

Racialized Accountability Threat:
Demographic Changes and Participation in Accountability Test Boycotts in New York

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Introduction

The use of standardized tests for high-stakes accountability purposes has always generated controversy. In recent years, these tests have faced increasing opposition from a coalition of parents and educators, who encourage the boycotting of annual accountability tests. Called the “Opt-Out Movement”, boycotts have grown significantly over the past few years, with almost 20% of students refusing to participate in annual exams in 2016 in New York state. Existing research has explored reasons parents have joined the movement (Pizmony-Levy and Green Saraisky 2016) and how participants have framed (and countered-framed) issues related to testing (Wang 2017).

Missing from the literature thus far is sustained attention to racial dynamics in the movement. Existing research suggests that the movement primarily consists of white, affluent parents, with less support and participation from black parents (Pizmony-Levy and Green Saraisky 2016; Wang 2017). Yet, there are two important reasons for attending to the role of race in the movement. First, education policies, like public policies more generally, are rarely race-neutral (Bonilla-Silva 1997; Leonardo 2007). Advocates of accountability policies promoted No Child Left Behind using the language of the Civil Rights movements, claiming that the policy aimed to boost the achievement of students of color and low-income students (Orfield 2014). In practice, schools with large proportions of students of color are more likely to experience accountability sanctions than those serving primarily white, affluent students (Darling Hammond 2007; Mintrop and Sunderman 2009; Stiefel, Schwartz, and Chellman 2007).

Second, previous educational social movements have had a distinct racial dimension. During the Civil Rights Movement, activists sought the desegregation of schools and expansions of educational opportunities for children of color. Activists met with fierce resistance from white

counter-protestors, who aimed to maintain the status quo of white privilege by protesting intervention by the state and federal governments (McAdam 1983). Likewise, attempts at integration, such as busing efforts, prompted collective resistance among whites, who participated in protests to challenge busing policies (Useem 1980). In both cases, white protestors resisted government intervention in schools and sought to maintain local control over educational resources and decisions (Siegel-Hawley, Diem, and Frankenberg 2018). Similar to these movements, participants in the Opt-Out movement express concerns related to the role of government in school decision-making and seek to maintain local control over educational resources and decisions (Pizmony-Levy and Green Saraisky 2016). While not explicitly racial, it is possible that participation in the Opt-Out movement derives from demographic changes that stoke racial status anxieties (Bobo 1999; Blumer 1958). Research suggests that changes in racial demographics in predominantly white suburban schools can engender concerns about accountability sanctions and declines in school quality (Holme, Diem, and Welton 2013; Holme 2002).

Racial group threat theory posits that members of socially dominant groups will participate in movements to protect their privileged social and economic status when they perceive threats to that status due to exposure to members of non-dominant groups (Andrews and Seguin 2015; Beisel 1990; Snow et al. 1998; Welch and Payne 2010; Bobo and Hutchings 1996). Previous research has established that group threat motivates members of dominant groups to oppose (or support) public policies that they believe will challenge (or maintain) their social status (Wetts and Willer 2018; Andrews and Seguin 2015).

Synthesizing the literature on racial threat, accountability policies, and racial dimension of schooling, I argue that a process of *racialized accountability threat* contributed to the

participation of white parents in test boycotts. Racialized accountability threat occurs when schools with little previous accountability sanctions experience influxes in the share of students of color during periods of heightened accountability pressures. I hypothesize that white parents associate such influxes with the potential for (1) changes in school practices and policies that emphasize test preparation and (2) government regulation through accountability sanctions. Thus, opposition to accountability will increase among white parents when they feel their entitled educational goods—such as rich curricula that include the arts, a range of extracurricular activities, and student-center instructional practices—are under threat. Attempts at regulatory intervention to ameliorate educational inequities have historically met with fierce resistance from whites, as with attempts at desegregation through busing programs (Useem 1980).

Using school-level accountability data from New York, I found that schools that experience a net increase in the share of black or Latinx students had about eight percentage points more participation in test boycotts for white students compared to schools without such an increase. This finding is robust to several specifications. I further present evidence for racialized accountability threat by showing that the result holds for predominately white schools in affluent suburban areas with little previous experience with accountability pressures. These findings support the Hypothesis that racialized accountability threat contributed significantly to participation in test boycotts among white families.

This study has important implications for educational policy and research on social movements. First, it uncovers an important consequence of the design of accountability policies: collective opposition from parents. While most accountability research has focused on how educators respond to accountability pressures, this study shows that parents participate in the implementation process as well through collective action. Second, it helps to explain

participation in the Opt-Out movement, uncovering racial processes that survey-based approaches (such as Pizmony-Levy and Green Saraisky [2016]) may miss, due to social desirability bias (Krysan 1998). While white parents may not express racialized motivations for participating in test boycotts, this study suggests that racial status anxieties may underlie such decisions.

Racialized accountability threat

To motivate the concept of racialized accountability threat, I synthesize three strands of research. First, from sociology of race and social movement theory, I draw on research showing that racial group threat can shape the behaviors and attitudes of members of dominant groups. Second, from education research, I draw on research documenting how pressures from accountability policies and demographic changes can shape school policies and practices. Accountability pressures can lead schools to adopt a range of practices to prevent sanctions, such as narrowing curricula to tested subjects or relying on test preparation. Third, from education research on school quality, I show evidence that such judgments are highly racialized—meaning that white parents judge school quality on the basis on the racial composition of the student body rather than other measures. Taking these three research strands together, I propose that racialized accountability threat—when demographic changes occur under conditions of increased accountability pressure—was a key factor motivating white families to participate in boycotts of annual accountability tests.

Racial group threat, policy preferences, and collective action

According to group position theory, racial discrimination occurs when members of socially dominant groups, who control political and economic resources, believe that their group position is under threat (Blalock 1967; Blumer 1958; Bobo 1999; Bobo and Hutchings 1996).

Members of dominant groups will adopt discriminatory attitudes or support discriminatory policies in order to protect their socially advantageous position. Threat can occur due to highly symbolic events, such as the election of the first African-American president, or due to, real or perceived, demographic changes (Wetts and Willer 2018; Quillian 1995; O'Brien 2017).

Importantly, members of non-dominant groups do not need to directly challenge the position of the dominant groups. Rather, it is the *perception* of a threat among members of dominant groups that matters. The increased visibility of members of minority groups, such as when people of color move into predominately white areas, can trigger perceptions of threat to the social status of members of dominant groups. Members of dominant groups (e.g., whites) may not adopt or express explicitly racist attitudes, but will mobilize and support policies that will maintain their control over economic and political resources (Blalock 1967).

Scholars have demonstrated the effect of racial group threat a number of contexts. Demographic changes partially explain negative racial attitudes of whites towards black Americans (Quillian 1996) and of native Europeans towards immigrants (Quillian 1995). White Americans express less support for welfare policies under conditions of perceived racial threat, especially when those policies are framed as primarily benefiting black or Latinx populations (Wetts and Willer 2018).

Racial threat can also shape political behavior. Andrews and Seguin (2015) demonstrate that group threat motivated whites to join the prohibition movement. Jurisdictions adjacent to areas with rapidly increasing populations of immigrants were more likely to pass prohibition laws. Using the demolition of public housing as a source of exogenous variation in racial composition, Enos (2015) found that whites living near housing projects vote more often and for more conservative candidates before the demolition of public housing and outmigration of the

residents, who were predominately black. Reny and Newman (2018) show evidence that white voters in areas of California that experience rapid growth in the black population were more supportive of a state proposition that protected racial discrimination in housing laws. O'Brien (2017) shows that states experiencing increases in the Latinx population adopted less distributive tax systems.

Demographic changes also influence policies and practices in schools. Studies by Welch and Payne (2018, 2010) provide evidence that schools with large shares of black or Latinx students adopt harsh disciplinary policies and practices. Research on anti-integration policies, while not directly framed in the group threat literature, provides evidence that white parents will mobilize or support policies that allow them to maintain control of local school decisions and resources (Useem 1980; Siegel-Hawley, Diem, and Frankenberg 2018). In predominantly white schools and districts experiencing demographic changes, educators, while conscious of the changes and needs of new student populations, have either preferred “race neutral” policies and practices that denied these students access to potentially beneficial resources (Turner 2015; Welton, Diem, and Holme 2013), or made “technical reforms” that aimed to mitigate pressures from the new accountability subgroups that they were responsible for (Holme, Diem, and Welton 2013).

Accountability sanctions and school practices

I draw two key insights from the research on group threat. First, racial group threat can motivate members of dominant groups to take action to protect their control over economic and political resources. Second, under conditions of racial threat, members of dominant groups will oppose policies that they perceive as benefiting members of non-dominant groups. These insights help to understand how accountability policies can become racialized. Advocates of

accountability policies, especially the federal iteration codified in the No Child Left Behind Act, promoted them to ameliorate gaps in educational outcomes between white students and students of color. Accountability policies were designed to expose potential discriminatory practices in schools leading to disparate outcomes (Cohen & Moffitt, 2010). Regardless of whether these policies were well-designed to achieve these goals, they were linked, explicitly, to an effort to improve the educational performance of students of color, particularly black and Latinx students, relative to white students.

A well-developed line of research has shown that school leaders and teachers respond to accountability pressures. In schools facing accountability pressures to increase performance on standardized tests, educators may focus attention and resources on students at the threshold of proficiency cutoffs (Booher-Jennings 2005; Neal and Schanzenbach 2010). Low-performing and high-performing students receive less attention and fewer resources. School staff may also focus instruction on tested subjects—mathematics and reading—and take time away from other subjects to boost test scores (Au 2007; Dee, Jacob, and Schwartz 2013; Ladd and Zelli 2002). Teachers may also adopt didactic instructional practices and increase test preparation, particularly for low-income students and students of color (Diamond 2007; Diamond and Spillane 2004). Such changes in school policies and practices toward an emphasis on test preparation match the concerns expressed by parents involved in the Opt-Out movement (Pizmony-Levy and Green Saraisky 2016).

Such accountability pressures, therefore, may create the sense of “threat” to the local control over educational resources and decisions that white families feel entitled to (Siegel-Hawley, Diem, and Frankenberg 2018). This can occur in two ways. First, pressures may generate anxieties in parents that schools will direct resources and instructional toward

standardized tests, as the research highlighted above suggests. Second, accountability sanctions expose schools to potential government regulation, threatening local decision making.

