

January 2011

Demographics, Performance, Resources:

Schools Proposed for Closing Compared With Other City Schools

Summary

THE CITY'S DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION has proposed closing 25 schools beginning in the 2011-2012 school year, which starts in September. The list includes 14 high schools and 12 elementary and middle schools that enrolled more than 17,700 students last year. The closings would occur over time, with no new students entering the schools and each grade phasing out as the current students are promoted. The Panel for Educational Policy is scheduled to vote on the proposed school closings on February 1 and February 3.

Schools proposed for closing are judged by the Department of Education to be low performing. This judgment presumes that the education department can accurately measure the effect that a school has on student performance separate from other factors that also influence student outcomes.

IBO has compared the schools slated for closure with other schools across the city. The comparisons include factors such as students' race, poverty level, English language and other special needs status; outcome measures such as test scores, attendance rates, and for high schools, graduation rates; and resource measures such as levels of teacher experience and training and school overcrowding. Based on these comparisons, IBO has found;

- The schools the education department has targeted for closing are all schools with below average student performance.
- The schools proposed for closing generally have been serving students with greater needs compared with other schools and the share of their enrollment in some high needs categories, such as the share of students in special education, has been increasing in recent years.

The report also notes that nearly a third of the schools proposed for closing are schools that had been opened as new small schools—the replacement model that the education department has favored for schools that have previously been closed. While the eight new small schools proposed for closing is just a small share of the number that have been opened, their inclusion on the list is a reminder that there is no guarantee that a closing school will be replaced by a more successful one.

In addition to the summary statistics provided in this report, our Web site includes tables that present all the demographic, outcome, and resource measures we have reviewed for each of the schools on the closing list. The report also summarizes the plans for using the space that comes available if these schools are closed.

Click [here](http://www.ibo.nyc.ny.us) for demographic, performance, and resource data on each school proposed for closing @ www.ibo.nyc.ny.us



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Introduction

The Department of Education (DOE) has released a list of 25 public schools targeted for closing beginning with the 2011-2012 school year. Final decisions will come after a mandated public hearing and vote of the Panel for Educational Policy. The list is longer than in past years because a court decision prevented DOE from closing 19 schools last year, and 15 of those schools were carried over to this year's proposed closing list. The complete list of schools on the closure list (both those held over from last year and those newly added) and the four schools for which DOE reversed last year's closure recommendation is on page 3.

There are 12 schools on the closing list that serve elementary and middle school grades and 14 that serve high school grades. One school, New Day Academy, spans grades 6-12 and since DOE proposes to close both its middle and high school grades, it is included as both a middle school and a high school when we report separately on each type of school.

The 25 schools that are on this year's proposed closing list were identified due to their low performance on key measures. DOE describes the process for identifying schools for the closure list as follows. First, the department generates a list of schools to consider for closure based on summary outcomes for the schools. The list includes any school receiving a D or F on the most recent school progress report, a school receiving three consecutive C grades and schools rated as "below proficient" on their most recent Quality Review. This broad list is then winnowed down through three additional steps. In step one, elementary and middle schools with English language arts (ELA) and math scores above their district average are removed from the list of possible closures. Similarly, high schools with graduation rates above the city average are also removed. Also, any school with a Quality Review score of "well developed" is removed as is any school that has just received its first ever Progress Report grade. In the second step, additional data is gathered, including data on demand for the school through the school choice process, data on the "talent profile" of the school, an assessment of potential replacement schools, and an assessment of community needs. In the third step, school and community representatives meet with superintendents, network leaders, or both. After this process, the final list of schools to be closed is presented to the Panel on Educational Policy for a vote after public hearings.

About the Schools

The schools on the closing list are located in every borough except Staten Island. The map on page 4 shows that the Bronx has more schools on the list than any other borough. The breakdown of the closing schools by borough is given in the table on this page. A disproportionate share of the students who would be affected is in the Bronx. Across the city, 17,740 students were enrolled in schools last year that would be affected by the closings.

Three schools on the proposed closing list are on campuses where a large high school was previously phased out and closed. The first is the School for Community Research and Learning, one of seven schools located on the Adlai E. Stevenson campus, which began phasing out in the 2005-2006 school year. Second is the Urban Assembly Academy for History and Citizenship for Young Men, located on the William Howard Taft campus, which was established after Taft began phasing out in 2002-2003. The third is the Monroe Academy for Business & Law, located on the James Monroe campus; the original school was phased out in 1994.

Eight of the 25 schools proposed for closing (about a third) are "new small schools." Two of these schools opened for the 2002-2003 school year, five opened in 2003-2004, and one opened in 2005-2006. Five of these "new" schools now being closed are in the Bronx, where the program of closing large high schools and opening small high schools first began in 2002-2003.

How the Study is Organized

The policy of school closures is partly premised on the notion that DOE can accurately measure the impact that a

Distribution of Students in Closing Schools in 2009-2010

	Number of Students	Share of Students in Closing Schools	Share of all City Students
Brooklyn	3,288	19%	30%
Bronx	6,707	38%	21%
Manhattan	3,461	19%	15%
Queens	4,284	24%	28%
Staten Island	0	0%	6%
TOTAL	17,740		1,038,741

SOURCES: IBO; Department of Education: 2009-2010 Enrollment Capacity Utilization (Blue Book) and J-form citywide audited October 31st Register.

Schools Proposed for Closing 2011-2012

Borough	School Name	School Type	Grades Served
Manhattan	Norman Thomas High School	High School	9-12
	Academy of Environmental Science		
Manhattan	Secondary High School	Secondary School	8-12
Manhattan	I.S. 195 Roberto Clemente	Middle School	6-8
Manhattan	Kappa II	Middle School	6-8
Manhattan	Academy of Collaborative Education	Middle School	6-8
Bronx	School for Community Research and Learning	High School	9-12
	The Urban Assembly Academy for History and		
Bronx	Citizenship for Young Men	High School	9-12
	Frederick Douglass Academy III		
Bronx	Secondary School	Secondary School	6-12
Bronx	John F. Kennedy High School	High School	9-12
Bronx	Christopher Columbus High School	High School	9-12
Bronx	Global Enterprise High School	High School	9-12
Bronx	P.S. 102 Joseph O. Loretan	Elementary	PK-5
Bronx	New Day Academy	Secondary School	6-12
Bronx	Performance Conservatory High School	High School	9-12
Bronx	Monroe Academy for Business & Law	High School	9-12
Brooklyn	M.S. 571	Middle School	6-8
Brooklyn	Metropolitan Corporate Academy High School	High School	9-12
Brooklyn	Paul Robeson High School	High School	9-12
Brooklyn	P.S. 114 Ryder Elementary	Elementary	PK-5
Brooklyn	P.S. 260 Breuckelen	Elementary	PK-6
Brooklyn	P.S. 332 Charles H. Houston	K-8	PK-8
Queens	Beach Channel High School	High school	9-12
Queens	P.S. 30 Queens	Elementary	PK-5
Queens	Jamaica High School	High School	9-12
Queens	I.S. 231 Magnetech 2000	Middle School	6-8

