

Philadelphia School Performance

W209 Final Project Proposal

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Concept

Our project idea is to create a dashboard to monitor the performance of each school in the School District of Philadelphia. The City of Philadelphia has an [existing dashboard](#), but it has extremely limited functionality. Their dashboard shows each school as a dot on a map, color coded by the quartile of performance, and when a user hovers over a dot, it lists the school name and number of students enrolled. We think we can make a much better visualization. In particular, we want to add the functionality to compare a small handful of schools at one time. Right now the group comparisons are fixed by type. Here are screenshots of the current tool:

GENERAL INFORMATION

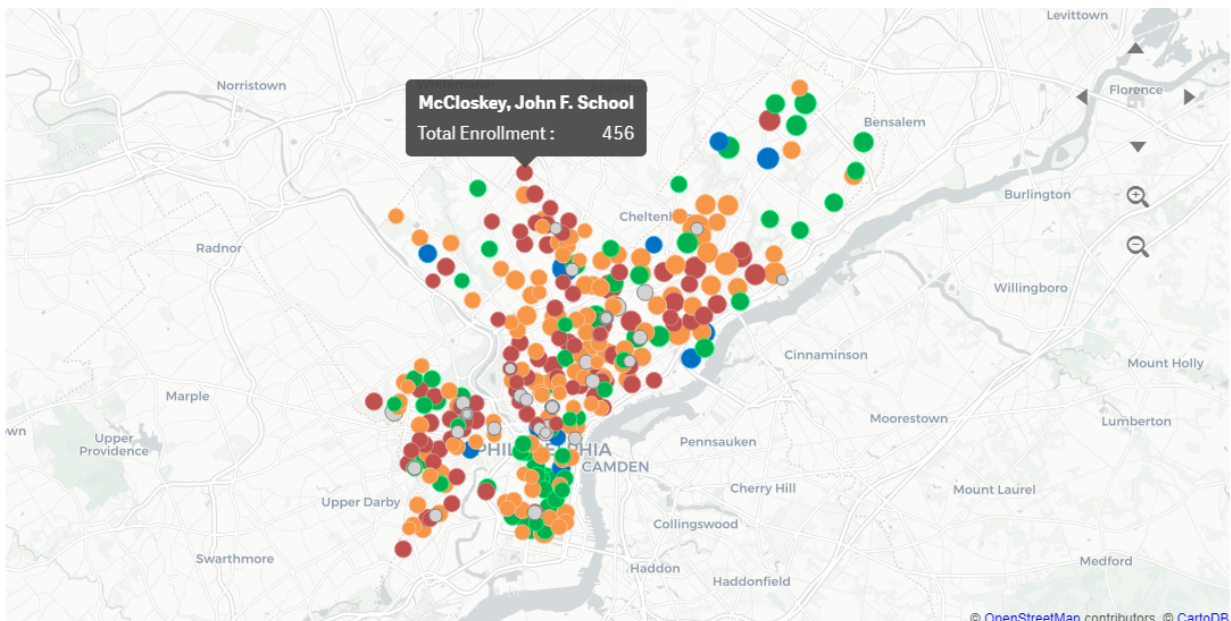
Make selections here:

Sector

Make selections here:

School Level

School Location



Goals / Purpose

We are focused on giving parents in Philadelphia the information they need to select the best school for their child by aggregating all the data available. People often choose their housing

location based off the quality of the public schools and this tool could help them in that regard. Also, in Philadelphia, parents can decide between sending their kids to the public school in their area or to one of several charter schools across the city. Parents might be concerned with comparing their local public school to charter schools in terms of distance, educational quality, safety, and student outcomes, and an effective visualization would allow parents to prioritize those criteria effectively.

Data

We will get our data from the [OpenDataPhilly](#) website, where they provide access to many city-wide data sets including 21 datasets related to the School District of Philadelphia. The main datasets that we're currently thinking about using are, [school progress report data](#), [safety](#) information, [school finder](#) based off location, [standardized test scores](#), and [graduation rates](#).

Users

The user base for this visualization will be parents and caretakers with children who go to school in Philadelphia. There may be two smaller user groups, the Philadelphia public as well as school teachers and administrators, but the visualization will not directly target those users.

