School District Report

By Jeff North

This is a report on high-schools in the local school district. The district encompasses 15 schools, serving approximately 39,170 students, and is funded by an overall budget of $24,649,428.

Roughly 2/3 (65%) of students in the district successfully pass both Reading and Mathematics. While technically this means that most students are successfully mastering both subjects, it also reveals that basically 1 out of every 3 students is failing to master both subjects. On a more positive note, the majority of students do manage to master at least one area of study, with 3 out of every 4 of students passing Math, and the majority of students (86%) passing Reading.

Some conclusions revealed by the data:

* Within the district, there is an obvious disparity between schools that are successfully educating students, and those that are not. In each of the 8 most successful schools, the vast majority (about 90%) of students are successfully passing both Math and Reading. However, in each of the remaining 7 schools, no more than 54% of students manage to master both subjects. Stated another way: there is a chasm between the 90% and 54% successful test results of the top and bottom performing schools, respectively.
* When ranked by % of students passing both Math and Reading overall, the highest-performing schools are all Charter schools (90.4%). The bottom-performing schools are all District schools (53.7%).
* When ranked by % of students passing both Math and Reading overall, the bottom-performing schools are all Large (having 2000 or more students). The highest performing schools are mostly Medium-to-Small sized, with only one qualifying as Large. Notably, the one school that is high-performing but also Large is a Charter School.
* Surprisingly, there is an inverse relationship between per-student spending and successful student outcomes. The more money that is spent per student, the lower the rate of success, both in terms of average test scores and % of students passing. The highest results overall were produced by schools with per-student spending < $585, and the lowest results were produced by schools with per-student spending > $645.
* When ranked by size, there is some correlation between school size and per-student spending. The larger the school, the more money that is spent per-student, suggesting perhaps that spending overhead increases as school size increases.