Schools Dropped From 2010-2011 Closing List

Manhattan	Choir Academy of Harlem	Secondary School	6-12
	Middle School for Academic		
Brooklyn	and Social Excellence	Middle School	6-8
	W. H. Maxwell Career and Technical		
Brooklyn	Education High School	High School	9-12
	Business, Computer Applications &		
Queens	Entrepreneurship High School	High School	9-12

SOURCES: IBO; Department of Education

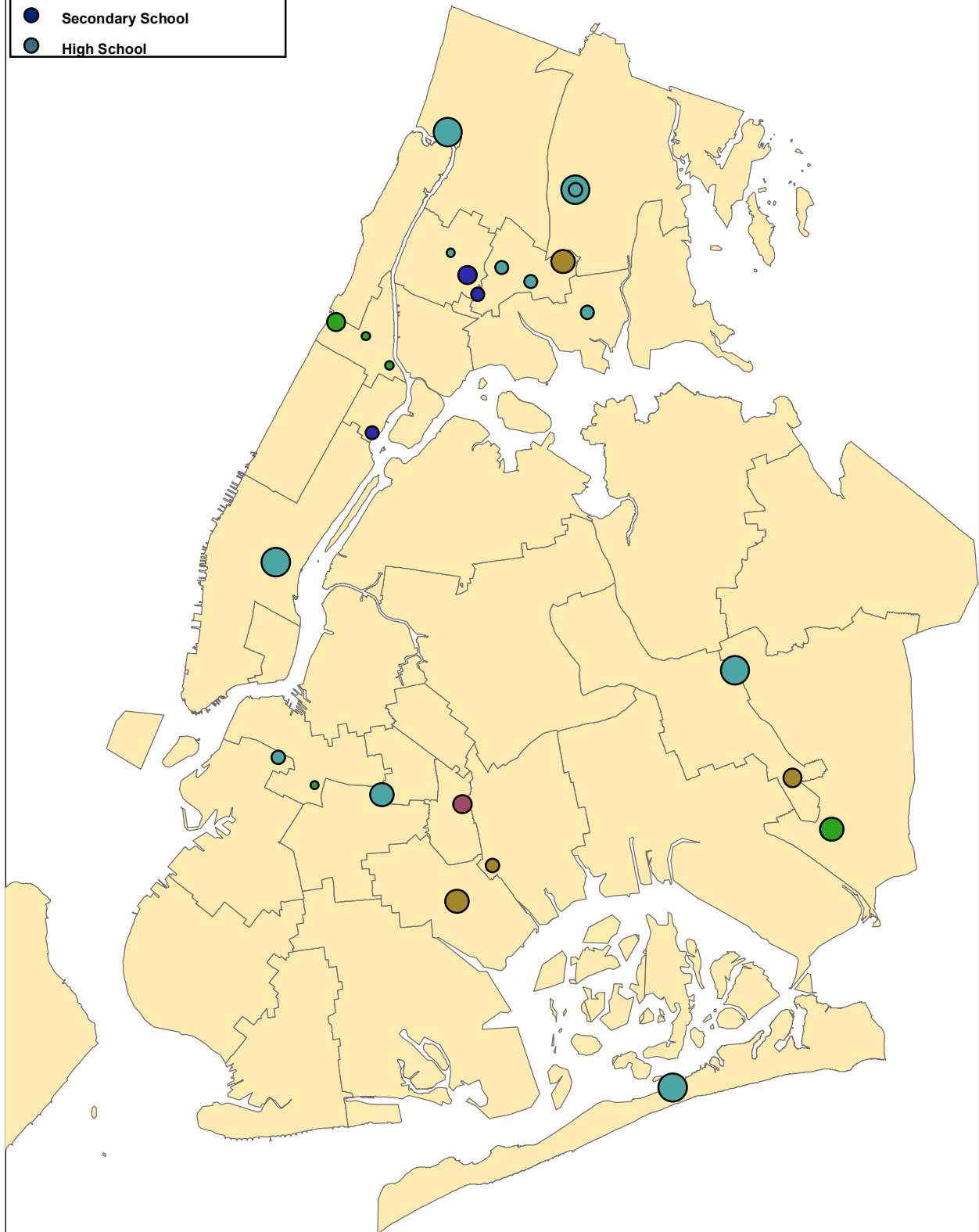
school has on the performance of its students, over and above the impact of nonschool factors. Because the closure of a school creates disruptions to both the students and school staff, it is important that the selection of schools for closure be based on reasonable criteria applied consistently. In this report, IBO poses a set of questions and provides answers about the schools on the closure list and how those schools compare to other schools in the city. This information can help in assessing the choices made by the education department.

First, we will consider the student population of the 25 closing schools in terms of key demographics of students' race; poverty level; and English language, immigrant, and special needs status. For high schools on the closure list, we will also look at the academic level of the students prior to their entry to high school, measured by their eighth grade test scores. These demographic characteristics are critical to the question of fairness, because it is widely understood that individual schools serve students who arrive at school with varying levels of need, and the stated

Schools Proposed For Closing by the Department of Education: 2011-2012 School Year

Legend

- Elementary School
- K-8 School
- Middle School
- Secondary School
- High School



SOURCES: IBO, Department of Education

NOTE: The size of the bubbles are determined by each school's 2011 preliminary enrollment.

policy of the Department of Education is to compare “like to like” by measuring schools against other schools with similar demographic characteristics when judging a school’s performance. We are also able to describe changes in some of the student demographic characteristics in the years leading up to the decision to close a school.