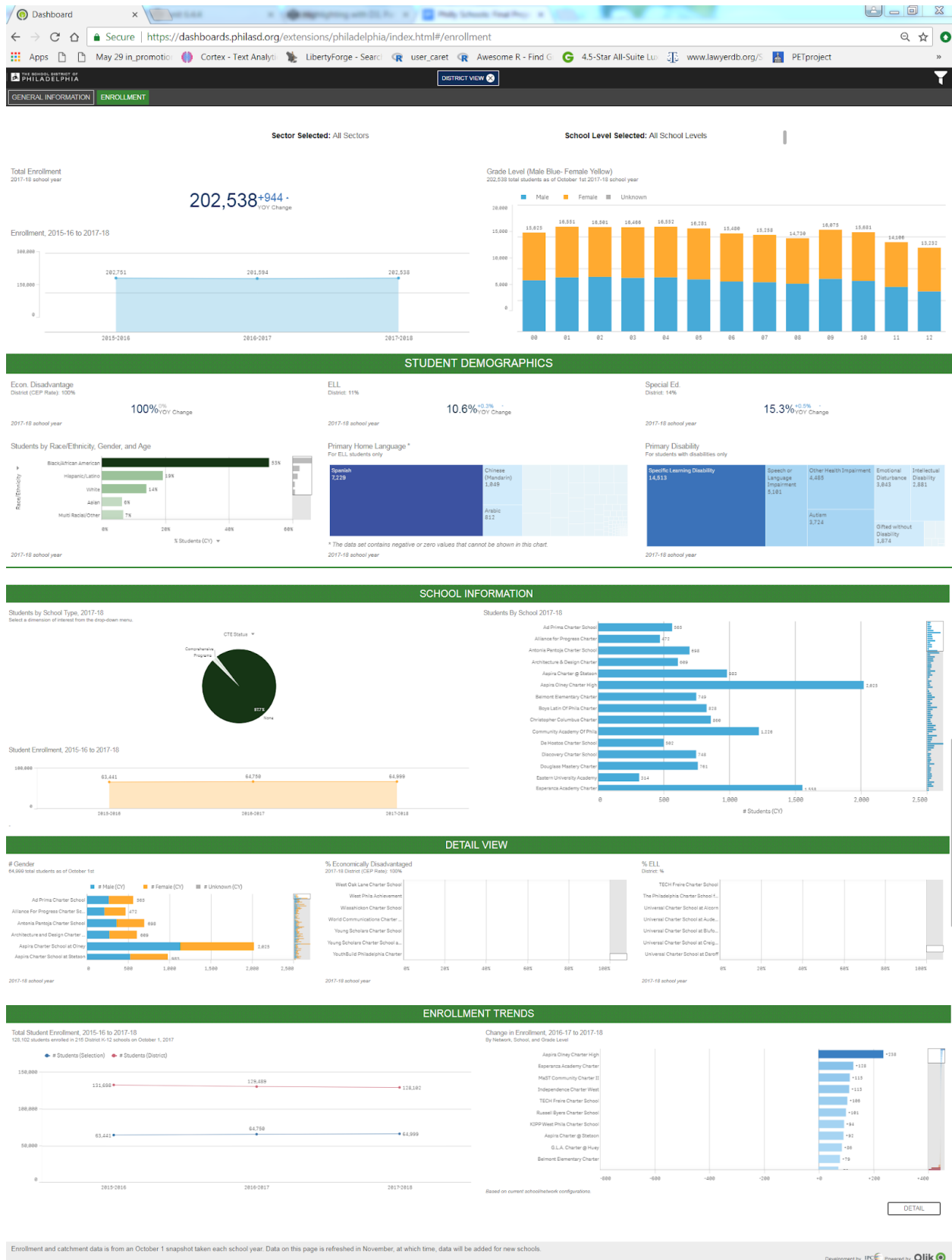
Tasks

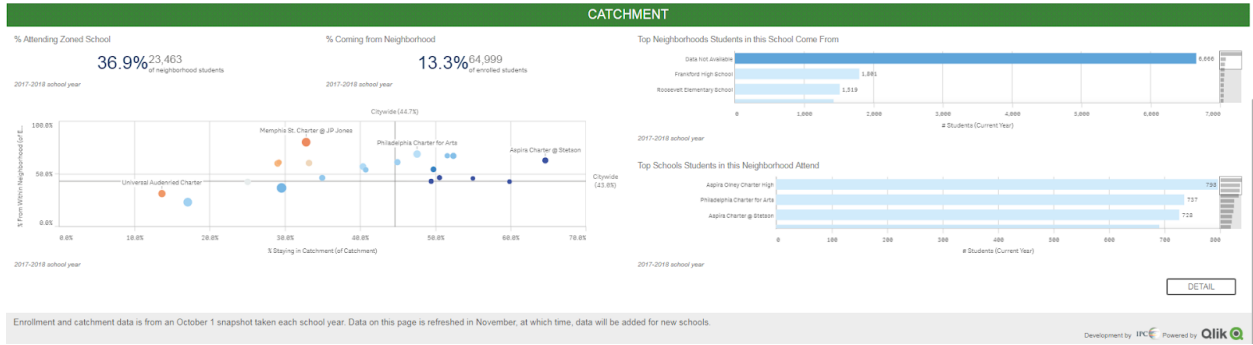
We seek to let parents prioritize metrics based on their unique circumstances, and arrive at the best possible school choice for their child. For example, many parents will wish for their children to go to college and seek a school with the highest possible college placement rate. Other's might presuppose that their children are going to college, and seek to maximize academic quality measured by standardized test scores over the raw number of children heading to college. Still others might simply want the safest environment for their child, regardless of the outcome. Our visualization will let parents interactively set their criteria and easily locate the optimal school choice for their children.

Example of Insights

The actionable outcome will be the decision by the parent to either send their child to a charter school, or to their neighborhood school. If necessary, parents could also relocate to another neighborhood for their children to attend a better public school. This is a difficult choice for any parent and we will seek to make the outcome clear and the selection criteria transparent. Parents should walk away from their experience with our visualization feeling confident in their choice for their children.

Some other Philly School Dashboards:





School Specific Views:

