weak but directional relationships between attendance and ELA for grades 4, 5, and 6; grade 4 Science; and grade 5 Social Studies. trends in the same direction.

⁷³ Caldas, S. J. (1993). *Reexamination of input and process factor effects in public school achievement*. Journal of Educational Research, 86, 206-214. The author points out that the impact of attendance on scores is relatively small compared to the impact of demographic factors but that, unlike demographic characteristics, attendance is a process variable over which schools can exercise some control, which heightens our policy interest in this factor.

⁷⁴ Otterman, Sharon (June 16, 2011). *City Reduces Chronic Absenteeism in Public Schools*. New York Times. <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/17/nyregion/city-reduces-ch>

⁷⁵ Ibid. New York Times citing: Philbeck-Musser, Martha (May 2011). *Taking Attendance Seriously: How School Absences Undermine Student and School Performance in New York City*. Campaign for Fiscal Equity. New York, New York.

*Because of the small number of these schools and their wide variety (American Sign Language to Nahuatl to Albanian) we have omitted them from the analysis.

- Other school-level factors relate to variation in APA achievement.

As schools' average dropout rates increase, the average percentages of Asian students scoring "Exceeds Proficiency Standard" on all Regents tests tend to be lower. In addition, in our data year, there is a negative, though not strong, relationship between school suspensions rates and Asian-student performance on Regents English, Math, and Science; grade 8 ELA; grades 5 and 8 Math; grade 5 Social Studies; and grade 8 Science.

After the statistical impact of poverty is removed, the number of recently arrived immigrants in high schools still has a negative relationship to above-proficient Asian student performance on the Regents English test. The percentage of limited English percentage students, however, does not.

- Instructional resources show an impact on Asian student test results.

Based on the relationship of test results to various DOE measures of instructional resources, Asian students taking math, science, and global studies courses appear vulnerable to differences in their access to those resources.

Even after we corrected for the effect of poverty, there remained mild but consistent correlations (i.e., $r > .2$) between various measures of No Child Left Behind staffing objectives and average Asian-student test scores for Regents history, global studies, math, and science; for some middle grades ELA, math, and science; and for some elementary ELA and Math. **These negative relationships involved one or more of average percentages of teachers teaching without certification, teaching out of certification, or teaching without a Master's degree as well as the percentages of core classes and all classes being taught by a less than "highly qualified" teachers.**⁷⁶

Clearly, a variety of individual factors shape the educational context in which nearly 136,000 APA students experience public schooling, including the mix of poverty and various Asian and non-Asian ethnicities and languages, a school's success in promoting strong attendance, and the ability of the city to staff the schools they attend with strong instructional resources. We will conclude our discussion with a preliminary exploration of the variety of ways in which these and other factors coexist and shape the educational context of APA and other students.

FINDINGS: OUTCOMES

Average school all-student and, in some cases, Asian-student outcomes vary with the degree and type of ethnic/racial diversity in schools.

Across all relevant schools, there are correlations between all-student and Asian-student test results and various measures of instructional resources.

Average overall test scores in Spanish and No non-English home language schools tend to be significantly lower than in Asian home languages schools.

Over half of APA students attend schools where Spanish and No non-English home languages dominate.

Asian-student rates of "Exceeds Proficiency Standard" on many Regents tests are at times substantially higher in the schools where an Asian home language dominates than in the Spanish, Spanish-and-Asian, and No language concentration schools.

Higher school poverty rates are associated with weaker average school test results for Asian students, average overall school results, and school SAT results.

Average grade 4 and 5 Asian-student math scores are weaker in other home language schools than in the Asian home languages schools.

Average school scores in the Korean and Chinese home language schools are higher than those in the Urdu schools. When we control for poverty, differences between the two East Asian and the three South Asian language subgroups mostly disappear. But, the differences in average school poverty rates are significant and could contribute to different day-to-day school climates.

Schools with lower attendance rates tend to have poorer Asian-student test results across all grade levels.

While the relationships are not strong, school suspension rates and dropout rates relate negatively to the percentage of Asian students scoring "Exceeds Proficiency Standard" on Regents tests and to average Asian scores for grade 8 ELA and Math.

⁷⁶ As defined by the state for Federally mandated compliance with No Child Left Behind. roni-absenteeism-in-public-schools.html?_f=1

REAL SCHOOLS, REAL STUDENTS, REAL DIFFERENCES

Analyzing how different factors relate to APA students is a useful first step in clarifying issues related to their education. Our exploration so far has mostly examined relationships between specific elements of climate, resources, and outcomes, mostly using school averages and working from a one-on-one perspective. For example, we looked at the relationship of grade 7 math scores with the percentage of out of certification teachers and discussed the relationship of Asian enrollment with school attendance rates. Some of the most obvious relationships involved racial, ethnic, and poverty indicators.⁷⁷

New York City's public schools comprise a system of 1.1 million students, tens of thousands of teachers, well over 1,500 schools, 13 grades, dozens of exams, scores of languages, and, to say the least, huge internal variety and complicated external social factors and political pressures. How do we move from a per variable perspective to a more holistic version of the educational situations of almost 136,000 APA students in the New York City public schools when, in fact, the educational context of each APA student encompasses all the climate factors, educational resources, and individual and school wide outcomes of the particular school she or he attends?

Furthermore, how do we avoid artificially isolating the situation of APA students from that of other students? With relatively few exceptions, APAs students are seldom the plurality in their schools, let alone the majority. Half the APA enrollment is dispersed across 1,326 schools (over 87 percent of all NYC public schools). Nearly 2,300 Asian students attend schools with Asian enrollments of fewer than ten students.

Clearly, Asian enrollment will seldom be the defining characteristic of a school's climate. To a degree never acknowledged by the Model Minority Myth, most APA students share the benefits or defects of policies driven by economic and racial politics from which they and their parents are largely marginalized.

To shed some light on the variety of educational environments experienced by APA students and, by extension, their other classmates, we sought to determine how the City's schools might differ from one another in terms of the distribution of students of different races and family incomes and what such differences might mean for APA students and others.