The education department believes that its Progress Report methodology, with its emphasis on peer group comparisons, adequately accounts for differences in school demographics when assessing school performance. DOE creates a “demographic index” rating for all schools as part of creating the Progress Reports; an individual school’s peer group is defined as the 20 schools above and below it on this demographic index. This report both compares the demographic characteristics of schools to citywide averages and also references peer group statistics when discussing school performance.

Second, we will review the performance of the closing schools in terms of measurable outcomes—student test scores, attendance rates, and, for high schools, credit accumulation and graduation rates. These outcome measures are important because at the heart of DOE’s school closure policy is the assumption that these schools are less effective than other schools serving similar populations. Further, there is an assumption that DOE’s process of analyzing these results can discern differences in student achievement levels from the measurement error that is inherent in all measures of student outcomes. In other words, the decision to close a school is based upon a valid measure of the school’s impact on students, not on measurement error or random fluctuations in the data.

Finally, we will describe the resources provided to these schools in terms of teacher characteristics and overcrowding.

In order to place the 25 closing schools in context we will at times refer to the following three groups of comparison schools:

- *All schools.* Using percentile ranks, we describe how these schools compare to all other elementary/middle schools or high schools citywide, excluding schools in the administrative district 75 (schools serving students with special education needs) and charter schools.
- *Schools that were “retrieved” from last year’s closure list.* Last year, DOE had proposed to begin the closure of these schools based on their 2008-2009 school year data. However, they were prevented from doing so

as a result of legal action. As a result, and after review of their 2009-2010 data, DOE chose to rescind its closure decision for these four schools.

- *Transformation schools*—these are high schools that DOE has placed in a federally funded “turnaround” program, an alternative to school closure for persistently low performing schools. These 11 high schools each received between \$750,000 to \$1.8 million in the 2010-2011 school year to fund additional staff development, mentoring, and enhanced instruction.

Demographic, performance, and resource data for each of the schools proposed for closing are available [here](#).

Demographics

Demographic variables were obtained from the 2008-2009 “School Demographics and Accountability Snapshot” from DOE’s Web site, the most recent year available. The proficiency levels for incoming ninth grade students in high schools were obtained from the detailed Progress Reports through 2009-2010, the most recent year available. Demographic data are presented in the table on page 6.

How Were Schools on the Closure List Different From All City Schools in 2008-2009?

All Closing Schools

- The 25 closing schools had a disproportionately large share of black students and a disproportionately small share of white students. The average share of black students in closing schools was 52 percent, more than 1.5 times the citywide average of 31 percent.
 - Conversely, the share of white students in closing schools was just 3 percent, much lower than the citywide average of 14 percent.
 - The share of Latino students (40 percent) was comparable to the citywide average (41 percent).
- The share of students identified as poor (based on qualifying for free or reduced lunch) in closing schools was 66 percent, 4 percentage points higher than the citywide average.

High Schools

- The percentage of students in special education in high schools on the closure list was 1.5 times the citywide average for high schools—18 percent compared with 12 percent citywide.
- The percentage of students from low-income families in high schools on the closure list was higher than

Select Demographics Over Time

	2005- 2006	2006- 2007	2007- 2008	2008- 2009	2009- 2010
Special Education					
Average for Closing High Schools	14%	15%	16%	18%	
NYC High School Average	10%	11%	12%	12%	
Average for Closing Elementary/Middle Schools	12%	12%	14%	16%	
NYC Elementary/Middle School Average	12%	13%	13%	15%	
English Language Learner					
Average for Closing High Schools	12%	13%	12%	12%	
NYC High School Average	11%	10%	11%	11%	
Average for Closing Elementary/Middle Schools	9%	9%	9%	9%	
NYC Elementary/Middle School Average	15%	15%	15%	15%	
Low Income					
Average for Closing High Schools	69%	66%	67%	63%	
NYC High School Average	51%	52%	53%	52%	
Average for Closing Elementary/Middle Schools	73%	71%	71%	72%	
NYC Elementary/Middle School Average	70%	69%	68%	68%	
Stability					
Average for Closing High Schools	92%	92%	92%	90%	
NYC High School Average	95%	95%	95%	95%	
Average for Closing Elementary/Middle Schools	91%	91%	90%	90%	
NYC Elementary/Middle School Average	93%	93%	93%	93%	
Temporary Housing					
Average for Closing High Schools	1%	1%	1%	6%	
NYC High School Average	1%	1%	1%	4%	
Average for Closing Elem/Middle Schools	2%	2%	2%	5%	
NYC Elem/Middle School Average	1%	1%	1%	4%	
Overage Students in Entering Class (High School Only)					
Average for Closing High Schools	8%	8%	8%	9%	
NYC High School Average	5%	5%	5%	4%	
Average Eighth Grade Proficiency Level for Entering Class (High School Only)					
Average for Closing High Schools	n.a.	n.a.	2.47	2.50	2.60
NYC High School Average	n.a.	n.a.	2.78	2.84	2.94

SOURCES: IBO; Department of Education: School Demographics and Accountability Snapshots and detailed Progress Reports

NOTES: All averages are weighted by student enrollment.

The stability rate is the percent of students in a school who are not in a terminal grade that return the following year.

the citywide average for high schools—63 percent compared with 52 percent citywide.

- The percentage of students classified as living in temporary housing (including those “doubled-up” with family members) was 1.5 times the citywide average for high schools—6 percent compared with 4 percent citywide.
- The share of overage students in the entering class of high schools on the closure list— those students who may have been “left back” in earlier grades since they are 15 years or older when they enter ninth grade—was significantly higher than the citywide average. Nine

percent of students in closing schools were overage, more than double the citywide average of 4 percent.

- The 2009-2010 test scores of students entering high schools on the closure list were lower than the citywide average. Ten of the 14 high schools on the closure list had entering classes that scored in the lowest fifth of all entering high school classes in the city.
- The stability rate in high schools on the closure list was lower than the citywide average for high schools—90 percent compared with 95 percent in citywide elementary and middle schools.

Elementary/Middle Schools

- A lower percentage of students in elementary and middle schools on the closure list were classified as English language learners than in the average elementary or middle school in the city—9 percent compared with 15 percent citywide.
- The percentage of students from low-income families in elementary and middle schools on the closure list was slightly higher than the citywide average for elementary or middle schools—72 percent compared with 68 percent citywide.
- The stability rate in elementary and middle schools on the closure list was lower than the citywide average for elementary and middle schools—90 percent compared with 93 percent citywide.

How Have Closing Schools' Students Changed in Recent Years?

- Looking at the five-year period of 2005-2006 through 2009-2010, there is evidence that the level of need of students in closing high schools has been increasing at a faster rate than the citywide average.
 - Ten of the 14 closing high schools had lower percentile rankings on the average proficiency levels of incoming students for the 2009-2010 school year than they did in 2007-2008. Jamaica High School consistently had the highest average proficiency level for incoming students of the 14 closing high schools. In the 2007-2008 school year, Jamaica ranked better than 40 percent of all city high schools. In 2009-2010, Jamaica's ranking dropped, with its incoming class having performed better than only a third of city high schools.
 - High schools on the closing list have experienced an increase in the share of special education students that is larger than the increase for all city high schools over the four years. The special education population citywide remained flat at 12 percent in 2008-2009, but the closing high schools experienced an increase in the share of special education students from 16 percent to 18 percent.
 - Closing high schools also saw a larger increase in the share of students in temporary housing from 2007-2008 to 2008-2009 compared with the average city high school. The average for closing high schools and for the city average were both at 1 percent in 2007-2008 and while the city average increased to 4 percent, the average for the closing schools increased to 6 percent.

- For overage students, closing high schools saw an increase by 1 percentage point from 8 percent in 2007-2008 to 9 percent in 2008-2009 while the citywide high school average fell 1 percentage point from 5 percent to 4 percent.
- The student needs profile for elementary and middle schools on the closing list have remained consistent with citywide trends.

Did Individual Schools on the Closure List Stand Out on Demographic Measures in 2008-2009?

- Nine of the 25 schools on the closure list had special education enrollments of 20 percent or greater: Christopher Columbus High School (25 percent); School for Community Research and Learning (24 percent); PS 30, Queens (23 percent); I.S. 195, Manhattan, John F. Kennedy High School, KAPPA II and Urban Assembly Academy for History and Citizenship (all 22 percent); and Performance Conservatory High School and MS 571, Brooklyn (both 20 percent).
- Three schools had English language learner enrollments of 19 percent or greater: I.S. 195, Manhattan (20 percent); and John F. Kennedy High School and PS 102, Bronx (both 19 percent).
- Four schools had more than 10 percent of their students living in temporary housing: PS 332, Brooklyn (17 percent); Paul Robeson High School (13 percent); and MS 571, Brooklyn and Norman Thomas High School (both 10 percent).
- Four high schools on the closure list had more than 10 percent of its students enter the school already overage for their grade: Paul Robeson (16 percent); Jamaica (12 percent); and Norman Thomas and Christopher Columbus (both 11 percent).

Performance

The schools on the closing list were evaluated on various performance measures obtained from the detailed Progress Reports. The data spanned four years: 2006-2007 through 2009-2010, the most recent Progress Report. In addition to reporting the current status for each performance variable in 2009-2010, the percentile rankings against all other schools in the city were also reported. All schools with data in the progress reports were included, with the exception of charter schools (for which there is limited data) and schools in the administrative district 75 (schools serving students with special education needs).

How Have Closing High Schools Performed Compared With All City High Schools in 2009-2010?

- Student attendance at high schools on the closure list averages 78 percent, dramatically lower than the citywide high school average of 87 percent. A 78 percent daily attendance rate translates to approximately 40 days absent per school year, or eight full weeks of instruction. Six of the 14 high schools on the closure list had attendance rates better than a third of the schools in their peer groups. Only 2 of the 14 had attendance rates in the lowest 10 percent of their peers.
- Ten of the 14 closing schools ranked lower in terms of attendance in 2009-2010 than they did in 2008-2009.
- Academic problems are evident from the start of students' careers in the high schools on the closure list. On average, only 61 percent of students in these schools earned at least 10 credits in their first year, the minimum amount needed to keep them on track to graduate within the normal four-year span. The citywide average for this measure is 78 percent. Eight schools on the closing list ranked in the bottom 10 percent of city high schools in terms of first-year students on track to graduate and the new schools added this year were among the lowest performers. Three schools on the closing list had credit completion rates better than half of their peer schools; only three had rates among the lowest 10 percent of their peers.
- The pass rate on Regents exams in the high schools on the closure list is 25 percent, compared to the citywide rate of 42 percent. All the schools proposed for closing ranked in the bottom fifth of city high schools in Regents performance.
- Only half of students in high schools on the closure list were able to graduate within four years of entering high school, compared with the citywide rate of 71 percent. All of the closing schools ranked in the bottom 15 percent of city high schools. Four of the schools had four-year graduation rates better than a third of their peer schools, and five had rates among the lowest 10 percent of their peers.
- The average six-year

graduation rate in 2009-2010 was 58 percent, compared with the citywide average of 75 percent. All but one closing school ranked in the bottom fifth of city high schools.

- Most closing schools received a grade of "Proficient" on the Quality Reviews as of 2008-2009. (The ratings, from lowest to highest, are Underdeveloped, Underdeveloped with proficient features, Proficient, Well Developed, and Outstanding.)
- One school scored "Well Developed" while two schools from the hold over list scored "Underdeveloped."

How Did the High Schools on the Closure List Perform Compared With Schools in the Transformation Program?

- When looking at the averages for transformation schools and closing schools on the performance variables, schools on the transformation list consistently performed higher than schools on the closing list on all the reported measures. Schools on the transformation list still performed below the average city high school on all measures and much lower in terms of graduation rates.
- Transformation schools averaged better Quality Review scores than closing schools, with seven getting "Proficient" and four getting "Well Developed."

How did the High Schools on the Closure List Perform Compared to the Three Rerieved High Schools?

- On average, the rerieved schools had equivalent or higher performance compared to closing schools: attendance (equal); first-year credit accumulation (71 percent compared with 61 percent for closing schools); Regent' pass rate (29 percent compared to 25 percent); four-year graduation rate (55 percent

2009-2010 Performance for High Schools				
	Average for All Closing Schools	NYC High School Average	Transformation High Schools	High Schools Rerieved from the 2011 Closure List
	(N=14)	(N=400)	(N=11)	(N=3)
Student Attendance	78%	87%	83%	78%
Year 1 Students Earning 10+ Credits	61%	78%	70%	71%
Regents Completion Rate	25%	42%	36%	29%
Four-Year Graduation Rate	50%	71%	59%	55%
Six-Year Graduation Rate	58%	75%	64%	59%

SOURCES: IBO; Department of Education: detailed Progress Report.
NOTE: Averages are weighted by student enrollment.

compared to 50 percent) and six-year graduation rate (59 percent compared to 58 percent).

- One rerieved school, Choir Academy of Harlem, performed much better than the other two in 2010, pulling the average for rerieved schools up, especially looking at the four-year graduation rate. The Choir Academy graduated 70 percent of students, while the other two schools graduated just over half—similar to the average closing school.

Have Graduation Rates Improved at the High Schools on This Year's Closure List?

In the chart on below, 2008-2009 graduation rates are plotted on the horizontal axis and 2009-2010 graduation rates are plotted on the vertical axis. Each symbol is a school. Those schools below the diagonal line are those whose graduation rates declined from 2008-2009 to 2009-2010; those above the line had improving graduation rates.

- As discussed above, the four-year graduation rates at the 14 high schools on this year's closing list were among the lowest in the city.
- Eight of the 14 high schools on the closing list—more

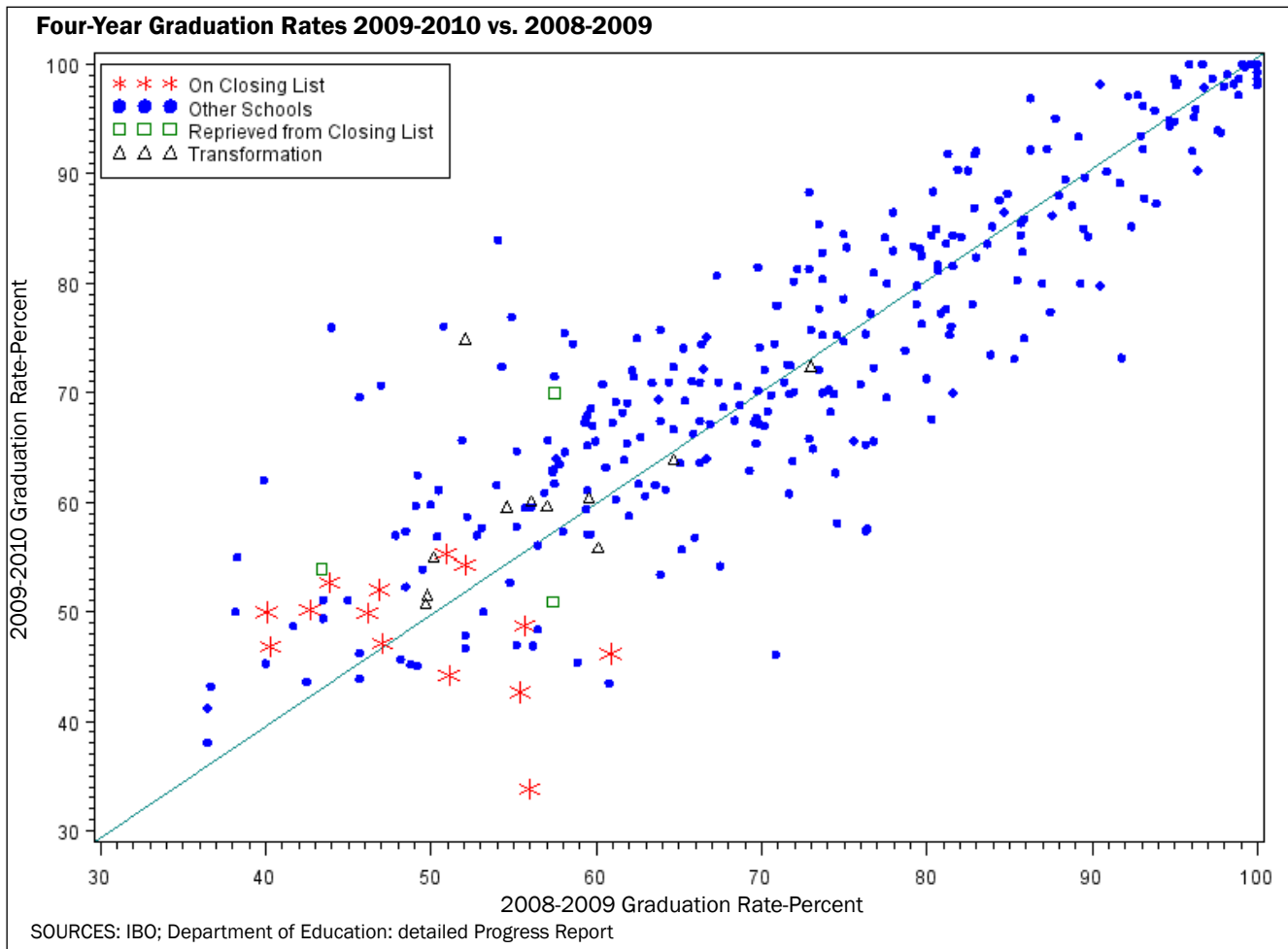
than half—saw four-year graduation rates improve in 2009-2010 compared with 2008-2009, roughly in line with 59 percent of all city high schools that saw an improvement on this performance measure. One closing high school's four-year graduation rate remained the same in both years.

- One school that was rerieved—Business, Computer Applications and Entrepreneurship High School—saw its graduation rate fall from 57 percent in 2008-2009 to 51 percent in 2009-2010.
- With one exception, the transformation schools saw little change in their four-year graduation rates from 2008-2009 to 2009-2010.

Closing Elementary/Middle Schools

How Have Closing Elementary/Middle Schools Performed Compared to All City Elementary/Middle Schools?

- Student attendance in elementary and middle schools proposed for closing was 90 percent in 2009-2010, below the city average of 93 percent. Nine of the closing schools fell in the bottom quarter of



2009-2010 Performance for Elementary/Middle Schools

	Average For All Closing Elementary/ Middle Schools (N=12)	NYC Elementary/ Middle School Average (N=1,063)	School Reprieved from the 2011 Closure List (N=1)
Student Attendance	90%	93%	88%
ELA Proficiency - Level 3 or 4	23%	44%	12%
Math Proficiency - Level 3 or 4	24%	56%	17%
ELA - Progress (median growth percentile)	59.4	67.8	65.5
Math - Progress (median growth percentile)	49.3	64.9	63.0

SOURCES: IBO; Department of Education: detailed Progress Report.

NOTES: Averages are weighted by student enrollment.

city elementary and middle schools in terms of the attendance rate, and all fell in the bottom half of city schools. Eight schools had lower attendance rates in the 2009-2010 school year than in 2008-2009. Three of the schools had attendance rates higher than 40 percent of their peers, and four had rates among the lowest 10 percent of their peers.

- Scores on the New York State test of English language arts were well below the city average, with 23 percent of students in closing schools scoring “proficient” or higher (i.e. attaining level 3 or 4), compared to a citywide average of 44 percent. The same is true for overall achievement in math—24 percent compared with 56 percent citywide. All but one of the schools fell in the lowest 30 percent of city elementary and middle schools in terms of ELA proficiency and all schools ranked in the bottom fifth citywide in terms of math proficiency. Four schools had ELA scores higher than a third of the schools in their peer group and four had scores among the lowest 10 percent of their peers.
- Seven closing schools improved or remained the same in their citywide ranking in 2009-2010 compared with the 2008-2009 school year on their ELA proficiency rates. Five of them were schools added to the list this year. On the other hand, all 12 schools fell or remained the same in their citywide ranking in math proficiency in 2009-2010 compared with 2008-2009.
- Progress on the ELA and math exams in the closing schools was also lower than the citywide average, although the differences were not as wide as they were on the absolute scores. The progress score—which measures the year-over-year improvement a

school makes on its students’ proficiency—was 59.4 percent on the ELA exam in closing schools compared with 67.8 percent citywide; for math, it was 49.3 percent compared with 64.9 percent.

- All but one school fell in the lowest 30 percent of city elementary and middle schools in terms of the progress score on the ELA exam and all but two schools in the lowest 30 percent on the progress score on the math exam.
- Schools that were held over from last year’s list tended to improve their rank on ELA progress and math progress from the 2008-2009 school year to 2009-2010 while schools that were added tended to fall relative to last year’s score.

How Did the Elementary/Middle Schools on the Closure List Perform Compared With the Middle School for Academic and Social Excellence—the Reprieved School?

- The average school on the closure list had higher student attendance, ELA and math scores than the school reprieved from last year’s closure list.
- Progress scores were higher in the reprieved school in both ELA and math.

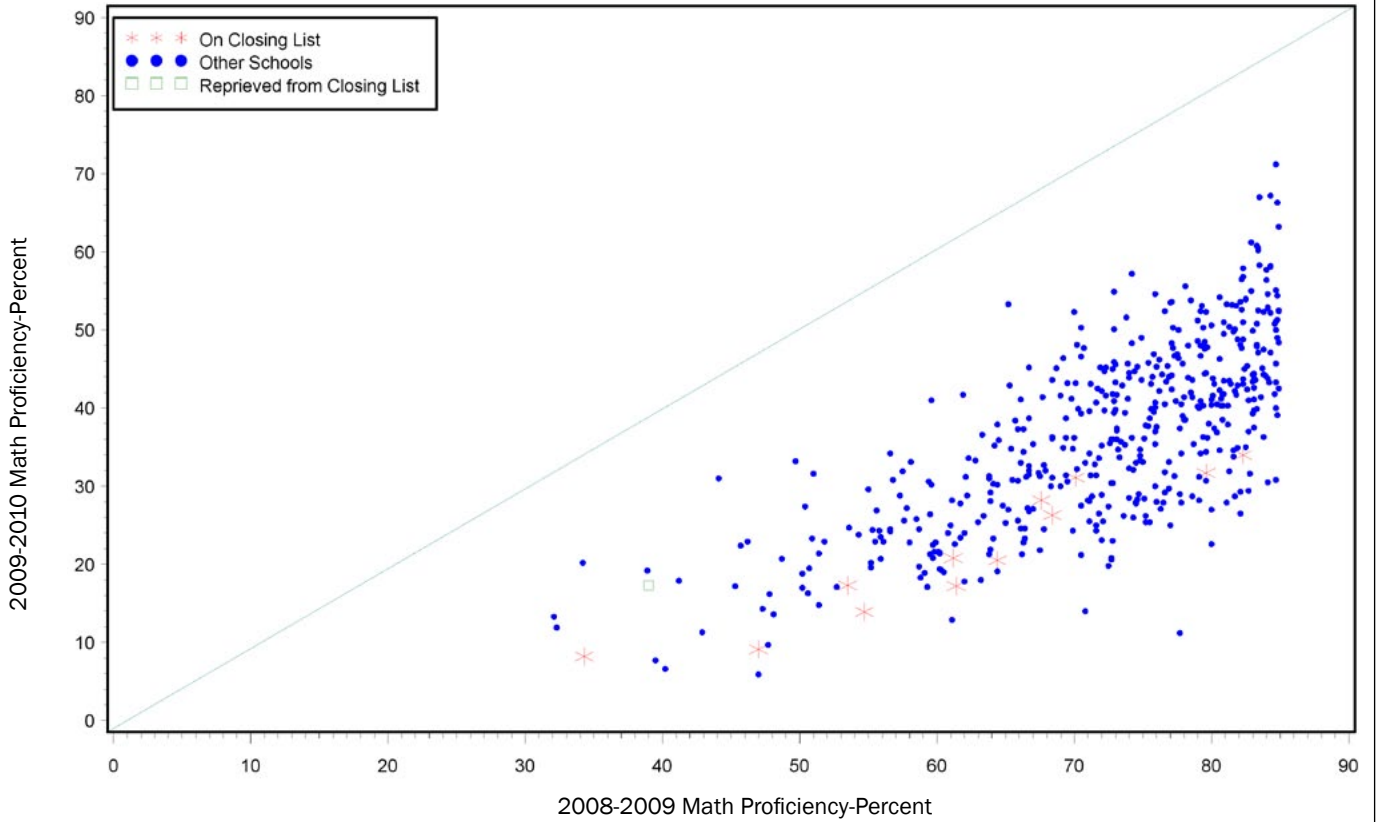
Proficiency Rates: How Did the Elementary/Middle Schools on This Year’s Closure List Perform?

In the charts on page 11, 2008-2009 school year proficiency rates are plotted on the horizontal axis and 2009-2010 proficiency rates are plotted on the vertical axis. Each symbol is a school. Those schools below the diagonal line are those whose proficiency rates declined; those above the line had improving proficiency rates. We plotted math and ELA proficiency rates separately. Because the state raised the cutoffs for proficiency levels in 2009-2010, almost all schools experienced lower proficiency levels in 2009-2010 relative to 2008-2009.

In order to see schools more clearly, we only present results for schools that performed at or below the level of the highest-performing of the closing schools in 2008-2009, P.S. 114 in Brooklyn. Therefore, the graph of math proficiency rates shows about 51 percent of all elementary and middle schools and the graph of ELA proficiency shows roughly 36 percent.

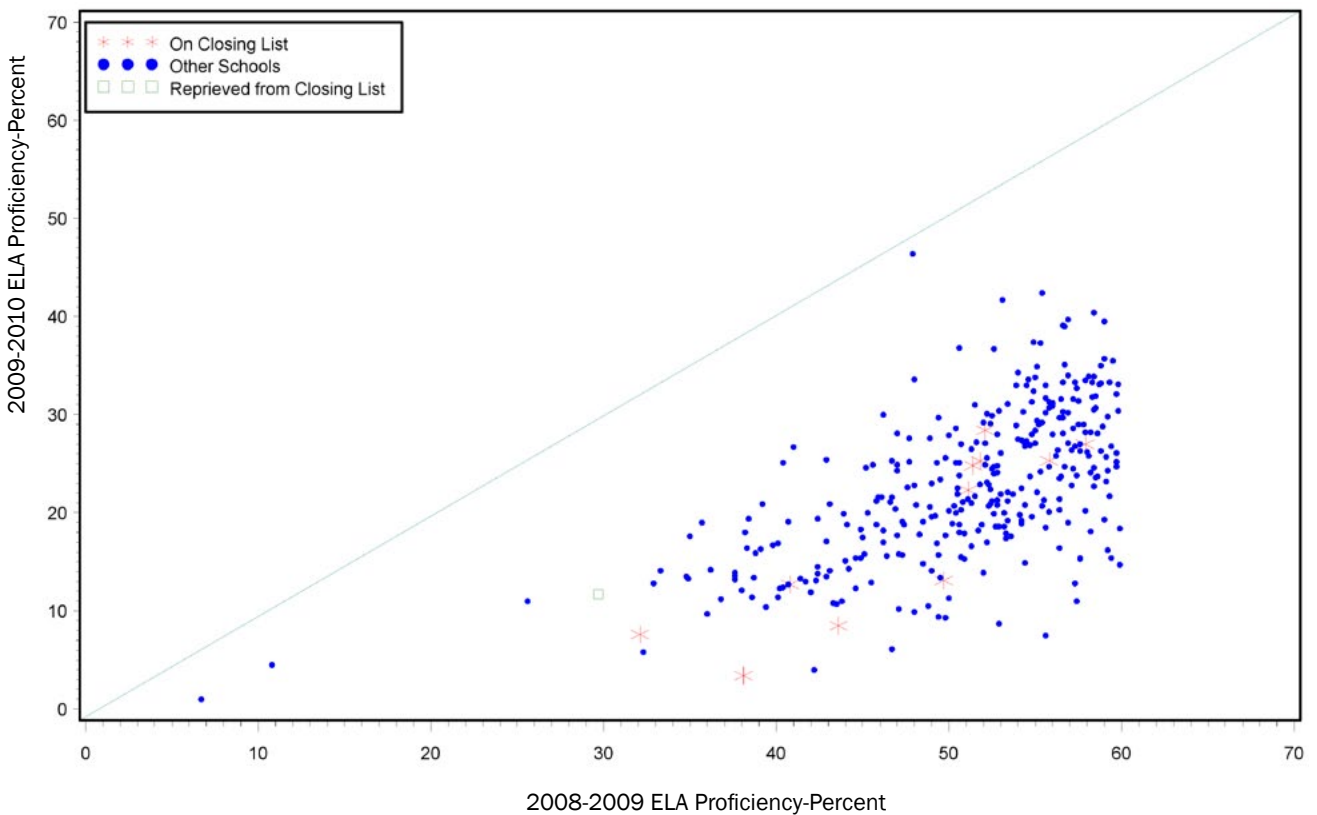
- The math proficiency rates for the 12 elementary and middle schools proposed for closing fell more steeply in the 2009-2010 school year compared with other city

Math Proficiency Rates for Schools at or Below 85 Percent in 2008-2009: 2009-2010 vs. 2009-2010



SOURCES: IBO; Department of Education: detailed Progress Report

ELA Proficiency Rates for Schools at or Below 60 Percent in 2008-2009: 2009-2010 vs. 2008-2009



SOURCES: IBO; Department of Education: detailed Progress Report

elementary and middle schools.

- The rerieved school, Middle School for Academic and Social Excellence, had a lower proficiency score than all but one closing school in 2008-2009, and lower than all but five closing schools in the 2009-2010 school year.
- Seven schools on the closing list saw relatively modest declines in ELA proficiency scores in 2009-2010 compared with other schools in the sample. These seven schools also had the highest proficiency rates in both the 2008-2009 and the 2009-2010 school years among closing schools.
- The rerieved school, Middle School for Academic and Social Excellence, had a lower proficiency score than all the closing schools in 2008-2009, and a lower score than all but three closing schools in 2009-2010.

Resources

Data on the resources available at the schools proposed for closing were obtained from several sources. Teacher demographics were obtained from the 2008-2009 “School Demographics and Accountability Snapshot” on the education department’s Web site. The 2009-2010 Enrollment Capacity Utilization (Blue Book) report was used to calculate the school-level utilization rate, taking into account all buildings used by each school. Note that the Blue Book data was collected before last year’s school closing plans were announced so that the reported utilization rates do not reflect the uncertainty about the futures of the schools on that list. Finally, per pupil allocations were calculated for 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 using Galaxy allocation data and the reported enrollment on the Progress Reports. (Galaxy is the financial system that the New York City Department of Education uses to allocate funds to schools.) Galaxy data were obtained on December 7, 2010 for individual schools on DOE’s Web site. Citywide per pupil allocation data were not provided in the tables on pages 12 and 13 because aggregate data for all schools is not readily accessible in the Galaxy system.

Closing High Schools

What Level of Resources Has Been Provided to High Schools on the Closure List?

- Closing high schools had an average student-teacher ratio of

15.8 in 2008-2009, which was lower than the citywide average of 16.6. The average closing high school had a higher student-teacher ratio than the average rerieved school and a lower student-teacher ratio than the average transformation school.