Racialized perceptions of school quality

While accountability pressures can shape the policies and practices of schools, at least in theory, they are designed to enable parents to make objective assessments of school quality. Yet, researchers have continually shown that parents judge school quality and choose to enroll in schools based on demographic composition (Holme 2002; Abdulkadiroglu, Pathak, and Walters 2018; Billingham and Hunt 2016). Parents construct “high status” schools as those serving predominately white, affluent students (Holme 2002; Billingham and Hunt 2016) and use the racial composition of a school as a proxy for academic quality (Ispa-Landa and Conwell 2015). White parents show strong preferences *against* enrolling in schools with large proportions of black students (Billingham and Hunt 2016; Saporito and Lareau 1999) and citing concerns over school safety, cultural values, and student behavior (Cucchiara 2013; Holme 2002; Roda and Wells 2013). However, Saporito and Lareau (1999) found that white parents will avoid majority Black schools, but choose white schools with poor safety and academic performance.

Within integrated schools, practices and policies often recreate racial status hierarchies (Ispa-Landa 2013; Diamond 2006; Lewis and Diamond 2015; Lewis-McCoy 2014). Integrated schools often adopt practices such as academic tracking that create different school experiences and outcomes for students of color (Lewis and Diamond 2015). Parents often exacerbate these differences by hoarding resources and opportunities for their own children at the expense of others (Lareau 1987; Posey-Maddox 2013; Calarco 2014). In predominately white, suburban schools experience demographic changes, school leaders respond by acknowledging racial disparities and making technical changes to school practices, but rely on deficit-laden cultural

explanations that reproduce racial hierarchies (Welton, Diem, and Holme 2013; Turner 2015; Evans 2016). School leaders view students of color and English language learners as potential liabilities and become more concerned about accountability pressures and focus school practices on maintaining accountability status (Holme, Diem, and Welton 2013).

Parent involvement in schools also reproduces educational inequalities within schools through resource and opportunity hoarding. Middle-class parents can divert school resources to serve their children (Posey-Maddox 2013) and educators are more responsive to the demands of middle-class parents (Lareau 1987; Lareau and Horvat 1999). Middle-class parents teach their children to advocate for themselves in the classroom, allowing them to receive more attention from teachers compared to lower class peers (Calarco 2014, 2011).

The evidence suggests within-school and outside-of-school factors that contribute to maintaining a racial hierarchy that results in the uneven distribution of educational resources. Since judgments of school quality are primarily based on demographic characteristics rather than assessments of instructional quality or curriculum, in a process similar to that uncovered by Massey and Denton (1993, 1988), increases in the share of students of color in a school may cause white families to perceive a decline in quality, inducing them to take social action to protect the educational goods they feel entitled to.

Racialized accountability threat

Synthesizing these insights, I propose that racialized accountability threat occurs when two conditions obtain: (1) an increase in the salience of general accountability pressure and (2) a concomitant increase in the share of students from non-dominant groups, with whom is associated the potential for accountability sanctions and changes in instruction and curriculum due to accountability pressures. Both conditions serve to increase anxieties among parents of the

potential for the loss of educational goods to which they feel entitled. This loss can occur through two potential channels. First, increased accountability pressure can lead school staff to adopt practices that focus instructional policies and practice on tested subjects. Second, increased accountability pressure raises the specter of government regulation through accountability sanctions. The local control over schools is a deeply held value, which affluent white parents often seek to protect (Siegel-Hawley, Diem, and Frankenberg 2018).

The first condition is necessary, since schools have historically adopted practices, such as tracking, that are partitioned instruction into separate regimes experienced by white students and students of color (Lewis and Diamond 2015). School can use these strategies to address the potential liability they face when they experience increases in populations of students who belong to accountability subgroups (Holme, Diem, and Welton 2013). For example, if a school faces an increase in the share of English language learners, they become responsible for an accountability subgroup that previously they were not. School staff may narrow curriculum and increase test preparation for these students, but not for the general population. However, under conditions of general accountability pressure, such as that represented by the adoption of the Common Core State Standards, school staff may not have the luxury to partition educational resources in such a way.

Therefore, under conditions of general accountability pressure, influxes of students of color can create racial group threat in which white parents perceive a potential loss over the control of educational goods. This can increase anxiety over the content and method of instruction, the narrowing of curriculum, the adoption of test preparation practices, and the focus of educational resources toward students at proficiency thresholds—all practices associated with schools facing accountability sanctions. Critical for this argument is that such change can be real

or perceived. This has been demonstrated by studies in which the *perception* of the threat to racial status are experimentally manipulated, such as Wetts and Willer (2018) and O'Brien (2017).

Based on the theory of racialized accountability, I propose two hypotheses:

- Hypothesis 1: *Schools that experience an influx of black and Latinx students in the period after the administration of Common Core-aligned accountability tests will have greater rates of boycotts on accountability tests among white students than schools without such an influx.*
- Hypothesis 2: *The relationship between racial threat and test boycotts will obtain for schools with little previous experience with accountability pressure, but not for schools with previous experience with accountability pressure. Therefore, I expect that schools (1) that are majority white, (2) in low poverty districts, (3) in non-urban areas, and (4) with no previous accountability pressure will demonstrate a relationship between increases in the share of black and Latinx students and the test boycott rate of white students, while minority white, high poverty, urban, or schools with previous accountability pressure will not.*

Opposition to high-stakes accountability in New York

Prior to the 2012-2013 school year, accountability sanctions primarily targeted urban schools with large shares of students of color. Of schools not meeting Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) in any area between 2009 and 2012, the mean percent of white students enrolled was 29% (Table 1). The mean of percent white students enrolled in K-8 schools in New York between 2009 and 2012 was 52%. Just 24% of schools not meeting AYP were in suburban areas.

However, in 2012-2013, the New York State Department of Education chose to simultaneously implement the Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics and administer accountability assessments based on those standards. John King, the state education chancellor at the time, issued warnings throughout the school year that he expected proficiency rates to drop dramatically, projecting that only 30% of students would reach proficiency on the new exams, compared to around 70% previously (Ujifusa 2013;

Hernández and Gebeloff 2013). Consequentially, the salience of potential accountability sanctions increased for majority white and suburban schools.

In the two years following the implementation of the Common Core-aligned tests, the types of schools and population of students not meeting AYP changed drastically. Schools not meeting AYP became more white and less Black and Latinx. The mean percent of white students in schools not meeting AYP in any area increased by 13 percentage points to 41.7%. The share of schools not meeting AYP located in the suburbs increased. White students as an accountability subgroup became more prominent after the administration of Common Core-aligned tests. Between 2009 and 2012, in only 9% of schools did white students not meet AYP in either math or ELA. Between 2013 and 2014, 35% of schools did not meet AYP for white students in either mathematics or ELA.

The period spanning 2010 to 2017 saw a shifting and uncertain landscape in terms of accountability policies. The No Child Left Behind Act was due for reauthorization in 2007, and due to the delay, the federal government began to grant waivers to states allowing them to avoid sanctions if they adopted the preferred policies of the Obama administration, such as the adoption of the Common Core standards. Finally reauthorized in 2015, the Every Students Succeeds Act delegated many of the decisions about the use of standardized tests for accountability purposes to the states, but state had to meet federal approval. New York's ESSA plan was approved in early 2018.

In this context of growing accountability pressure and uncertainty, participation in test boycotts grew significantly. Many new advocacy groups were created that aligned with the Opt-Out Movement and the movement gained national attention (Hernández and Baker 2013; Wang 2017). Non-participation on annual accountability tests was rare prior to 2013. After 2013, rates

of non-participation increased dramatically, reaching an average of about 30% of white students not participating in annual tests in 2016 (Figure 1). The test boycotts are meaningful from a policy perspective. NCLB included requirements that schools maintain a 95% participation rate on all annual accountability tests for all accountability subgroups or risked not meeting AYP. Test boycotts also threaten to undermine accountability schemes to assess the quality of schools or teachers. If students with certain characteristics—for example, typically high-achieving students—participate in boycotts at greater rates than other students, the composition of the student body participating in test is systematically different from the overall student populations. Or, as is the case in some schools, if nearly all students boycott the tests then there is no data with which to assess schools. Widespread test boycotts create challenges for accountability systems by depriving them of their main source of data.

[Figure 1 about here]

Data

To analyze the role of racial threat in test boycotts, I compiled school-level data from New York State from four sources. My primary data source was school accountability and demographic data provided by the New York State Department of Education through School Report Cards. These data contain school-level information on performance on accountability tests, disaggregated by racial/ethnic subgroups and by grade, student demographics, and school staff characteristics. Critically for this study, this dataset reports the number of students enrolled during the testing period and the number of students who participated—again, disaggregated by grade and subgroup.

I supplemented these data with additional school-level demographic data available in the Common Core of Data (CCD) provided by the National Center for Education Statistics and data

on district characteristics from the American Communities Survey (ACS) and Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) from the U.S. Census Bureau. From the CCD, I obtained data on school enrollment by grade and racial/ethnic group. From the ACS and SAIPE, I obtained district data on the percent of school-age children in poverty and the percent of adults with a Bachelors degree or above for each school district in New York.

Analytic sample

My main sample covers academic years from 2009-2010 to 2016-2017 school years and includes all public schools that contain at least one tested grade (third through eighth grades). I specify this time frame because it covers four years prior to (and including) the administration of the Common Core-aligned exams and four years after. I exclude secondary grades, since the nature of standardized testing changes in these grades. For example, New York requires students to pass the Regents exam to receive a diploma. The differences in the structure of testing in secondary grades may mean that the dynamics of test boycotts are quite different. Therefore, I focus on the primary grades. I also exclude charter schools, since testing may manifest differently in charter schools compared to traditional public schools—they may, for example, rely on test scores to maintain their charter. Finally, I exclude schools which have no data for the percent of white students participating in annual testing, typically because these schools have six or fewer white students. NYS report cards do not report data for students populations less than six. The resulting sample includes 18,673 observations nested within 2,325 schools.

Measures

Dependent variable: Rate of boycott of annual accountability tests. I measure participation in test boycotts by the percent of eligible white students *not participating* in annual standardized testing for mathematics. New York state reports the number and percent of students participating in

annual assessments, overall and for federally-mandated accountability subgroups. I construct the boycott variable by subtracting the report percent from 100, converting the variable from the rate of participation to the rate of non-participation.