Cluster analysis is a statistical method that sorts units—in this study, schools—according to how closely each school's combination of features of interest is or is not similar to the mix of features in other schools. The result is a set of mutually exclusive subgroups (clusters) of schools that are each distinct and whose members share similar profiles of those features (Everitt, Landau, & Leese, 2001).⁷⁸ To create clusters of schools, we used total

enrollment, school poverty rate, and the percentages of Asian, Black, Hispanic, and White enrollment as defining characteristics.

The cluster analysis allowed us to identify nine groups of schools with distinct profiles in terms demographics, resources, school climate, and outcomes. We then compared the groups to see if they differed in other important ways. We found that there were, in fact, extensive differences in resource distribution, climate factors, and the academic outcomes at the all-students level and, frequently, the outcomes of APA students in different clusters.

APA students are enrolled in every cluster. In our data year of 2007-2008, each cluster enrolled from two to 34 percent of the APA students in the New York City Public Schools.

The table on the following page summarizes the different configurations of schools generated based on the cluster analysis.

Approximately 25,000 APA students are isolated in four clusters with concentrations of poverty and Black and Hispanic enrollment that border on hyper-segregation. Black students are the overwhelming majority (75 percent) of just one cluster, which also has an average school poverty rate of 71 percent. Hispanic enrollment dominates the next three clusters. In keeping with the one or two dominant sub groups in each cluster, these four clusters are labeled Black, Hispanic 1, Black/Hispanic, and Hispanic 2 on the accompanying table.

The percentage of APA students in these clusters is 4.4 percent, 1.7 percent, 3.8 percent, and 8.0 percent, respectively. Black and Hispanic students in these four clusters combined are 82 and 71 percent of their group's respective citywide enrollment, despite being slightly under 33 and 40 percent of total citywide enrollment. Moreover, dispersion notwithstanding, based on their own share of citywide enrollment, at 19 percent, APAs are also overrepresented in these four clusters.

Hispanic/APA, and Diverse also have large enrollments but are considerably more diverse racially. White, APA 1 (High SES⁷⁹), and APA 2 (Low SES) are much smaller and less diverse.

With the exception of the Black cluster and a very small, low-income APA cluster, average school poverty rate across the other seven clusters declines as the cluster percentage of Hispanic enrollment declines; in other words, the smaller the Hispanic enrollment, the lower the average school poverty rate of the clusters schools. This observation coincides with the observed strong correlation of Hispanic enrollment and school poverty rate.

The dispersion of APA students comes into focus when we look at the actual ratios of Black and Latino students to APA students that, for the first four clusters are 21:1, 56:1, 24:1, and 11:1, respectively. In contrast, the ratios for the other five clusters range from just 0.2:1 to 3:1. When we remember that APAs come from dozens of distinct ethnic and language groups, we begin to see how isolated thousands of APA students are in the public school system.⁸⁰

⁷⁷ Because we must work with school-level statistics, we compare differences in group averages. However, any average contains a range of values and, in some cases, ranges might overlap in terms of their standard deviation. How then can we discuss a difference between an average grade 4 Math score of 507 in one group and 493 in another and decide if that difference is substantial? To answer that question, we used standardized differences of means that deal with the overlap issue. For our purposes, we have defined a standardized difference of at least two to be substantial and, in some cases, 1.5 to be noteworthy.

⁷⁸ In this analysis, we clustered schools (N=1,512) with Ward's method using a hierarchical approach; that is, start with N clusters, and combine clusters until solution is optimal). Ward's method takes an analysis of variance approach by grouping units based on sums of squares. A nine-cluster solution, chosen based on statistical and substantive criteria, differentiates groups of schools by different distributions of ethnicities, poverty, and overall school size. Everitt, B. S., Landau, S., & Leese, M. (2001). *Cluster Analysis*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

⁷⁹ SES: socioeconomic status.

⁸⁰ We use *diverse* comparatively to encompass a number of quantifiable notions: the number of racial or ethnic subgroups, the number of students in each subgroup, their relative percentage of the group, and the ratio of the largest subgroup(s) to the smallest subgroup. Our working assumption is that the relevance of absolute numbers is distinct from the relevance of percentages; e.g., the situation of four students in a group of 40 might differ from that of 40 students in a group of 400. Working from the notion of hyper-segregation, Conger, in a very useful discussion of the distribution of students of color and its impact on educational and civic issues, uses isolation to describe the situation of students who are the overwhelming majority of their school or classroom (e.g., 90 percent). Given that we are examining the situation of the second smallest racial group in the school system, we use isolation to describe the situation of APA students, who are among the least numerous in most of the clusters. Conger, Dylan (January 2008). *New Directions in Measuring Racial Isolation in School Working Paper #08-02*. IESP Working Papers Series. <http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/scmsAdmin/uploads/001/113/wp08-02webversion.pdf>

TABLE 9: CLUSTERS BASED ON CONCENTRATIONS OF RACE AND POVERTY

	Black		Hispanic 1		Hispanic/Black		Hispanic 2		White		Hispanic/ APA		APA 1 High SES		APA 2 Low SES		Diverse	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
All schools	409		256		338		80		135		186		47		17		41	
High Schools	72		28		125		28		19		16		4		2		39	
APA students	9,617	4.4%	2,234	1.7%	4,971	3.8%	8,336	8.0%	8,210	10.4%	46,690	31.9%	13,658	50.9%	9,630	79.5%	32,343	24.2%
White students	5,381	2.5%	1,868	1.5%	7,577	5.8%	5,022	4.8%	48,088	60.9%	31,826	21.7%	7,947	29.6%	574	4.7%	28,402	21.3%
Black students	166,334	75.8%	24,656	19.2%	49,567	38.2%	21,442	20.5%	8,604	10.9%	13,013	8.9%	1,563	5.9%	573	4.7%	33,197	24.8%
Hispanic students	38,130	17.4%	99,574	77.6%	67,501	52.1%	69,822	66.7%	14,102	17.8%	55,055	37.6%	3,631	13.5%	1,334	11.0%	39,671	29.7%
Total number of students	219,462	100%	128,332	100%	129,616	100%	104,622	100%	79,004	100%	146,584	100%	26,819	100%	12,111	100%	133,613	100%
APA isolation ratio	21:1		56:1		24:1		11:1		3:1		1.5:1		0.4:1		0.2:1		2:1	
Avg. poverty level		71%		86%		69%		74%		31%		68%		27%		77%		39%
Mean Nasian/schl/cluster	24		9		15		104		61		251		291		566		789	
% APA of cluster enrollment		4%		2%		4%		8%		10%		32%		51%		80%		24%
% of total APA enrollment (135,702)		7%		2%		4%		6%		6%		34%		10%		7%		24%

CLIMATE ISSUES

The demographics of the clusters present interesting differences.