- On average, high schools on the closing list had teachers with more experience than the average city high school and the average transformation school. Teachers at closing schools were slightly more likely to have graduate degrees than the average school citywide, but nearly the same share of core courses taught by “highly qualified” teachers.
- Closing schools had an average utilization rate of 85 percent, well below the citywide average of 106 percent. Thus closing schools tended to have empty seats, indicating a lack of interest in these schools by prospective students.

Closing Elementary/Middle Schools

What Level of Resources Has Been Provided to Elementary/Middle Schools on the Closure List?

- Elementary and middle schools on the proposed closing list had an average student-teacher ratio of 12.6 in 2009, which was slightly below the city average. The Middle School for Academic and Social Excellence, which was rerieved from last year’s closing list, had a student-teacher ratio much lower than the average for closing schools.
- Closing elementary and middle schools had fewer

Resources Available to High Schools

	Average for All Closing Schools (N=14)	NYC High School Average (N=390)	Transformation High Schools (N=11)	High Schools Rerieved from the 2011 Closure List (N=3)
Student-Teacher Ratio	15.8	16.6	16.2	14.2
Teachers with Five+ Years Service	69%	58%	64%	74%
Teachers with Graduate Degree	85%	82%	84%	88%
Core Courses Taught by "Highly Qualified" Teachers	94%	93%	93%	90%
Building Utilization Rate	85%	106%	121%	83%

SOURCES: IBO; Department of Education: 2008-2009 School Demographics and Accountability Snapshot, 2009-2010 Enrollment Capacity Utilization (Blue Book).

NOTES: Averages are weighted by student enrollment.

A “highly qualified” teacher is defined by the U.S. Department of Education as having a bachelor’s degree, full state certification, and being able to prove that they know each subject they teach.

Resources Available to Elementary and Middle Schools

	NYC		
	Average for All Closing Schools (N=12)	Elem/Middle School Average (N=1,057)	Middle School Reprieved from the 2011 Closure List (N=1)
Student-Teacher Ratio	12.6	13.1	10.1
Teachers with Five+ Years Service	55%	58%	42%
Teachers with Graduate Degree	79%	85%	75%
Core Courses Taught by "Highly Qualified" Teachers	91%	95%	90%
Building Utilization Rate	76%	96%	48%

SOURCES: IBO; Department of Education: 2008-2009 School Demographics and Accountability Snapshot, 2009-2010 Enrollment Capacity Utilization (Blue Book).

NOTE: Averages are weighted by student enrollment.

experienced teachers, fewer teachers with graduate degrees, and a smaller share of core classes taught by “highly qualified” teachers than the average city school. Teachers at the Middle School for Academic and Social Excellence had less experience and fewer credentials than teachers at the average closing school.

- Closing schools are generally underutilized with many unused seats. The Middle School for Academic and Social Excellence is highly underutilized, with less than half of its capacity in use.

Plans for Use of Space in Closing Schools

Two schools on the list are proposed for complete closure at the end of this year because there are currently very few students enrolled. The remaining 23 would be phased out over time. Because elementary school students are assigned to a school based on the “catchment area”, or zone, in which they live, any zoned elementary school that is proposed for closing must, by law, be replaced by another school that will serve area students.

For the five elementary schools on the list, a new zoned elementary school is expected to open in the same building in September 2011 serving grades K-2 (and in one case, pre-kindergarten) and gradually phase in additional grades as the current schools phase out.

Since DOE favors the creation of smaller schools to replace many of the large schools on the closure list, the current plans described in the Educational Impact Statements for these closures lay out 41 new or expanded schools to take

the place of 23 of the 25 schools scheduled to be closed. (Two of the schools to be closed will not be replaced, as they are currently in shared space that is judged to be full.) The 41 replacement schools fall into the following categories:

- twelve are existing small schools or programs that will grow to their full complement of grades
- ten are new small schools to be opened in 2011-2012
- seven are new zoned elementary or middle schools
- five are existing charter schools that will grow to their full complement of grades
- two are existing charter schools that will be relocated
- one is an existing small school that will be relocated
- one is a new charter school to be opened in 2011-2012
- three are unspecified schools to open in 2012-2013 or later.

In total, 23 of these replacements involve small schools, eight involve charter schools and seven involve new zoned schools, and plans for three schools have not yet been released.

Of the 17 small and charter schools that will be allowed to grow in their existing buildings due to the closure of a school, all but two are in schools that were first proposed for closure last year.

Conclusions

Based on our analysis of the available data, there are two clear observations:

- The schools selected for closure by the Department of Education are all schools with below average student performance.
 - While 8 of the 14 high schools on the list saw some improvement in their graduation rates, their graduation rates remain low—at or below 55 percent compared with an average of 71 percent for all city high schools.
 - Similarly, though several closing elementary and middle schools had smaller drops in their ELA proficiency scores than similar schools in 2009-2010, these schools all had 35 percent or fewer of their students scoring at level 3 or 4 on the

test—which was also true for 45 percent of city elementary and middle schools.

- Half of all schools on the closure list had overall Progress Report grades among the lowest 10 percent of schools in their peer groups. At the same time, four of the schools had Progress Report scores higher than the lowest quartile of their peers.
- It is also true that the schools on the closure list generally have been serving students with greater needs compared with other schools and the share of their enrollments in some high-needs categories has been increasing in recent years:
 - The percentage of students in special education or in temporary housing has been increasing at a faster rate in these schools than in the city as a whole.
 - The eighth grade proficiency levels of the incoming high school students in schools on the closure list have declined relative to other city high schools; 10 schools have incoming classes that rank lower

in terms of eighth grade proficiency in 2009-2010 than they did in the 2007-2008 school year.

- The percentage of students entering the closing high schools already overage for their grade has consistently been higher than the city average and is now over twice the norm.

In reviewing the list of schools proposed for closing we also note that almost a third of the schools had been opened as new small schools—the replacement model that the Department of Education has favored for schools that have been closed in the past. This is an issue that bears monitoring as greater numbers of these small schools mature. While the number of these closing schools, eight, is just a small share of to the number DOE has opened, their appearance on the list serves as a reminder there is no guarantee that a closing school will be replaced by a more successful one.

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Click [here](#) for demographic, performance, and resource data on each school proposed for closing

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