As noted above (Figure 1), prior to the 2012-2013 school year nearly all white students in the state participated in annual testing. Beginning in 2013, the Opt-Out Movement grew and became much more visible. Therefore, I feel confident that the percent of students not participating in annual testing captures my outcome of interest—test boycotts.

Importantly, the New York Department of Education suppresses data for subgroups whose population in a school is less than six. This limits the analytic sample to those schools with more than five white students in any given testing grade. This censoring of the data is not problematic for this analysis, since schools with small proportions of white students would not experience racial threat as I have hypothesized.

Independent variable: Percent black and Latinx. I operationalize racial threat by finding within-school changes in the share of black or Latinx students. This practice follows previous studies on racial/ethnic threat, such as Welch and Payne (2010). At the school-level, I use an indicator of racial threat that indicates whether a school had a net increase in racial diversity between 2013 and 2015. I consider the 2012-2013 school year as the onset of test boycotts and the years after 2013 to comprise the boycott period. I chose the 2013-2015 period as the “treatment” timeframe for two reasons: (1) it coincides with the onset of Common Core-aligned testing in 2013 and (2) incorporates the years immediately following to capture an ongoing trend in the growth of black and Latinx populations in a school. The onset of Common Core-aligned assessments increased the salience of accountability sanctions across the state. I, therefore, consider the 2013 to 2015

period to comprise a “sensitive” period where the hypothesized effects of racialized accountability threat should occur. However, I will also consider various other windows in the analysis.

Figure 2 shows the unadjusted trend lines in the test boycott rate for white students for schools that had an increase in the share of black and Latinx students and those that did not. The difference grew from three percentage points in 2013 to 11 percentage points in 2017.

Control variables. I add control variables that capture characteristics of schools that may be associated with test boycotts. First, I include a set of variables that capture important school demographic characteristics. These include the percent of students who qualify for free or reduced price lunch and who have limited English proficiency. Since the Opt-Out movement primarily consists of white and affluent parents, schools with higher percentages of students qualifying for school lunch programs or English language learners may have lower rates of test boycotts. Second, I include two controls for prior year academic performance by including a variable for the lagged non-proficiency rate on the mathematics accountability test for all students and for white students specifically. Increases in the non-proficiency rate of students in a school may lead parents to question the legitimacy of the tests and participate in test boycotts. Finally, I include a set of controls that capture aspects of school quality. These include the percent of novice teachers in a school (defined as those with fewer than three years of experience) and the percent of teachers with a Masters degree or higher. Parents with students in schools with more experienced teachers may feel more secure in participating in test boycotts, since teachers have greater job security and may feel less pressure to encourage students to participate in testing.

[Figure 2 about here]

Analytic strategy: Difference-in-differences design

To assess whether racial threat contributed to test boycotts, I use a difference-in-differences approach. To do this, I create an indicator for schools that had a net increase in the share of black or Latinx students between 2013 and 2015. I use this window since it captures the demographic changes that occurred after the first administration of Common Core-aligned tests. According to the theory of racialized accountability threat, I expect that demographic changes that occur when accountability pressures first become salient are critical for decisions to join test boycotts. To create the difference-in-differences estimator, I interact the indicator for a net increase in the share of black or Latinx students with an indicator for the years after the administration of the first Common Core-aligned assessments in 2013. I implement the difference-in-differences strategy with by estimating:

$$Y_{it} = \beta_1 T_i * D_t + \beta_2 X_{it} + \alpha_i + \gamma_t + \epsilon_{it}$$

The main outcome of interest, Y_{it} , is the percent of white students boycotting annual accountability tests in mathematics in school i for year t . The main independent variable is the difference-in-differences estimator—the interaction between the indicator for years greater than 2013, D_t , and the indicator for schools that had a net increase in the share of black or Latinx students between 2013 and 2015, T_i . The coefficient β_1 captures the difference in the change in test boycott rates between schools with an increase in black or Latinx students and those without. The terms α_i and γ_t represent school and year fixed effects. By employing school and year fixed-effects, I am effectively capturing any account fixed unobserved differences between schools and unobserved year-to-year differences that impact all schools.

This model captures that average difference between the change pre-2013 to post-2013 for schools that had an increase in black or Latinx students compared to those that did not. The difference-in-differences approach addresses the fact that schools are not randomly assigned to receive increases in the share of black or Latinx students. However, this approach relies on a key assumption: that trend in the outcome of interest moves in parallel between the two groups in the absence of treatment. In other words, the rate of change in test boycott rates between the two groups would be the same if the “treated” schools did not have an increase in the share of black or Latinx students. If schools demonstrate similar trajectories in the absence of treatment, then any unobserved characteristics of those schools are irrelevant to the outcome. Typically this is assessed by showing parallel trends in the pre-period, before treatment occurs. In this case, schools should show the same trajectory in test boycott rates before 2013. However, test boycotts prior to 2013 were extremely rare, as shown in Figure 1. Therefore, the pre-2013 trend lines in the test boycott rate are not helpful for assessing the assumption of parallel trends.

It is therefore plausible that there are important unobserved characteristics of schools associated with both increases in the share of black or Latinx students and with the rate of test boycotts in a school. The difference-in-differences estimator would be biased. I address this issue in three ways. First, I set a specific criterion for inclusion in the comparison group for the difference-in-differences analysis. A strength of the difference-in-differences approach is that differential selection into “treatment” and comparison conditions does not matter so long as whatever existing unobserved differences do not appear to effect the outcome variable. Therefore, the change in outcome for the comparison group provides a reasonable counterfactual for the “treatment”. Since I cannot adequately assess parallel trends in the test boycott rate pre-2013, I make a careful selection of schools that will form the comparison group. To be included

in the analysis as a “treatment” school, the school had to experience a net increase in the share of black or Latinx students between 2013 and 2015. To be include as a comparison school, the school had to experience a net increase in any two year period other than 2013-2015. I assume that there is no systematic difference between a school that had a net increase in the share of black or Latinx students between 2010 and 2012 and one that had a net increase in 2013 and 2015.

Second, in absence of the ability to compare directly the trend in the test boycott rates, I assess trends between schools with an increase in the 2013-2015 window and those without for a number of key variables. This assessment provides evidence that schools with increases and those without increases between 2013 and 2015 are not changing differently along key dimensions.

Third, I conduct a series of “placebo” tests to rule out the possibility that other, unobserved characteristics of schools are driving the results. I use several placebo indicators for schools that had a net increase in the share of black or Latinx students in periods other than 2013-2015. The key placebo is an indicator for schools that saw an increase in the share of black or Latinx students between 2015 and 2015, but not between 2013 and 2015. The logic of these tests is that if schools with increases in the share of black or Latinx students have unobserved changes that make them more likely to see such increases and are related to test boycotts for white students, then the placebo indicator should identify such unobserved changes by finding an association between future changes and the test boycott rate. In other words, a 2015-2017 indicator should not predict test boycott rates between 2013 and 2015, unless there are unobserved school-level changes that are associated with increases in test boycotts and increases in the share of black or Latinx students. I discuss this more below.

Descriptive analysis of analytic sample

Table 2 presents descriptive statistics of the key variables in the sample for schools that experienced a net increase in the share of black or Latinx student between 2013 and 2015 and those that did not, separately presented for all schools and for majority white schools and for before the administration of Common Core-aligned assessments and after. Overall, schools that experienced an increase in share of black or Latinx students between 2013 and 2015 overall tended to be slightly more advantaged than those that did not. These schools had fewer students qualifying for free or reduced price lunch and were located in districts with fewer 5 to 17 year-olds in poverty. This is true for the full analytic sample and for a subsample of majority white schools, as well as for the pre-Common Core years and the Common Core years.

[Insert Table 2 about here]

While this descriptive analysis suggests systematic differences between the schools that experienced increases in the share of black or Latinx students and those that did not, the difference-in-differences approach accounts for such differential selection if the assumption of parallel trends is met. As noted above, key to the difference-in-differences approach is the assumption of parallel trends in the outcome of interest between the treatment and comparison groups in the pre-treatment period. The assumption of parallel trends is important because it demonstrates that unobserved differences between the two groups are not correlated with the outcome variable. In this case, the pre-2013 trends in test non-participation rates between the two groups are indeed parallel—since the rates for both groups were effectively zero until 2013. The assessment of pre-2013 trends offers little information to determine any meaningful differences between the groups that might bias the difference-in-differences estimator. Therefore, I assess the trends for several key variables in the study to see if the parallel trends assumption holds. Differences in pre-2013 trends between the two groups for any of these variables could indicate a

selection bias—that schools with an increase in the share of black or Latinx students were trending differently in along other dimensions.

I show the trends for several variables of interest for the two groups for both all schools and for majority white schools only (Figures 3 and 4). The percent of students with limited English proficiency or qualifying for free or reduced price lunch, the percent of teachers with Masters degrees or above, and the rate of non-proficiency on English and Math assessments show parallel trends. The percent of teachers with fewer than three years of experience show slightly different trends. Schools that experienced increases in the share of black or Latinx students between 2013 and 2015 had a downward trend from 2010 until 2012 and then began to increase again. Schools without an increase saw the share of teachers with fewer than three years of experience decrease from 2010 to 2011, before beginning to increase again. Schools without increases in the share of students of color had a sharper increase in the share of novice teachers. However, when I limit the sample to include only schools that are majority white, the trends in the share of novice teachers are parallel. The differences in trends, therefore, is likely concentrated in schools with fewer white students. In each model, I control for the share of novice teachers in the school.

Results

As a first pass, I present the results of an OLS regression of the test boycott rate on the percent of black or Latinx students, with and without school and year fixed effects (Table 4). For the full pooled analytic sample, there is a negative overall relationship between the share of black or Latinx students and the test boycott rate for white students. This is not surprising, given that prior research suggests the movement is concentrated in affluent, white areas (Pizmony-Levy

and Green Saraisky 2016). For elementary grades, there is a small positive relationship, while for middle grades the relationship is negative.

[Insert Table 4 about here]

The inclusion of school and year fixed effects accounts for the possibility that unobserved differences between schools or unobserved year-to-year changes may correlate with test boycott rates. With the inclusion of fixed effects, the relationship between the share of black and Latinx students and the test boycott rate becomes positive and quite strong, across each specification in Table 4 (Models 2, 4, and 6). For each percentage point increase in the share of black or Latinx students in a school, there is a 0.8 to 1 percentage point increase in the test boycott rate among white students. To put this in context, if a school saw a 7.5 percentage point increase in its share of black or Latinx students, it saw an average increase of 6 percentage points in the test boycott rate among white students. This is a large enough for the school to fail to meet the 95% participation requirement. Thus, while overall, schools with larger populations of black or Latinx students have fewer white students boycotting the tests, schools with increases in the share of black or Latinx students over time have larger increases in the test boycott rate for white students.

Also notable across the models in Table 4 is the relationship between the lagged non-proficiency rate in mathematics and the test boycott rates among white students. This variable captures the potential role of accountability pressures on test boycott rates. Increases in the non-proficiency rate expose a school to potential accountability sanctions. Across the pooled OLS models (Table 4, Models 1, 3, and 5), the relationship is positive and stronger than that of the share of black or Latinx students—for the full sample and for elementary and middle grades separately. There is about a 0.3 to 0.4 percentage point increases in the test boycott rate for each

one percentage point increase in the non-proficiency rate. Overall, therefore, schools with higher non-proficiency rates have higher rates of test boycotts.

Again, these estimates are subject to potential bias from unobserved school-level differences. With the inclusion of fixed effects to account for between school differences, the coefficient is reduced by a quarter. It remains positive, but is only a seventh of the magnitude of the coefficient on the percent of black or Latinx students. Controlled for between-school confounds, I find that a within-school increase in the share of black or Latinx students is much more strongly associated with test boycotts than lagged non-proficiency rates. The non-proficiency rate on the previous year's test matters, but much less than increases in the share of black or Latinx students.

Difference-in-differences strategy

While the estimates from the fixed effects models above provide strong evidence that increases in the share of black and Latinx students contributed to participation in test boycotts among white students, the difference-in-differences approach allows me to directly compare schools with an increase in the share of black or Latinx students in the period after the implementation of Common Core-aligned assessments in 2013. I can more directly test the theory of racialized accountability threat by isolating those schools that had an increase in its population of black or Latinx students between 2013 and 2015 from those that did not. In the parlance of the difference-in-differences framework, the schools with a net increase in the share of black or Latinx students between 2013 and 2015 form the "treatment" group, while those without form the comparison group.

Based on the difference-in-differences strategy, I find strong evidence that racialized accountability threat increased participation in test boycotts among white students. Compared to

schools with no increase in the share of black or Latinx students between 2013 and 2015, schools that experienced increases had about seven to eight percentage points more students participating in boycotts (Table 5). The estimates are similar for the full analytic sample (Table 5, Models 1 and 2) and for the subsample of elementary grades (Table 5, Models 3 and 4) and middle grades (Table 5, Models 5 and 6). The inclusion of school and year fixed effects reduces the estimate by one percentage point, but again, it is stable across specification.

[Insert Table 5 about here]

According to my argument, racialized accountability threat should impact more affluent, white, suburban schools, since these schools have historically not faced accountability pressures. With the implementation of Common Core-aligned assessments in 2013, the possibility of accountability sanctions became more salient in these communities. Therefore, I should detect an association between increases in the share of black or Latinx students and the rate of test boycotts among white students only for schools that are majority white and located in affluent and non-urban areas. I re-estimated the main specification to compare four types of relevant subgroups: (1) majority white and minority white schools; (2) schools in low poverty district and those in high poverty districts; (3) schools in non-urban areas and urban areas; and (4) schools with no pre-2013 experience with accountability pressures for white students and those with previous experiences with accountability pressures. According to the theory of racialized accountability threat, increases in the share of black or Latinx students should create group threat for schools the salience of accountability sanctions was historically low. The first of each pair just listed should experience racialized accountability threat, but not the second.

Table 6 presents the results of the difference-in-differences strategy comparing these subgroups. In keeping with the theory of racialized accountability threat, schools with a net

increase in the share of black or Latinx students had higher rates of test boycotts in majority white schools, but not in schools with a majority of black or Latinx students (Table 6, Panel A, Models 1 and 2); in schools in more affluent areas, but not in less affluent ones (Table 6, Panel A, Models 3 and 4); in non-urban areas, but not in urban ones (Table 6, Panel A, Models 5 and 6); and in schools with no previous accountability pressure, but not in schools with previous accountability pressure. The point estimate for the difference-in-differences estimator remains stable across these different subgroups, showing about a seven to eight percentage point difference between the two groups of schools.

[Insert Table 6 about here]

The stability of the estimate across subgroups is not entirely surprising, given that schools affluent, non-urban areas are predominately white. In Table 6, Panel B, I show estimates that compare subgroups comprised of only majority white schools. The estimates remain stable. Affluent majority white school and non-urban majority white schools with increases in the share of black or Latinx students have about five percentage points more white students boycotting the test compared to poorer and urban majority white schools. Most notably, for majority white schools that had no previous accountability experience, those that had a net increase in the share of black or Latinx students between 2013 and 2015 had nine percentage points more white students participating in test boycotts (Table 6, Panel B, Model 7). For majority white schools with previous accountability pressure, I find no difference in the test boycott rate for white students.

Alternative specifications for “treatment” and comparison groups

In the difference-in-differences framework, the criteria used to construct the treatment and comparison groups are often potentially exogenous, determined by factors like changes in

public policy. In this case, however, I created “treatment” and comparison groups using a criterion that reflect the theoretical framework motivating the study. A school was considered a “treatment” school if it had a net increase in the share of black or Latinx students between 2013 and 2015. The school may or may not have experienced increases at other times in the 2009 to 2017 timeframe that captures the scope of the dataset. Comparison schools are those that experience no increase in the 2013 to 2015 period, but may have experienced increases at other times. This setup reflects the theory of racialized accountability threat that I argue for here. However, there are other plausible criteria that I could have used. For example, “treatment” may require an increase in a wider or narrower window. Or the appropriate comparison schools are those that never experienced any increase in the share of black or Latinx students.

To determine how stable the estimates in the analysis above are to other treatment and comparison criteria, I re-estimate my main specification replacing the treatment indicator with the set of indicators described in Table 7, Panel A. For each treatment indicator, I re-estimate the model for each potential comparison group as described in Table 7, Panel B. I first estimate the model where “treatment” is determined by the criterion in Table 7, Panel A, row 1 and comparison is determined by the criterion in Table 7, Panel B, row 1. Then, using the same treatment indicator, I repeat the analysis for Table 7, Panel B, row 1. I repeat this for each permutation of treatment and comparison, giving 16 possible estimates.

[Insert Table 7 about here]

I display the results of this process in Figure 5. Each point represents the point estimate of the difference-in-differences estimator. Vertical lines show the 95% confidence interval. The dashed horizontal line is the median of the estimates and the solid line shows zero. All of the estimates are substantially similar to the estimates in the main analysis. The median estimate is

about ten percentage points, slightly greater, but substantially similar to the seven to eight percentage point difference in the main analysis above. The estimates range from a seven percentage point difference to a 14 percentage point difference. Taken together, the alternative specifications produce substantially similar results to the main analysis above.

[Figure 5 about here]

Placebo tests

While the various model specifications confirm the predictions of racialized accountability threat, there remains a key threat to the validity of these findings. Neither the fixed-effects or difference-in-differences approaches can fully account for unobserved within-school changes that are associated with increases in the share of black or Latinx students, particularly given the inability to assess trends in the pre-treatment period for the outcome variable. As I noted, since the outcome variable is effectively zero for both groups prior to 2013, it provides little information for assessing parallel trends between the two groups of schools. Therefore, I cannot determine if the two groups are changing differentially in ways that are consequential for the rate of test boycotts. There may be some unobserved within-school changes that are associated with a school seeing an influx of black or Latinx students *and* with the likelihood that the school will experience more test boycotts among white students. For example, black and Latinx parents may enroll their children in schools prioritize test preparation, adopting practices like teaching to the test or narrow curricula to tested subjects. Prior research on the Opt-Out Movement suggests that concern over such changes practices has lead parents to join the movement (Pizmony-Levy and Green Saraisky 2016). Thus, if these changes are associated with both future increases in the share of black and Latinx students in a school and increases in test boycotts among white students, then the results presented above are biased due to omitted

variables. Parents participating in boycotts are reacting to changes in curricula or instructional practices, rather than changes in demographics.

I addressed this possibility by showing parallel trends for a number of key school-level variables (Figures 3 and 4). These plots provide evidence of parallel trends between the two groups in the absence of “treatment”, but still require the assumption that there were no unobserved changes that, uncorrelated with those variables, was correlated with test boycotts. If the tendency to adopt test preparation practices is unrelated to the variables in those figures, but correlated with future gains in the share of black or Latinx students and future test boycotts, the estimates in the analysis above are biased due to differential selection into “treatment.”

To add more evidence against this possibility, I conducted a series of placebo tests. I created different placebo “treatment” indicators that take a value of 1 for schools that saw a net increase in the share of black or Latinx students for time periods outside of 2013-2015, but did not see an increase between 2013 and 2015, and a 0 otherwise. For the first of these placebo tests, I created a treatment indicator for schools that experience an increase in the share of black or Latinx students between 2016 and 2017. If it is the case that there are leading changes that make a school more likely to see an increase in the share of students of color, these changes must occur in the 2013-2015 time period for these “treated” schools. Parents can react to these changes in participate in test boycotts in the 2013-2015 period.

If it is the case that increased shares of students of color exacerbate the perception of accountability threat for parents, as I propose, then I also should not detect an effect for schools that experienced pre-2013 increases. For example, if a school experience an influx of students of color between 2008 and 2010, the school staff and parents have had time to adjust to these changes prior to the 2013 implementation of the more rigorous Common Core-aligned

assessments. They should not experience racialized accountability threat, since the changes occur outside of the condition of increased accountability pressure. Therefore I create a placebo indicators for schools that had a net increase between 2008 to 2010 and between 2010 to 2012, but not between 2013 and 2015. For the placebo indicator capture increases between 2016 and 2017, I restrict the data to include only the years prior to 2016 to avoid picking up concurrent effects of demographic changes.

As shown in Table 8, I detect either no, or negative, effect for each of the placebo indicators, for the full sample and for elementary and middle grades separately. Schools that saw increases in the share of black or Latinx students outside the 2013-2015 window do not see an increase in the test boycott rate among white students compared to those schools that did not see such an increase.

[Table 8 about here]

Alternate explanation: Progressive orientation of parents

So far, I have argued for, and presented evidence to support, a theory of racialized accountability threat. However, the evidence presented thus far is also consistent with another potential explanation. Existing research suggests that parents who participate in the Opt-Out Movement are politically liberal, but not exclusively so, and many participants consider themselves political “independents” (Pizmony-Levy and Green Saraisky 2016). Therefore, a potential alternate explanation is that more “progressive” schools, those with more politically liberal parents, may attract more black and Latinx students and may have more participation in test boycotts among white students—due to the ideological orientation of the parents and not due to the influx of black and Latinx students. In this case, the above analysis is biased due to the omitted variable of the “progressiveness” of parents. The indicator for an increase in the share of

black or Latinx students captures not just the increase in shares of those students, but also schools that have parents who are more “progressive” in their attitude toward accountability testing.

The difference-in-differences framework potentially accounts for such omitted variables, provided that the assumption of parallel trends in the outcome variable is satisfied. In this case, I cannot directly satisfy this assumption. I have presented indirect evidence based on parallel trends along other key variables and on the placebo tests above. If parental “progressiveness” attracts black and Latinx students, it should do so for periods other than 2013 to 2015. But perhaps for the 2013-2015 period alone, the “progressive” orientation of parents is associated with increases in the share of black and Latinx students. If this explanation is plausible then two assertions should hold: (1) that the political liberalness of parents should predict whether a school sees an increase in the share of black or Latinx students in the 2013 to 2015 time frame; and (2) that the effect of an increase in the share of black or Latinx students should not hold in schools with more politically liberal parents. In other words, I should not find a difference in among schools in more liberal areas between those with an increase in the share of black or Latinx students and those without. If I do detect an effect consistent with those of the main analysis, then the hypothesis of racialized accountability threat holds even among parents in more liberal areas.

To assess this explanation, I use precinct-level voting data from the 2010 election in New York, available from the Harvard Dataverse (Ansolabehere and Rodden 2011). These data have vote counts for almost all census-define voting districts in the state. Using the latitude and longitude of schools, I determine in which voting district each school was located in 2010 and

assign voting data to that school. Voting districts do not necessarily overlap with a school's catchment area, so it is an imperfect measure of the voting patterns of a school's location.

First, I predicted, using a simple linear probability model, whether the total vote share for liberal candidates in a school's voting district in 2010 predicts whether that school will have a net increase in the share of black or Latinx students between 2013 and 2015 (Table 9). I estimate this model for the total vote share of third party liberal candidates and for the total vote share for all liberal candidates. I define third party liberal votes as those going to candidates in the Green or Working Families lines. In many cases, the Working Families Party endorses the Democratic candidate and has that candidate on their voting line. I define all liberal votes as those going to all Democratic, Green, and Working Families candidates. I include votes for federal offices (Senate and House of Representatives) and state offices (Governor, State Senate, and State Assembly). I estimate these models separately for all schools and for majority white schools only.

[Insert Table 9 about here]

As shown in Table 9, the share of votes going to either third-party liberal candidates or all liberal candidates is not associated, or negatively associated, with whether a school saw a net increase in the share of black or Latinx students between 2013 and 2015. For voting districts that had more votes for third-party party liberal candidates, schools were significantly less likely to see a net increase in the share of black or Latinx students between 2013 and 2015. This suggests that schools in more liberal areas did not experience increases in the share of black or Latinx students, as this explanation predicts.

Second, I estimated the difference-in-differences model separately for areas whose share of votes going to liberal candidates was greater than the median and for those whose share was

less than the median, for the full analytic sample and for majority white schools only (Table 10). The difference-in-differences estimator for each model falls within the range of the main analysis above for school in both liberal and conservative areas. The impact of a net increase in the share of black or Latinx students appears stronger in areas that had a greater share of votes going to conservative candidates compared to areas with a greater share of votes going to liberal candidates.

[Table 10 about here]

Taken together, this analysis provides evidence against the alternate explanation that schools in politically more liberal areas were more likely to see increases in the share of black or Latinx students between 2013 and 2015 and to have higher rates of test boycotts for white students, which would suggest a potentially spurious relationship between racial group threat and participation in test boycotts. Whether schools were in a politically liberal or politically conservative area, those with increase in the share of black and Latinx students had a higher rate of test boycotts for white students than those without such an increase. The effect, however, was larger in schools located in more conservative voting areas, suggesting that white parents in these areas are more sensitive to racialized accountability threat. This may be in keeping with conservative political ideology, which is more suspicious of government intervention in schools.

Discussion

This study provide strong evidence that changes in the racial composition of a school contributed to participation in test boycotts among white students, consistent with the theory of racialized accountability threat. I found that schools with an increase in the share of black or Latinx students between 2013 and 2015 had about five percentage points more white students boycotting the annual mathematics accountability assessment than schools without such an

increase. While many factors may contribute to why parents joined the movement and encourage their children to boycott the tests, I provide evidence that, in the case of collective action in New York, changes in school racial composition was an important factor that contributed to anti-testing mobilization.

While the findings from the main analysis provide evidence that racial group threat contributed to the participation in test boycotts among white students, the findings from the comparative analysis of subgroups provide even more striking evidence. The effect of a net increase in the share of black or Latinx students between 2013 and 2015 on the test boycott rate of white students holds only for schools in areas with little previous concern over accountability pressures, including majority white schools, schools in low poverty districts, those in suburbs or rural areas, and those schools that had always previously met AYP in math and ELA. The onset of Common Core-aligned testing increased the salience of potential accountability sanctions.

My findings extend previous research on racial group threat by showing that, in addition to shaping political attitudes and behaviors, racial threat can motivate participation in collective action. Previous research has shown that racial threat can shape political behavior like voting and support for policies (Enos 2015; Reny and Newman 2018; Andrews and Seguin 2015), but there is no previous research showing that racial threat can promote participation in specific acts of protest. This is an important finding for research on social movements, since identifying factors that contribute to movement mobilization is a central research concern. This study shows that racial threat is a factor that can spur participation in social movements.

While this study provides evidence that racialized accountability threat contributed to participation in the Opt-Out Movement, it is important to acknowledge that motivations for joining social movements are multifaceted. In this study, many schools that did not experience

increases in the share of black or Latinx students had high rates of test boycotts for white students. Movement participation is frequently driven by ideology (Zald 2000; Snow et al. 1986; Oliver and Johnston 1999), and these findings are consistent with the possibility that some participants in test boycotts are driven by ideological concerns, while others may react to racial threat. While further research is needed to disentangle the role of ideology in the movement, these findings suggests that success movement mobilization can extend beyond ideological commitments and may incorporate a wide range of motivations.

In addition, while previous studies on accountability policies have documented their effect on student outcomes and school policies and practices, this study explores how accountability policies have created a constituency that has mobilized in opposition. Parents are key stakeholders in the education policy process, but their role in their process has not often been made thematic. Yet, they respond to policy changes and may take collective action that can shape how policies are designed and implemented. Collective action by parents can also shape the landscape of educational opportunity if that action seeks to maintain exclusive control over educational goods, hoard opportunities, and reinforce racial hierarchies.

While I have argued that these results are consistent with the theory of racialized accountability threat, there are several key limitations to the inferences that I can draw. First, the mechanisms driving the relationship between racial group threat and participation test boycotts are unclear. According to the group threat theory, the mere perception of a threat to a dominant groups control over political and economic resources is enough to trigger changes in attitudes and behavior. Wetts and Willer (2018) experimentally manipulated the salience of Barack Obama's race and the magnitude of trends in demographic changes and found a negative effect on whites' attitude toward welfare programs.

However, other mechanisms are possible. Studies have documented how school staff adopted practices focused on maintaining accountability status when their school experienced influxes of students of color, immigrant students, or English language learners (Turner 2015; Welton, Diem, and Holme 2013; Holme, Diem, and Welton 2013; Evans 2016). Parents of white students may react to the adoption of practices like teaching to the test, narrowing curricula to tested subjects, and eliminating extracurricular activities in favor of test preparation that may result from demographic changes. Indeed, this mechanism is consistent with previous survey research on the avowed reasons parents joined the Opt-Out Movement (Pizmony-Levy and Green Saraisky 2016). The findings presented here are consistent with either process, but future research may investigate in-depth the mechanisms that drive parents to participate in collective action to protect educational goods.

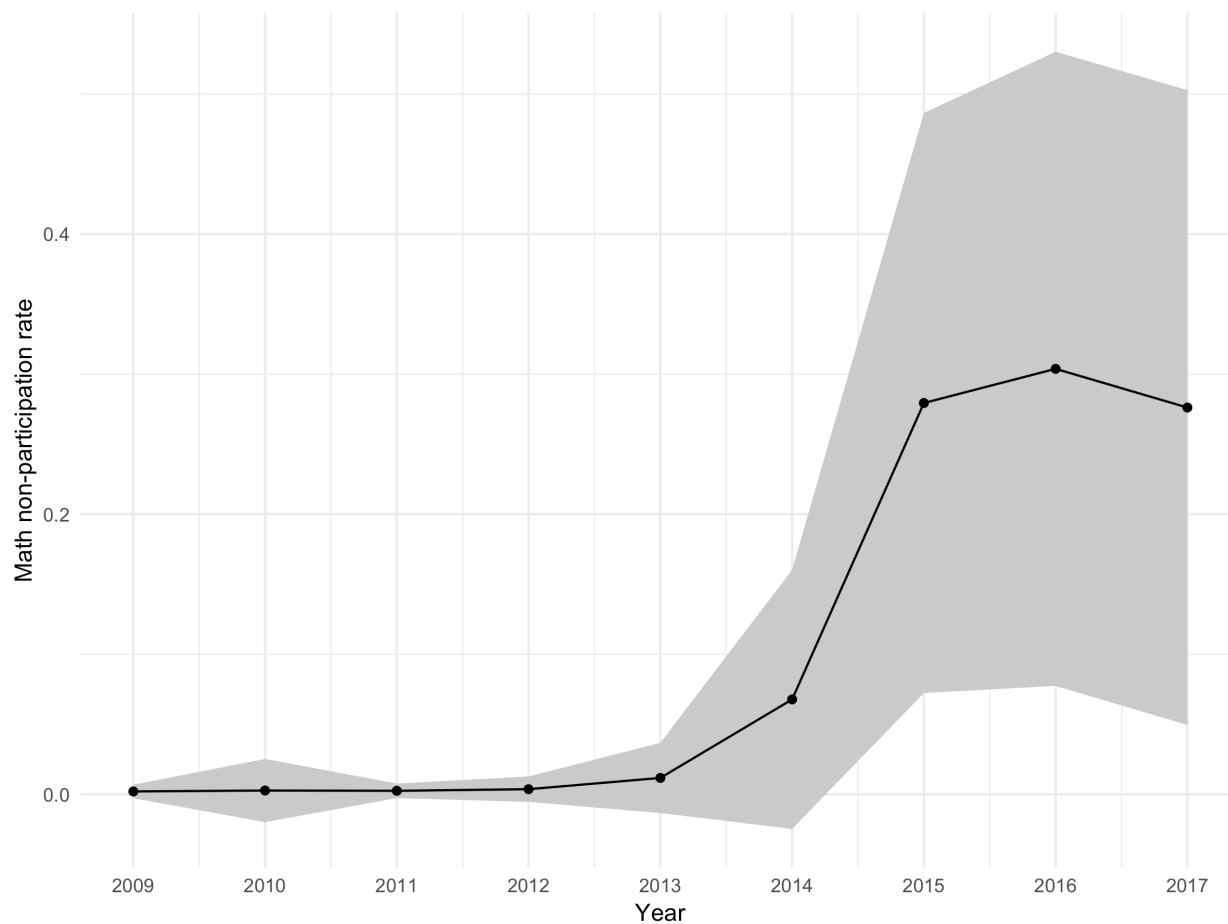
Another key concern is the extent to which these findings are generalizable to other contexts. A unique aspect of the case of New York is the confluence of three factors: (1) an aggressive implementation of Common Core State Standards and aligned tests with more rigorous proficiency cutoffs; (2) a pre-existing network of advocacy groups opposed to the use of standardized tests for high-stakes accountability purposes; and (3) changes in racial demographics. While the majority of states have adopted the Common Core, not all approached testing in the same way as New York. While the Opt-Out Movement has a national presence and activists promote test boycotts in all states, not all states have a robust movement infrastructure to support collective action as New York does. These factors make New York a non-representative case, which is a problem that social movement research often faces (McAdam 1996). Therefore, it is necessary to test the theory of racialized accountability threat in other contexts, both for participation in test boycotts and for other relevant outcomes as well. For

example, racialized accountability threat may motivate well-resourced white families to exit the public school system altogether and enroll in private schools or take on homeschooling.

These findings have important implications for the future of accountability policies and the design of policies that seek to improve educational opportunities for non-dominant groups. Much research has demonstrated how maintain access to educational opportunities, through micro-level processes within schools (Calarco 2014; Lewis-McCoy, 2014; Lewis & Diamond 2015) and through macro-level policies (Bonilla-Silva 1997). The findings of this study extend those of other studies that document action taken by affluent white parents to maintain local control over educational decisions and resources, such as anti-busing demonstrations (Useem 1980) and opposition to desegregation plans (Siegel-Hawley, Diem, and Frankenberg 2018). There is a long tradition of opposition to state and federal attempts to expand educational opportunities for students of color when those efforts challenge the local control over schools. Standardized tests are a cornerstone of accountability policies. Under the most felicitous interpretation of their use, they expose the education debt owed to students of color, traditionally underserved by local schools (Ladson-Billings 2006). These findings suggest that policies that seek to redress the education debt will face challenges when they threaten, in reality or in perception, the control over educational resources exerted by parents in predominately white communities.

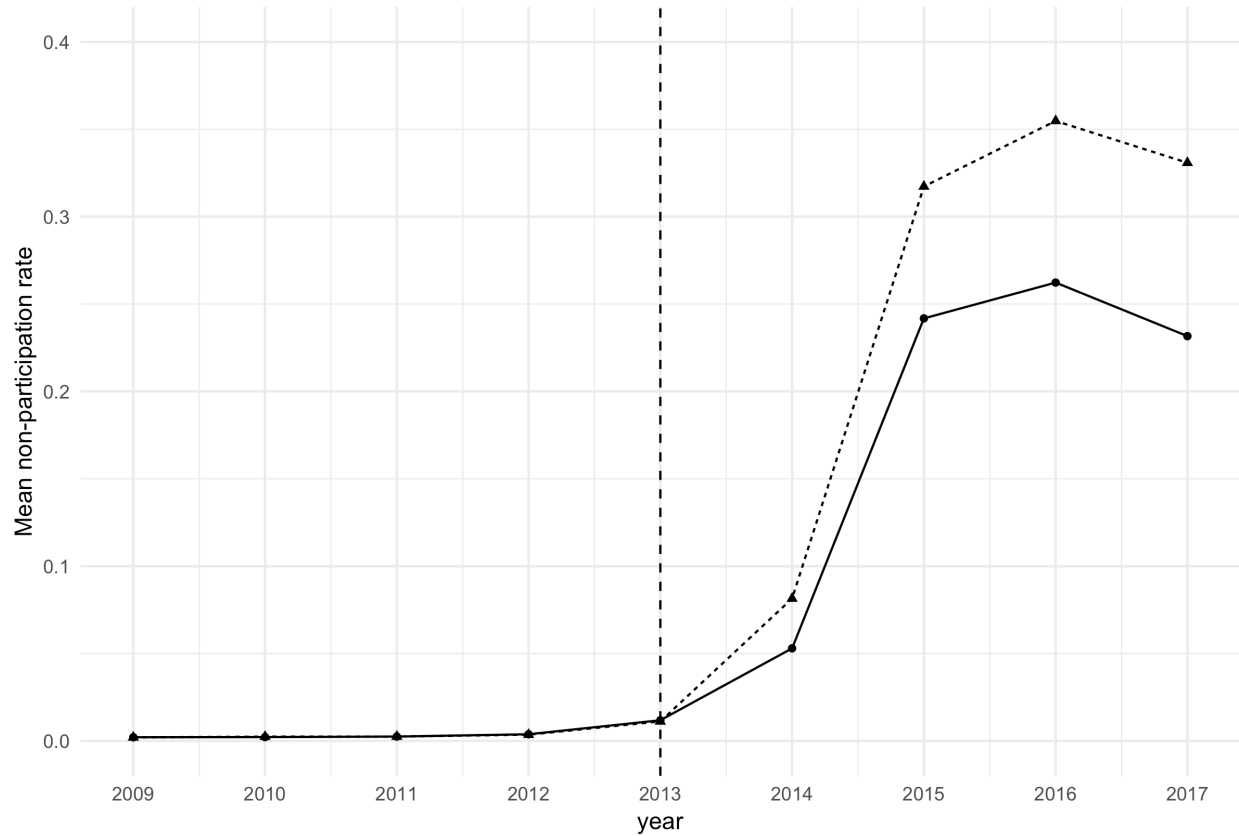
Figures

Figure 1 - Trend of non-participation for mathematics accountability assessments for white students, 2009-2017



Note. Vertical line indicates the administration of Common Core-aligned assessments.

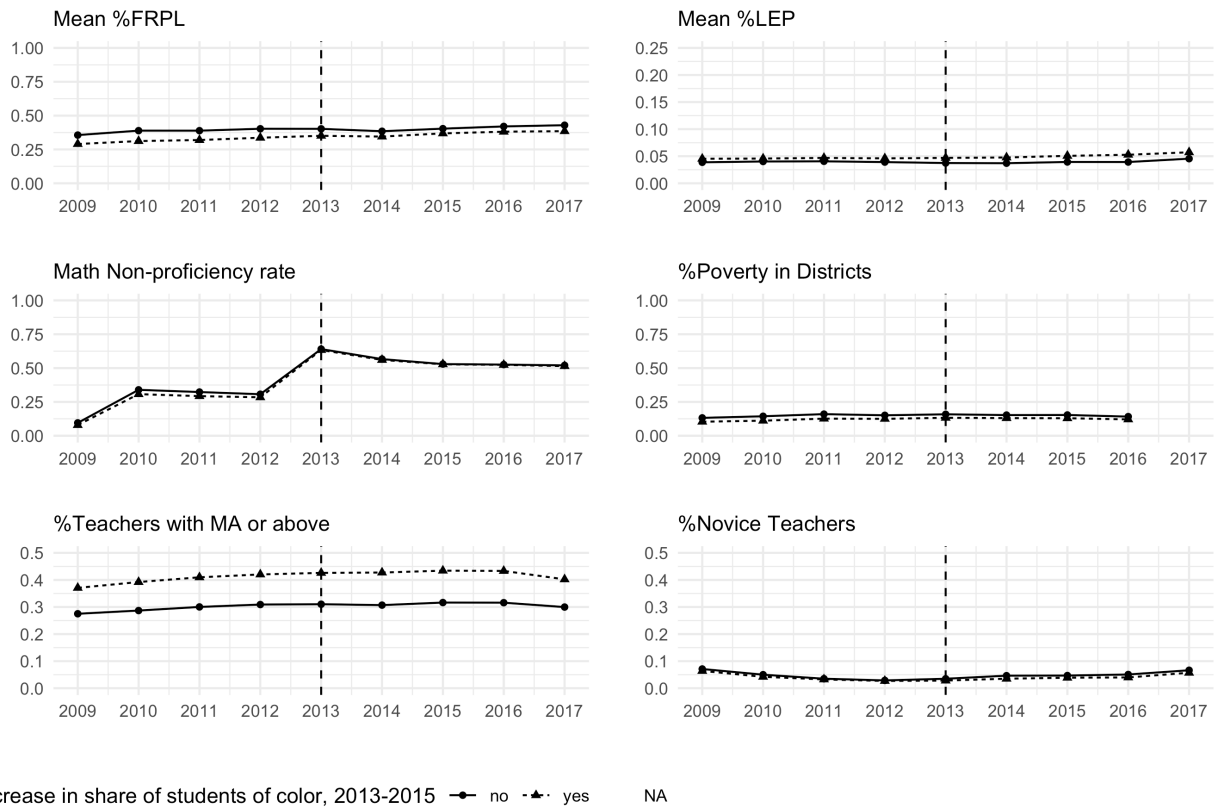
Figure 2 - Trend of non-participation for mathematics accountability assessments for white students for schools with a net increase in the share of black or Latinx students and those without, 2009-2018



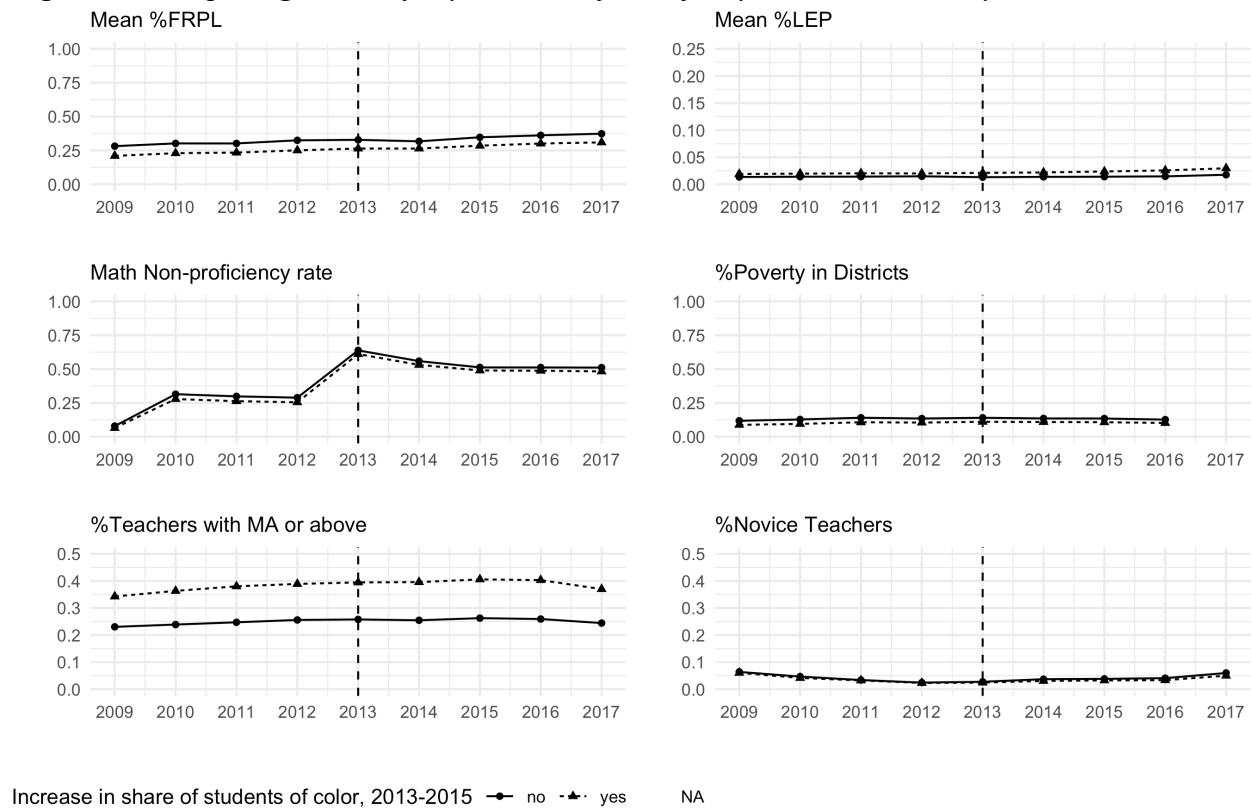
are of students of color, 2013-2017 — no ---- yes NA Increase in share of students of color, 2013-2015 •

Note. Vertical line in 2013 indicates the administration of Common Core-aligned assessments.

Figure 3 - Comparing trends of key variables for schools with a net increase in the share of black or Latinx students and those without, 2009-2018

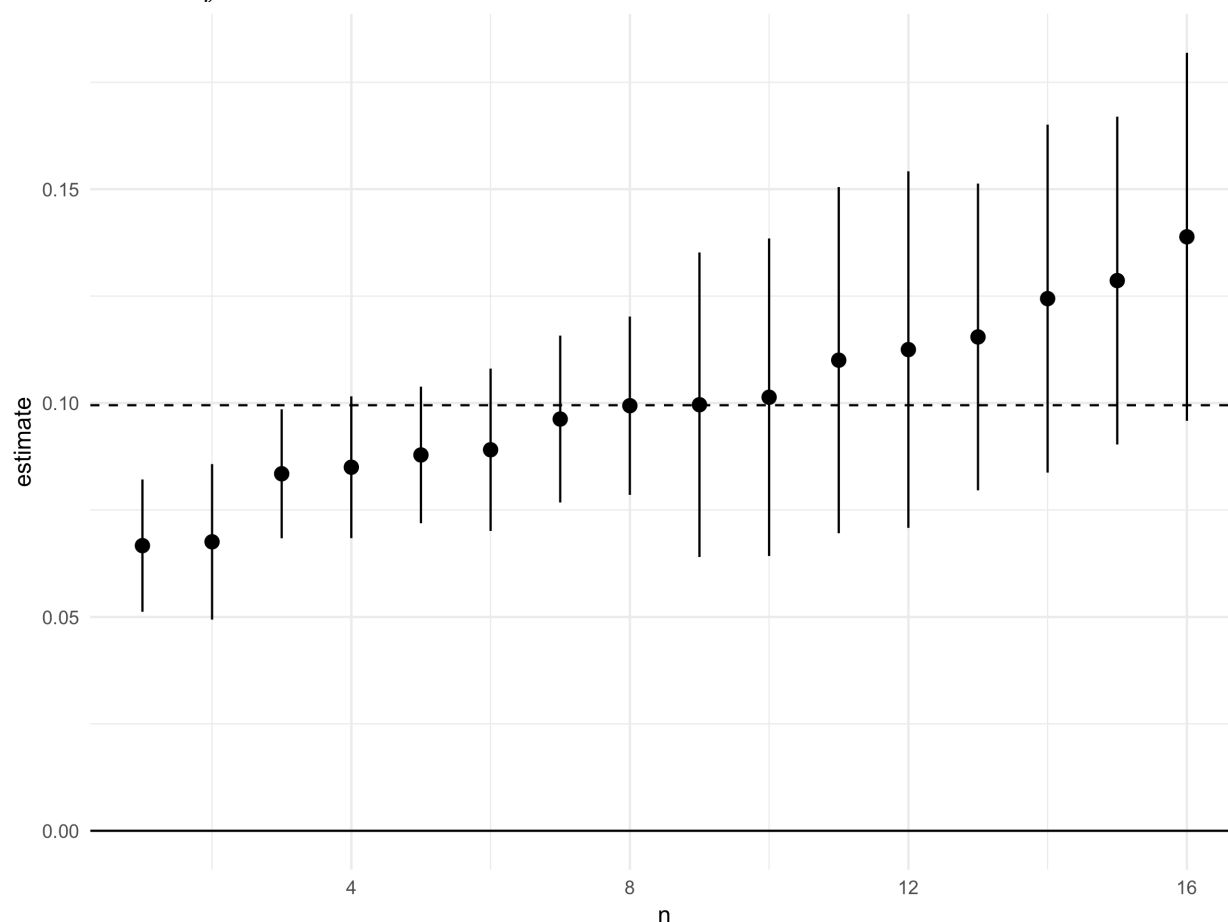


Notes. FRPL = free or reduced price lunch; LEP = limited English proficiency. Novice teachers are defined as those with fewer than three years of experience. Vertical line indicates the administration of Common Core-aligned assessments. ##### page break

Figure 4 - Comparing trends of key variables for majority white schools only, 2009-2018

Notes. FRPL = free or reduced price lunch; LEP = limited English proficiency. Novice teachers are defined as those with fewer than three years of experience. Vertical line indicates the administration of Common Core-aligned assessments.

Figure 5 - Estimates and confidence intervals for difference-in-differences estimator under various criteria for inclusion in treatment



Notes. Difference-in-differences estimator is the interaction between treatment variable and an indicator for years after 2013. All models include controls for the lagged non-proficiency rate in mathematics for all students and for white students, the percent of teachers with less than 3 years of experience, the percent of teachers with MAs or above, the percent of English Language Learners, the percent of students qualifying for free or reduced price lunch, the natural log of total school enrollment, and school and year fixed effects. Heteroscedastic-robust standard errors clustered at the school level are in parentheses.

Tables

Table 1 - Percent of schools not meeting Adequate Yearly Progress in either mathematics or English Language Arts in the pre-Common Core era and Common Core era

	Pre-Common Core Era (2009- 2012)	Common Core Era (2013-2014)	Change
Mean %White	60.1	69.8	9.7
Mean %Black	16.5	9.7	-6.8
Mean %Latinx	16.3	13.3	-3
Mean %FRPL	57.9	47.9	-10
Mean %ELL	6.4	4.4	-2
%Suburban	43.4	54.8	11.4
%Not meeting AYP for white students	8.67	35.2	26.5

Note. AYP = Adequate Yearly Progress. Includes all K-8 schools that contain at least one tested grade (3-8).

Table 2 - Descriptive statistics by group for all years, for 2009, and for 2013

	Increase in %Black and Latinx, 2013-2015		No increase in %Black and Latinx, 2013-2015		Increase - No increase difference	
	All Schools	Majority White Schools	All Schools	Majority White Schools	All Schools	Majority White Schools
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	Diff.	Diff.
<i>Panel A. 2009-2012</i>						
Boycotting tests - all students	0.37 (0.82)	0.38 (0.86)	0.38 (0.88)	0.39 (0.94)	-0.01	-0.01
Boycotting tests - white students	0.44 (1.04)	0.43 (1.08)	0.44 (1.27)	0.45 (1.38)	0	-0.02
Non-proficiency rate - mathematics	32.04 (22.51)	29.46 (21.03)	33.5 (22.77)	31.75 (21.75)	-1.46	-2.29
Black/Latinx	20.74 (20.28)	10.9 (8.57)	19.17 (21.47)	8.74 (7.61)	1.57	2.16
White	71.12 (23.2)	83.33 (10.55)	72 (25.91)	85.98 (10.17)	-0.88	-2.65
Novice teachers	3.87 (4.44)	3.64 (4.24)	4.43 (5.19)	3.97 (4.51)	-0.56	-0.33
Teachers with MA or above	40.4 (27.16)	37.39 (27.92)	29.6 (24.58)	24.58 (23.49)	10.8	12.81
Free/reduced price lunch	32.2 (24.55)	23.78 (18.67)	38.74 (24.93)	30.72 (20.04)	-6.54	-6.94
Limited English proficiency	4.62 (6.68)	2 (2.74)	3.93 (6.71)	1.39 (2.42)	0.69	0.61
Total enrollment	558.35 (254.73)	521.27 (226.83)	530.75 (282.69)	470.69 (224.28)	27.6	50.58