Given the features we specified for the cluster analysis, it is not surprising that some of the most striking differences among clusters relate to poverty and race. Others include wide variations in average school enrollment, distribution by school type (elementary, middle, high), and enrollment of Limited English Proficient students.

The spread of average school poverty rates is extreme. There are clusters dominated by Asian enrollment at both ends of the poverty spectrum: 27 percent (lowest) and 77 percent (second highest).

The Black and Hispanic 1 clusters are among the least racially diverse with large Black or Hispanic majorities and combined majorities of Black and Hispanic students, respectively, of well over 90 percent. The total enrollment of the 17 high poverty schools of APA 2 cluster is almost 80 percent Asian.

The average poverty rate of schools in APA 1 is substantially lower than most of the other clusters and has the second highest *percentage* of White students after the White cluster. The Hispanic/APA cluster has the highest *number* of White students after the White cluster.

As a group, the Diverse cluster spreads enrollment the most evenly from 22 to 29 percent across the four race groups. APA and White students are overrepresented in this cluster and Black and Hispanic students underrepresented relative to their citywide enrollment. At 39 percent, the average poverty rate of this group of mostly high schools (39 of 41) is also the third lowest.

On average, schools in the APA 2 (low SES) cluster have substantially higher percentages of Limited English Proficient students than five of the other clusters *including* APA 1 as well as the Black, Hispanic/Black, White, and Diverse clusters.

- APA students are widely dispersed among the clusters.

Nearly a fifth of APA enrollment is dispersed across the 1,000 schools in these first four clusters. APA students are the majority in only two small clusters, comprising a total of just 64 schools and 17 percent of the City's APA enrollment. The largest number of APA students—over a third of the system's APA enrollment—is in a third cluster (Hispanic/APA) of 186 schools with a Hispanic plurality and the second largest enrollment of White students in the city.

- Average enrollment per school varies widely across clusters.

Average total enrollment ranges from 3,259 in the Diverse cluster, which is mostly high schools, to 383 in the Hispanic/Black cluster. APA 2 and APA/Hispanic, two of the three major APA concentrations percentage-wise, have average total enrollments of over 700 students.

The 8,336 APA students in the Hispanic 1 cluster are in schools with average enrollment of 1,308. The average number of APA students per school varies across clusters from nine in the Hispanic 1 cluster, to 566 in the APA 2 schools, and 789 in the Diverse schools

- The mix of schools in clusters varies widely across clusters.

The lopsided mix of school types across clusters makes some comparisons between clusters difficult (e.g. high school to high school). One of the poorest clusters, APA 2, is mostly elementary schools and includes just two high schools. APA 1 is, on average, the most economically advantaged, and also comprises mostly elementary and middle schools plus just four high schools.

The White and Hispanic/APA clusters also have fewer high schools than other clusters. In contrast, almost all the schools in the Diverse cluster, which enrolls 24 percent of APA students, are high schools.⁸¹

- The APA plurality clusters show strongest average attendance.

The average attendance rates for the two small clusters with high Asian enrollment (APA 1 and 2), are substantially higher than the White and Diverse clusters and noticeably higher than three of the four high poverty, concentrated Black or Hispanic enrollment clusters, which enroll about half of the APA students in the system.

FINDINGS: SCHOOL CONTEXT

The average school poverty rate per cluster ranges from 27 to 86 percent.

In comparison to enrollment of Black and Hispanic students, APA students are isolated in some clusters by ratios as high as 56:1.

One anomalous cluster of schools comprises only seven percent of total APA enrollment but consists of schools that average 79 percent APA enrollment and average school poverty rate of 77 percent.

APA 2 has mostly noticeably higher average percentages of teachers with at least Masters degrees than the four large clusters that enroll a strong majority of the system's Black and Hispanic students and over 25,000 APA students.

The average percentages of Master's prepared teachers in Hispanic/APA cluster tends toward being higher than the Hispanic 1 and Hispanic/Black clusters that enroll over 7,000 APA students.

Although differences are not as noteworthy, rates for various teaching resources in the APA 1 and 2 clusters are typically better than the rates for other clusters.

⁸¹ The lopsided distribution of high schools complicates the comparison of resources and Asian high school student performance across clusters. The teaching resource statistics for the Diverse cluster, therefore, are presented in the endnotes/technical appendix without reference to the other clusters..

RESOURCE ISSUES

Earlier in the chapter, we presented evidence that, at minimum, strongly suggests a possible connection between various proxies for teacher effectiveness and the academic outcomes of APA and other students. The cluster analysis adds additional depth to our discussion by suggesting that there are sometimes substantial differences in how instructional resources are distributed not just on a school-to-school basis but also among entire groups of schools.

- Resources vary among the clusters. The two small clusters with high concentrations of Asian enrollment fare somewhat better in the distribution of instructional resources.

APA 2, one of the poorest clusters, has a slightly higher average percentage of teachers with Masters degrees than three of the four clusters that enroll a strong majority of the system's Black and Hispanic students as well as about a fifth of the APA students. The APA 1 cluster has lower but similarly trending values compared to the Hispanic 1 and Hispanic/Black clusters. APA 2 also has lower values that are still consistent with lower percentages of teachers teaching out of certificate and of teachers with no certificate than four clusters with high APA isolation rates.

While the average differences are much smaller, values for other instructional resources for APA 1 and APA 2 schools compared to the four high-poverty, low-diversity clusters tend toward the more favorable direction (higher percentages of resources, lower percentages of deficits).

The Hispanic/APA cluster has a slightly higher average percentage of Master's prepared teachers than the Hispanic and Hispanic/Black clusters.

OUTCOMES OF CLUSTERS

Differences in school climate and resources among clusters are associated with differences in outcomes for APA and other students.⁸²

What difference does it make where an APA student in New York goes to school? A careful examination of the available information suggests that, compared to the school averages for APA students in the lower average school poverty cluster (APA I), APA students in the poorest, least diverse clusters are likely to be less successful academically than their peers in more diverse situations. Interestingly, various performance indicators for the APA 2 and Hispanic/APA clusters, which have high average poverty rates, are also frequently substantially or, at least, noticeably higher than those for other low-income clusters. (APA 2 is not diverse. Hispanic/APA is relatively diverse.)

Across more than a dozen accountability tests given in elementary and middle grades⁸³, the average scores in the APA 1 cluster are substantially higher than those for the Black, Hispanic 1, Hispanic/Black, and Hispanic 2 clusters. These include:

- All-student scores for grades 3-8 ELA
- All-student scores for grades 3-8 Math
- All-student scores for grades 4 and 8 Science.
- All-student scores for grades 5 and 8 Social Studies

APA 1 cluster averages for school average Asian student

scores are substantially higher than Asian-student scores in one or more other clusters, noted in parentheses:

- Grade 6 Math (Black and Hispanic 2 clusters)
- Grade 8 Math (Black and Hispanic 1 clusters)
- Grade 5 Social Studies (Hispanic 1 cluster)
- Grade 8 Social Studies (Black cluster)
- Grade 8 ELA (Hispanic 1 cluster)
- Grades 5 and 6 ELA (Black and Hispanic 1 clusters)

The APA 2 cluster, which encompasses just 17 schools and has a higher average school poverty rate, also has stronger test performances than one or more of the larger clusters including:

- All-student scores for grade 3 ELA (Hispanic 1 and 2 clusters)
- All-student scores for grades 4 and 5 ELA (Black, Hispanic 1, Black/Hispanic, Hispanic 2 clusters)
- All-student scores for grades 4, 5, and 8 Math (Black, Hispanic 1, Black/Hispanic, Hispanic 2 clusters)
- All-student scores for grade 4 Science (Hispanic 1 and 2 clusters)
- Asian-student scores for grade 5 ELA (Hispanic 1 and 2 clusters)⁸⁴

The differences between the Hispanic/APA cluster and the other large clusters are not as substantial. At the all-student average score level, however, there are noteworthy differences ($\Rightarrow 1.5$) for most of the grades 4 to 7 ELA and Math tests and both Social Studies exams, particularly with the Hispanic 1 and some Black clusters including:

- All-student scores for grades 3, 4, 6, 7 and 8 ELA (Hispanic 1 cluster)
- All-student scores for grades 3, 4, and 5 Math (Black and Hispanic 1 cluster)
- All-student scores for grades 6 and 7 Math (Hispanic 1 cluster)
- All-student scores for grade 8 Science (Hispanic 1 cluster)
- All-student scores for grade 8 Social Studies (Hispanic 1 cluster)
- Asian-student scores for grade 8 ELA (Hispanic 1 cluster)
- All-student above proficient for Regents Math (Black and Hispanic 1 cluster)
- All-student SAT Math (Hispanic 1 cluster)

Some of the findings in this chapter are substantial. Some point to future investigations using child-level data. Current DOE, state, and national policies emphasize measuring the success of the educational mission with standardized tests. The differences in test results among our clusters raise the possibility that the mix of climate factors and resources in some of those clusters might be less conducive than the mix in others to nurturing the academic and developmental success of APA and other students of color in New York City's public schools.

CLUSTER OUTCOMES

The two high APA concentration clusters have measurably higher attendance rates than the high concentration Black or Hispanic districts that enroll about half of the APA students in New York.

Compared to the higher SES APA dominated cluster, all-student scores on grade 3-8 ELA and Math tests, grade 4 and 8 Science, and grade 5 and 8 Social Studies are substantially lower in the clusters where APA students are isolated.

Average per school Asian-student scores are also substantially lower in one or more of those clusters for grades 5, 6, and 8 ELA; grades 6 and 8 Math; and grades 5 and 8 Social Studies. There are additional smaller differences for other tests.

The somewhat more diverse Hispanic/APA cluster has higher percentages of students scoring above proficient on the Regents math exam and higher school average SAT math scores than the Black, Hispanic 1, and Hispanic/Black clusters.

⁸² Note that the uneven distribution of high schools within the clusters, as well as data suppression issues described above, limited our ability to compare outcomes among the high schools in most of the clusters.

⁸³ Note that there were not enough high schools in each cluster to make inferential comparisons on the Regents test scores.

⁸⁴ The small number of schools in APA 2 cluster limited our ability to examine Asian student scores by grade level tests.

FINDINGS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

We conclude our exploration of the factors affecting the educational situation of New York City’s Asian Pacific American public school students with an overview of major findings and specific policy recommendations.

Public and media attention given to the Asian enrollment in the highly competitive “science highs” distracts from a fuller understanding of the wide variety of educational contexts and outcomes experienced by APA youth across the city. The Model Minority Myth is a stereotype that ignores the histories, capacities, cultures, and personalities of an incredibly diverse group of APA children and youth that is larger than the entire enrollment of many other urban systems across the United States. The Myth imposes unrealistic expectations on young people and justifies official and unofficial policies and practices that fail to meet their educational and developmental needs. This report challenges that framework directly and urges policy-makers and community members to promote and engage in a more nuanced dialogue about APA students’ reality that includes those students and their parents.

The evidence suggests that the opportunities *and* outcomes of APA students in the New York City public school system vary more widely than they are often portrayed and might not be easily explained by any single variable. When we disaggregate the data even to the school level, we find many APA students in settings that are unlikely to help them or their schoolmates of other races maximize their academic and personal potential. That said, our examination of the relationships among independent variables and the outcomes of APA students strongly indicates that they are more successful in some contexts than others. This study has presented quantitative and qualitative analyses that highlight a number of areas of concern, which are the headings for this summary and, in some cases, the inspiration for policy recommendations.

RACE AND ETHNICITY

As we heard from our student focus groups and observe in our data analysis and day-to-day advocacy, race-based identities and perceptions, as well as cultural and economic differences and school-level leadership, shape a variety of environments with a range of educational outcomes as well as the overall policy framework in which DOE and related City agencies operate.

- **Race and ethnicity of enrollment are defining characteristics of the schools attended by APA students.**
- **In general, higher Asian enrollment tends to be associated with higher White enrollment and to be inversely associated with Hispanic and Black enrollment.**

That said, 34,000 students are dispersed in small numbers across nearly 1,200 schools.

- **The largest number of APA students is enrolled in schools where Spanish is the dominant home language.**

Given that such schools are about 60 percent of the total, Asian

enrollment in any given school can still be small.

- **Schools that have larger Asian enrollment tend to have higher average scores on the all-student SAT scores (Reading, Math, and Writing), although only the relationship with the Math score is statistically significant when we control for poverty and other races.**

Holding race and poverty constant, a school’s average total SAT score increases by about 2.7 points for each ten percent increase in Asian enrollment. It *decreases* by roughly the same amount for each ten percent increase in Black enrollment. Finally, it decreases by about 5.4 percent for each ten percent increase in Hispanic enrollment. (All differences are significant to <.001.) These results are contextualized with our extensive exploration of the impact of poverty, the variations in poverty among various ethnic and racial categories, the relationship of racial concentrations, and the uneven distribution of educational resources.

- **There are important differences in average school scores among the home language groupings.**

For all test takers, over half of APA students are enrolled in the Spanish home language and No language concentration groupings where school averages for most elementary and middle school NCLB accountability exams are significantly lower than in the Asian home languages schools. However, just 19 percent of Asian enrollment attends Asian home languages schools.⁸⁵

In addition, compared to the Asian home languages schools, the average school *Asian-student* scores for some elementary school math tests were lower in the Spanish home language schools and No language concentration schools.

We compared the percentages of all students and of Asian students passing Regents exams with a 4 (Exceeds Proficiency Standard). The Asian home languages schools generally fared substantially or noticeably better than both the Spanish home language and the Spanish-and-Asian home languages schools and sometimes better than the No language concentration group.⁸⁶

- **School suspension rates tend to be lower with higher White enrollment, and higher with higher Hispanic and Black enrollment.**

Earlier research conducted when the DOE released suspension statistics by race found that suspensions for all students were substantially higher—and for APA students were four times higher—in Black and Latino majority schools.

Participants in our student focus groups reported being bullied and feeling targeted because of their race as a common theme. Despite Chancellor’s regulations and anti-bullying legislation, harassment continues to be a daily reality for many APA students. Administrators in many schools automatically suspend everyone involved in fight, even when the victim of an attack is defending himself.

⁸⁵ Of the 16 tests administered to grades 3-8 all but three* showed significant differences in the No non English home language grouping comparison: Grades 3 and 6 ELA and grade 8 Science.

⁸⁶ Substantially better than Spanish and Spanish-and-Asian for Asian English, Global Studies, History, and Science and for All-student Math and Science. Noticeably better than Spanish and Spanish-and-Asian for Global Studies, History, and Science. Substantially better than No non-English for Asian History and Math and noticeably better Asian Global Studies.

The salience of race and ethnicity in the administration and performance of the public schools argues strongly for a central and more substantive role for Asian Pacific Americans and other families of color in monitoring DOE performance in addressing institutionalized racism.

- **The mayor should appoint an independent task force, supported by the Research Alliance for New York City Schools, to analyze child-level data to clarify the relationship of resources and outcomes to enrollment by APA ethnicity, race, LEP, and special needs.**
- **DOE should reform the culture of the Panel for Educational Policy, the City’s Board of Education, to incorporate parent and student input as a respected factor in its decision making process.**
- **DOE should improve outreach to hard-to-reach parents such as immigrants with limited English skills, parents without computers or computer skills, or parents in temporary housing. Increase the channels of input for parent voice in the school system.**
- **DOE must ensure guidance staff and teachers are better prepared to understand and address the range of challenges facing the students with whom they work. Principals, teachers, and other staff must be aware of and have access to community resources that can contribute to effective teaching and counseling of immigrant students.**

Cultural competency is a necessary skill set in New York City’s multi-racial, multi-cultural school system. Cultural competency should be included in pre-employment degree programs or, if necessary, in post-hiring professional development. The DOE should:

- **Hold principals and New York City Police Department personnel accountable for the compliance with the Student Safety Act, DASA, and Chancellor’s Regulations.**
- **Monitor student awareness of Chancellor Regulations and anti-bullying measures by including questions on the annual student survey regarding knowledge of these rules.**
- **Monitor schools’ compliance with rules requiring posting regulations.**
- **Issue language appropriate cards to students that outline their rights under the Student Safety Act, Chancellor’s Regulation A-832⁸⁷, and DASA including working phone numbers and web addresses to report violations.**

POVERTY

The impact of poverty on New York City public schools is virtually a mantra used to explain away so-called achievement gaps between some low-income children of color and more middle class students, particularly White ones and, sometimes and incongruously, APA students. Misuse of the issue notwithstanding, poverty does, in fact, relate to the APA educational situation as a characteristic of individual schools and a demographic related to students’ specific ethnic communities.

APA students in schools with relatively few APA students are typically in a higher poverty environment than schools with more APA students. Furthermore, school poverty rates are, on average, higher in Spanish, Spanish-and-Asian, and No

language concentration schools than in the Asian home languages schools. An increase in school-level poverty is associated with weaker average school-level test results for Asian students. (This relationship is even more frequently true for the school average *all-student* test scores.)

School poverty rates also vary widely among the Asian home language schools depending on which of five Asian languages at least ten percent of APA students speak at home. This latter finding is consistent with the variation in family poverty rates among various APA ethnic communities, and there are differences in test results among these different groups of schools. When we statistically remove the effect of poverty, there are only marginal performance differences among the groups. (However, statistically removing the effect of poverty to understand its impact does not change its actual relationship to language, culture, race, etc.)

- **The range of school poverty is much wider in the more numerous group of bottom quartile schools where Asian enrollment is most dispersed.**
- **At 73 percent, however, the median poverty rate in the larger group of schools is twice the median poverty rate of the 31 schools attended by the densest quartile.**

In other words, DOE has identified as low-income an average of roughly three quarters or more of students in nearly 600 of the schools attended by the APA students in the most scattered quartile. (Note that this finding describes schools but not whether the APA students in those schools come from families in poverty.)

- **Higher school poverty rates are associated with weaker average school test results for Asian students, average school all-student results, and school SAT results.**
- **Due to financial challenges facing their families, many APA students cannot afford the time and investment required to enroll, attend, and complete college studies.**

These challenges can be further complicated by the additional time some older students need to complete high school and by parental pressure to take a low-wage job immediately after high school to contribute to the family budget. In addition, some parents are reluctant invest in additional education for daughters who are expected to marry and become part of their spouse’s family economic unit.

Many APA students may be the first in their family to apply for college in the United States. The challenges confronting any first generation college students applying and successfully completing college are the same for APA students. Many parents are unable to assist their child through the process. Increasing college tuition, even in public college systems, and continued threats to state and federal student aid as well as the scarcity of guidance counseling and college planning services in many high schools also have a severe impact on APA students from low-income families.

- **APA children from low-income and poor families are more likely to be designated as Limited English Proficient.**

The children and youth from these families are the most vulnerable among the APA student population and are exactly the students who become invisible in a school system that in large part has homogenized what is in reality a wide spectrum of quite diverse and individualized needs and personal histories.

Of the more than 25 Asian language groups covered in the DOE Home Language Survey, the percentage of U.S. born children eligible for free or reduced price lunch (a standard indicator

⁸⁷ Chancellor’s Regulation A-832, which “prohibits [peer] harassment based on a student’s actual or perceived race, color, creed, ethnicity, national origin, citizenship/immigration status, religion, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation or disability.” schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/DEDFD207.../A832Attachment1.pdf

of low income) was higher than the percentage of foreign born children in all but three language groups (Korean, Tibetan, and Dari/Farsi/Persian). The differences ranged from very small—as in Mayaham (47.7 percent U.S. born, 45.2 percent Indian-born) to very large as in Japanese (30.5 percent U.S. born, 19.2 percent born in Japan) or Cantonese (81.4 percent U.S. born, 66.1 percent from various nations).

POVERTY *recommendations*

The continued influence of the Myth of the Model Minority contributes to a working assumption that APA students are somehow immune to the impact of individual, family, and community poverty. DOE and City Hall should work toward a more sophisticated understanding of the economic situation of APA students with initiatives such as the following.

- **Map child-level data to cross-tabulate children in poverty and children from different APA communities to map the variation in and impact of economic poverty among APA ethnicities and share the results with relevant service providers and affected communities.**
- **Incorporate the knowledge that the most isolated APA students tend to be in higher poverty schools into professional development and planning for differentiated instruction.**
- **Review practices for certifying children for free-and reduced-price lunch with particular attention to the accessibility of those practices to parents of foreign-born students.**
- **Provide adequate numbers of culturally competent guidance counselors, beginning with lowest income and most overcrowded schools.**

Students from low income families often lack little or no other access to information and social capital required for navigating the high school bureaucracy and maze of the college choice and application process.

RESOURCES

The analysis summarized in this section used school-level data to suggest that school climate and resource factors are related to the academic success of APA students in New York City schools, as measured by standardized tests and other indicators. A more robust understanding of these relationships will require a commitment on DOE's part to conduct system-wide analyses of child-level data or to develop protocols that will allow independent researchers to do the work while protecting individual student privacy.

- **The distribution of important instructional resources is uneven across the New York City Public School system.**
- **On average, at the school level, instructional resources vary by factors such as racial mix, poverty, and the home language concentration⁸⁸ of the schools.**
- **Citywide, across all relevant schools, the distribution of resources has a relationship to DOE outcome measures.**
- **Across all relevant schools, there are correlations between all-student and Asian-student test results and various measures of instructional resources.**

⁸⁸ A home language other than English spoken by at least ten percent of a school's enrollment.

⁸⁹ Op. cit. Eskenazi et al (October 2003).

⁹⁰ Op. cit. Otterman, Sharon (October 13, 2011).

⁹¹ Ibid.

In terms of DOE's instructional resource metrics for the experience and training of teachers, Asian home languages schools fare better than schools where Spanish is the dominant home language or no non-English language dominates. However, nearly three times more APA students attend schools in the latter two groups than attend the Asian home languages schools. APA students in this larger number of schools, however, are still only about nine percent of each group.

Previous research on New York City schools suggests that schools with more qualified teachers and a range of other educational resources averaged higher student attendance as did schools with libraries, computer resources, and certified librarians.⁸⁹ Our study suggests that schools with lower attendance rates tend to have poorer Asian-student test results across all grades.

- **For Asian students with Limited English Proficiency, the very low Asian enrollment in many schools may limit what English Language Learner services are available to them.**

The relationship between enrollment and a school's percentage of Limited English Proficient students is stronger for Hispanic enrollment than for Asian enrollment. In other words, LEP enrollment will tend to increase more as Hispanic enrollment goes up than it will as Asian enrollment goes up. Despite the large number of APA students in the Spanish home language schools relative to Asian enrollment in other home language concentration groupings, APA students are still only nine percent of the enrollment in those schools and not all of them require ELL support.

Fifteen percent of Limited English Proficient (LEP) students in the Spanish home language schools receive Transitional Bilingual Instruction (TBI), in which they initially study most of their subjects in their first language while developing their English skills. This is over twice the percentage of LEP students receiving such instruction in the Asian-and-Spanish and Asian home languages schools. The TBI requirement of a minimum number of shared-language speakers raises the concern that the options open to APA LEP students from the most broadly dispersed quartile of Asian enrollment might be more limited than those for other language groups.

The New York Times reported that in the previous school year, "5,190 children were not getting the language lessons to which they were legally entitled" because DOE lacks the necessary certified teachers of English as a Second Language.⁹⁰

According to Dr. John King, New York State Commissioner of Education, in 2010 "some parents were being deprived of their legal right to choose what kind of program they wanted for their children, whether a bilingual program...or all classes in English, with some extra help." However, he also said that there is no new state money to implement the 31-page plan NYSED has prescribed for the City to improve ELL services. Moreover, the city has already cut the school's budget.⁹¹

The availability of cross-tabulated data (LEP students subdivided by ethnic group) would advance our understanding of the language acquisition supports available to isolated APA ELL students.

- **The distribution of Department of Youth and Community Development Out-of-School Time (OST) funding**

is uneven and appears to disadvantage areas with higher percentages of Asian enrollment and residential concentrations of various APA ethnic communities.

Federal and local education strategies have increasingly used OST activities and funding to supplement the school day agenda. However, zip codes with higher percentages of APA students often have no DYCD programs or so few programs that the ratio of potential participants of any race to available programs suggests that there are many more students than there are after school slots.

RESOURCES *recommendations*

DOE has control over some of the factors that influence climate and, with or without adequate support from City and State government, total responsibility for the distribution of whatever resources are available.

- **The Mayor and Chancellor should lead the way in demanding full state compliance with the Campaign for Fiscal Equity ruling, which has been abandoned by the governor, the legislature, and City Hall.**

Albany's tardiness in implementing this historic court decision should not, however, be used as an excuse for the City's failure to dedicate more local resources to the schools or to distribute them equitably.

- **The City's elected officials need to support progressive revenue options at the State level to ensure full funding for education, including ELL instruction, guidance services, and other programs that support students, such as OST.**
- **A consensus must be reached that respects both the educational rights of students and the workers' rights of teachers and other necessary professionals (i.e., guidance counselors) to allow administrators to place the most qualified teachers in the schools that need them most.**
- **The actual costs of specific teachers should be eliminated from the principal's budget and replaced with the appropriate number of personnel lines indicated by the size and characteristics of a school's enrollment.**

Centralizing the personnel budget at Tweed would prevent principals from trying to stretch their program by hiring the least expensive teacher or to cut back on programming or raise class size to hire a more experienced teacher. They could just focus on hiring the best teacher available for the opening.

- **The City must meet its legal obligations to English Language Learners by hiring, at minimum, the required number of certified and appropriately oriented and supported ESOL teachers to serve the English Language Learners of the New York City public schools.**

Professional development should build or reinforce the capacity of *all* teachers to adjust language instruction strategy to the ages and developmental needs of ELL students. This is particularly relevant for teachers of ELL students in mainstream subject matter classes.

In addition, as our focus group discussions with parents suggest, DOE must ensure that ESOL instructors are fully knowledgeable of native language maintenance, which is an important educational objective many APA parents hold for their children.

- **DOE should publish the breakdown of LEP students by ethnicity and type of ELL services provided.**

Regardless of type of instruction, the overall concern is quality instruction that is key to ensure the success of our ELL students.

- **Taking into consideration shifts in populations and both geographic and cultural communities, conduct a thorough needs assessment that drives planning, design, funding, and implementation for education, out of school time and other youth development, and social services.**

DISPERSION/CONCENTRATION/ISOLATION

- **The distribution of Asian enrollment concentrates large numbers of APA students in a relatively small number of schools and scatters tens of thousands of others in very small pockets across the city.**

The densest quartile of Asian enrollment attends just 31 schools, most of them high schools. Roughly the same number of students in the most dispersed quartile attends nearly 1,200 schools. When we define clusters in terms of similar poverty and racial mixes, the individual isolation of APA students takes one of two forms. At the most extreme, in a cluster of 256 schools dominated by Hispanic enrollment, the ratio of Latino and Black students to APA students is 56:1. (This and similarly constituted clusters also tend to have a high average poverty rates.) At another extreme, one of the two majority APA clusters comprises nearly 10,000 students in 17 schools with nearly 80 percent Asian enrollment.

Twenty of the 31 largest APA enrollment schools (the densest quartile) are also among the 31 largest schools in the system (2,572–4,469 students) with total Asian enrollment of 25,503. Over half (17) of the highest APA enrolling schools in the city are in Queens.

Large enrollment and overcrowded facilities are separate issues. (Overcrowding is a function of students per square foot of usable floor space exceeding DOE's estimate of optimal usage.) In a more recent Independent Budget Office dataset, seven of the 31 most over-capacity (128 to 254 percent utilization) schools in the system are in Queens.

Although overcrowding eased in all five boroughs (sic), in the 2008–2009 school year 78 percent of students in large high schools in Queens and 63 percent of students in large Brooklyn high schools were in overcrowded schools.⁹²

Half the City's Asian enrollment goes to school in Queens.

Our analysis strongly suggests that the problems associated with being enrolled in a high-density segment of Asian enrollment differ from those of the APA students who are the highly isolated minorities in their schools. SAT scores for the APA students in the densest quartile of enrollment, for example, are markedly higher than those of APA students in the widely dispersed quartile. In our cluster analysis, the somewhat more balanced and diverse Hispanic/APA cluster has higher percentages of students scoring above proficient on the Regents math exam and higher school average SAT math scores than the Black, Hispanic 1, and Hispanic/Black clusters have.

While the differences are not statistically substantial given small group sizes, the average four-year Regents diploma graduation rates for the entire cohort and for the APA student sub-cohort from the Asian home languages schools are markedly higher than those for the Spanish and Spanish-and-Asian home

⁹² High School Overcrowding Persists, Especially in Large Schools (August 2010). Independent Budget Office. Note that this study employs DOE data which are extremely optimistic in calculating floor space that is available for classroom activity.

languages schools (i.e., 85, 61, and 64 percent, respectively).

The two relatively small clusters (64 schools total) with high APA concentrations have measurably higher attendance rates than the high concentration Black or Hispanic clusters that enroll about half of the APA students in New York.

Compared to the lower average poverty rate APA-dominated cluster, all-student scores on some elementary and middle grades tests are substantially lower in the clusters where APA students are isolated. Average per school *Asian-student* scores are also substantially lower in one or more of those clusters for some middle grades tests.

ISOLATION/CONCENTRATION *recommendations*

We recommend that the DOE:

- **Identify and instruct principals to use culturally competent community based organizations or service providers to provide ombudsperson services in schools where language or immigrant minorities meet a standard of isolation . (This would provide DOE with an opportunity to establish working relationships with culturally competent CBOs and social service providers.)**
- **Develop a culturally competent peer buddy system for recent immigrants above some threshold of isolation. Trained buddies would receive credit toward their community service requirement.**
- **Develop clear feedback system to ensure quality translation and interpretation are available in the public school system.**

DATA SUPPRESSION

The bulk of our discussion has revolved around school averages for various variables. While we make useful inferences with these data, two factors limit their scope.

- **DOE's data presentations frequently lack even the most logical of cross tabulations.**

For example, from the annual report data, we know the number of Asians and the number of Limited English Proficient students in a school but have no idea how many APA students are designated LEP. Absence of such obvious break-outs suggests a failure to consider children and youth as multidimensional individuals and must hinder effective planning at the school and grade level.

- **DOE's policy of not disaggregating results for groups of fewer than five students seriously handicaps any effort to understand what is happening to APA students in hundreds of schools they attend.**

Arguably, this policy is rooted in a concern for protecting the privacy of individual students. However, given the extreme isolation of many APA students, this policy also results in a lack of transparency concerning their academic progress to a degree that violates the spirit, though not the requirements, of the No Child Left Behind monitoring requirements.

- **At the K-8 level, there are more schools that omit the test results of Asian students than report them.**

Across all 16 NCLB accountability tests for grades 3-8, we found more schools where the Asian-student test scores are not reported than we did schools where they are provided. For example, for third grade English Language Arts, there were 302 schools not reporting versus at least 232 reporting schools). Translated to the child level, we have nearly 1,400 APA third graders whose reading skills cannot be compared from one school to the next, or, for that matter, within their own schools. We conservatively estimate that outcome measures are not available for almost 7,000 Asian students in grades three through eight for our main data year.

DATA SUPPRESSION *recommendations*

The failure to consider children and youth as multidimensional individuals is demonstrated by the lack of publicly available data that are disaggregated and cross-tabulated by student characteristics, special needs, and available educational resources.

- **DOE must find ways to disaggregate student data by Asian enrollment at minimum and, more usefully, by APA ethnicity.**

A transitional strategy could begin with grouping demographic, resource, and outcome income indicators across school and grade levels in the schools that currently suppress APA results. Such an analysis might begin to uncover differences among schools attended by very dispersed APA students and other schools.

- **DOE should produce accessible school-level cross tabulations of the various categories to which the same students belong.**

An example might be ELL and LEP populations broken out by race or ethnicity. Such data presentations would dramatically increase the public's understanding of the needs of each school's students and the support required by their teachers.

CONCLUSION

The quality of education available to Asian Pacific American students in New York City public schools is vulnerable to the same factors that shape the education provided to other children of color. Poverty, inequitable distribution of teaching resources, overcrowding, locked down schools, and serious deficits in the cultural competence of many administrators and some educators affect the schooling of APA children and youth as they do that of Black, Latino, and other communities of color.

The system as a whole has not addressed these challenges for struggling students in general. Furthermore, it is unprepared linguistically and culturally to serve its immigrant and first generation enrollment, including Asian Pacific American students.

The city's public education system must be prepared to understand and meet the needs of APA students and their families through listening to parents and students; improving data collection, analysis, and dissemination; partnering with culturally competent community based organizations; and confronting the overall challenges which poverty and limited resources present to many children and youth, including APA students who are unable or unwilling to conform to the Model Minority Myth.

APPENDIX: ADDITIONAL TABLES

TABLE 4A: DISTRIBUTION OF APA ENROLLMENT BY BOROUGH AND SCHOOL TYPE

	BRONX	BROOKLYN	MANHATTAN	QUEENS	STATEN ISLAND	TOTAL
ELEMENTARY						
N Schools	141	195	108	157	43	644
Total Enrollment	85,529	109,045	48,888	105,101	26,037	374,600
Avg/School	607	559	453	669	606	582
N Asian	2,729	14,561	5,711	30,930	1,956	55,887
% Asian	3.2%	13.4%	11.7%	29.4%	7.5%	14.9%
MIDDLE						
N Schools	68	84	44	40	11	247
Total Enrollment	30,581	47,750	16,790	37,510	12,854	145,485
Avg/School	450	568	382	938	1,169	589
N Asian	983	6,540	2,262	11,293	1,019	22,097
% Asian	3.2%	13.7%	13.5%	30.1%	7.9%	15.2%
K-8						
N Schools	27	54	37	30	0	148
Total Enrollment	19,042	35,195	16,666	21,300	0	92,203
Avg/School	705	652	450	710	N/A	623
N Asian	1,194	2,618	1,472	2,633	0	7,917
% Asian	6.3%	7.4%	8.8%	12.4%	N/A	8.6%
K-12						
N Schools	2	7	1	6	0	16
Total Enrollment	1,038	2,566	386	2,638	0	6,628
Avg/School	519	367	386	440	N/A	414
N Asian	9	77	19	369	0	474
% Asian	0.9%	3.0%	4.9%	14.0%	N/A	7.2%
MIDDLE/HIGH						
N Schools	33	35	27	19	2	116
Total Enrollment	18,139	19,601	14,310	15,403	1,615	69,068
Avg/School	550	560	530	811	808	595
N Asian	513	1,124	799	3,787	76	6,299
% Asian	2.8%	5.7%	5.6%	24.6%	4.7%	9.1%
HIGH						
N Schools	96	100	85	51	9	341
Total Enrollment	55,898	86,612	58,563	75,272	16,994	293,339
Avg/School	582	866	689	1,476	1,888	860
N Asian	3,056	11,996	7,560	18,897	1,519	43,028
% Asian	5.5%	13.9%	12.9%	25.1%	8.9%	14.7%

TABLE 8B: 10% ASIAN HOME LANGUAGES CONCENTRATION BY SCHOOLS (= >10%)

		Chinese	Korean	Bengali	Punjabi	Urdu	All
Borough	Bronx	0	0	2	0	0	2
	Brooklyn	47	0	7	0	5	58
	Manhattan	21	0	0	0	0	21
	Queens	18	24	20	6	0	68
	Staten Island	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Total	86	24	28	6	5	149
School Type	Elementary	40	17	23	6	3	89
	K-8	6	0	1	0	2	9
	K-12	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Middle	18	6	3	0	0	27
	Middle High	3	0	1	0	0	4
	High	19	1	0	0	0	20
	Total	86	24	28	6	5	149

An extensive technical appendix is available online at **CACF.org**.





COALITION FOR ASIAN AMERICAN
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

50 Broad Street, 18th Floor

New York, NY 10004

TEL (212) 809-4675

FAX (212) 785-4601

www.cacf.org

PUMPHOUSE PROJECTS

230 Garfield Place

Brooklyn, NY 11215-2207

(718) 768-1023

pumphouse.projects@verizon.net