District %Poverty	11.99	10.09	14.88	13.2	-2.89	-3.11
	(9.13)	(7.22)	(9.21)	(7.45)		

Panel B. 2013-2017

Boycotting tests - all students	21.6	24.82	16.63	19.42	4.97	5.4
	(20.39)	(20.75)	(16.82)	(17.03)		
Boycotting tests - white students	27.01	29.92	19.78	22.33	7.23	7.59
	(23.55)	(23.46)	(18.81)	(18.76)		
Non-proficiency rate - mathematics	53.19	49.81	53.53	52.36	-0.34	-2.55
	(18.14)	(16.3)	(18.79)	(17.13)		
Black/Latinx	25.07	15.04	18.26	8.66	6.81	6.38
	(21.16)	(10.44)	(20.25)	(7.43)		
White	64.8	77.14	70.07	83.84	-5.27	-6.7
	(23.9)	(12.67)	(25.85)	(11.41)		
Novice teachers	4.27	3.66	5.26	4.41	-0.99	-0.75
	(5.2)	(4.58)	(5.86)	(5.09)		
Teachers with MA or above	42.45	39.37	30.99	25.53	11.46	13.84
	(28.9)	(30.09)	(26.68)	(26)		
Free/reduced price lunch	36.98	28.99	40.95	35.01	-3.97	-6.02
	(23.29)	(19.03)	(22.91)	(20.11)		
Limited English proficiency	5.2	2.51	4.03	1.5	1.17	1.01
	(6.93)	(3.32)	(6.85)	(2.69)		
Total enrollment	559.74	509.54	549.69	477.25	10.05	32.29
	(257.64)	(221.53)	(286.87)	(212.59)		
District %Poverty	12.7	10.6	14.93	13.22	-2.23	-2.62
	(9.32)	(7.38)	(9.28)	(7.38)		

Table 3 - Descriptive statistics by group for majority white schools for all years

	Increase in %Black and Latinx, 2013-2015	No increase in %Black and Latinx, 2013-2015
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)
Boycotting tests - white students	0.13 (0.21)	0.1 (0.16)
Boycotting tests - all students	0.11 (0.18)	0.08 (0.15)
District %Poverty	0.1 (0.07)	0.13 (0.07)
Non-proficiency rate - mathematics	0.38 (0.22)	0.4 (0.22)
Teachers with MA or above	0.38 (0.29)	0.25 (0.25)
Black/Latinx	0.13 (0.1)	0.09 (0.08)
Limited English proficiency	0.02 (0.03)	0.01 (0.03)
Novice teachers	0.04 (0.04)	0.04 (0.05)
Free/reduced price lunch	0.26 (0.19)	0.33 (0.2)
White	0.81 (0.12)	0.85 (0.11)

Table 4 - OLS and School and Year Fixed Effects Estimates of Effects of Increases in the percent of black or Latinx students on Rate of Test Boycotts Among White Students

	All grades (3-8)		Elementary grades (3-5)		Middle grades (6-8)	
	1	2	3	4	5	6
%Black or Latinx	-0.048 *** (0.011)	0.785 *** (0.059)	0.035 * (0.016)	0.835 *** (0.082)	-0.063 ** (0.02)	0.974 *** (0.117)
Lagged math non-proficiency rate - all students	0.42 *** (0.028)	0.132 *** (0.025)	0.336 *** (0.039)	0.112 ** (0.035)	0.236 *** (0.059)	0.082 (0.046)
School Fixed Effects	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y
Year Fixed Effects	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y
Observations	17193	17193	9164	9164	3203	3203
R2	0.194	0.726	0.176	0.715	0.265	0.799
Adj. R2	0.194	0.683	0.175	0.667	0.263	0.76

*** p < 0.001; ** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05.

Note. Includes controls for the lagged non-proficiency rate in mathematics for all students and for white students, the percent of teachers with less than 3 years of experience, percent of teachers with MAs or above, the percent of English Language Learners, the percent of students qualifying for free or reduced price lunch, and the natural log of total school enrollment. Heteroscedastic-robust standard errors clustered at the school level are in parentheses.

Table 5 - Difference-in-differences Estimates of Effects of Increases in the Percent of Black or Latinx students on Rate of Test Boycotts Among White Students

	Panel A: All grades (3-8)		Panel B: Elementary grades (3-5)		Panel C: Middle grades (6-8)	
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Increase %Black or Latinx, 2013-2015 X post-2013	0.072 *** (0.008)	0.066 *** (0.008)	0.084 *** (0.011)	0.077 *** (0.012)	0.081 *** (0.017)	0.077 *** (0.017)
School Fixed Effects	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y
Year Fixed Effects	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y
Observations	14273	14273	7584	7584	2660	2660
R2	0.445	0.728	0.434	0.721	0.523	0.802
Adj. R2	0.445	0.688	0.433	0.676	0.521	0.766

*** p < 0.001; ** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05.

Note. Includes controls for the lagged non-proficiency rate in mathematics for all students and for white students, percent of teachers with less than 3 years of experience, percent of teachers with MAs or above, the percent of English Language Learners, the percent of students qualifying for free or reduced price lunch, and the natural log of total school enrollment. Heteroscedastic-robust standard errors clustered at the school level are in parentheses.

Table 6 - Difference-in-differences Estimates of Effects of Increases in the Percent of Black or Latinx students on Rate of Test Boycotts Among White Students by Relevant Subgroups

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	Majority White in 2012	Majority Black/Latinx in 2012	District %Poverty < Median	District %Poverty > Median	Non-urban	Urban	Always Met AYP, 2009- 2013	Did Not Always Met AYP, 2009- 2013
<i>Panel A. All schools</i>								
Increase %Black or Latinx, 2013- 2015 X post-2013	0.078 *** (0.009)	0.021 (0.023)	0.078 *** (0.012)	0.012 (0.010)	0.075 *** (0.009)	-0.001 (0.011)	0.081 *** (0.011)	0.018 (0.013)
School Fixed Effects	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Year Fixed Effects	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Observations	11001	1582	5960	5040	11275	2997	9444	4211
R2	0.760	0.640	0.813	0.786	0.782	0.521	0.739	0.724
Adj. R2	0.726	0.583	0.778	0.739	0.749	0.443	0.703	0.682
<i>Panel B. Majority white schools only</i>								
Increase %Black or Latinx, 2013- 2015 X post-2013			0.079 *** (0.012)	0.003 (0.011)	0.077 *** (0.010)	0.032 (0.019)	0.092 *** (0.012)	0.023 (0.015)
School Fixed Effects			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Year Fixed Effects			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Observations			5633	3788	10106	1073	7658	3219
R2			0.812	0.804	0.783	0.578	0.766	0.759
Adj. R2			0.777	0.759	0.751	0.507	0.734	0.721

*** p < 0.001; ** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05.

Note. AYP = Adequate Yearly Progress. Schools considered always meeting AYP met AYP in ELA and mathematics in each year between 2009 and 2013. Schools considered not always meeting AYP did not meet AYP in either ELA or mathematics at least one time. All models include controls for the lagged non-proficiency rate in mathematics for all students and for white students, the percent of teachers with less than 3 years of experience, the percent of teachers with MAs or above, the percent of English Language Learners, the percent of students qualifying for free or reduced price lunch, and the natural log of total school enrollment. Heteroscedastic-robust standard errors clustered at the school level are in parentheses.

Table 7 - Alternative Criteria for Inclusion in Treatment or Comparison Groups for Difference-in-differences Framework

Panel A. Alternative criteria for inclusion in treatment condition

- 1 Increase in %Black or Latinx every year between 2013 and 2017
 - 2 Net increase in the %Black or Latinx after 2013
 - 3 Increase in %Black or Latinx every year between 2013 and 2015
 - 4 Net increase in the %Black or Latinx between 2013 and 2015
 - 5 Never an increase in %Black or Latinx in any year between 2009 and 2017
-

Panel B. Alternative criteria for inclusion in comparison condition

- 1 No net increase in the %Black or Latinx between 2009 and 2017
- 2 Never an increase in %Black or Latinx in any year after 2013
- 3 No net increase in the %Black or Latinx after 2013
- 4 Never an increase in %Black or Latinx between 2013 and 2015
- 5 No net increase in the %Black or Latinx between 2013 and 2015

Table 8 - Difference-in-differences Estimates for the Effect of Placebo Indicators on Rate of Test Boycotts Among White Students

	1	2	3
	All grades (3-8)	Elementary grades (3-5)	Middle grades (6-8)
	b(SE)	b(SE)	b(SE)
Increase %Black or Latinx, 2016-2017	-0.001 (0.013)	0.007 (0.021)	-0.03 (0.031)
Increase %Black or Latinx, 2008-2010	-0.045 *** (0.009)	-0.056 *** (0.013)	-0.054 ** (0.018)
Increase %Black or Latinx, 2010-2012	-0.04 *** (0.009)	-0.057 *** (0.012)	-0.025 (0.017)

*** p < 0.001; ** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05.

Note. All models include controls for the lagged non-proficiency rate in mathematics for all students and for white students, the percent of teachers with less than 3 years of experience, percent of teachers with MAs or above, the percent of English Language Learners, the percent of students qualifying for free or reduced price lunch, and the natural log of total school enrollment. Models in row 1 were run on data subset to include only years before 2016. Heteroscedastic-robust standard errors clustered at the school level are in parentheses.

Table 9 - Linear probability model of association between liberal vote share in a voting district and a net increase in the share of black or Latinx students in a school

	All Schools	Majority White Schools	All Schools	Majority White Schools
%Votes for 3rd party liberal candidates	-1.663 ** (0.529)	-0.577 (0.746)		
%Votes for all liberal candidates			-0.215 * (0.088)	-0.012 (0.133)
Observations	1753	1286	1753	1286
R2	0.006	0.000	0.003	0.000

*** p < 0.001; ** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05.

3rd party liberal candidates include candidates running on Green Party or Working Families party line. All liberal candidates include candidates running on the Democratic, Green, or Working Families party line.

Table 10 - Difference-in-differences model of the effect of a net increase in the share of black and Latinx students on the text boycott rate of white students, by share of votes for liberal candidates and share of white students in schools

	All Schools, > Median Liberal Vote Share	All Schools, <= Median Liberal Vote Share	Majority White Schools, > Median Liberal Vote Share	Majority White Schools, <= Median Liberal Vote Share
Increase %Black or Latinx, 2013-2015 X post-2013	-0.115 *** (0.028)	-0.166 *** (0.033)	-0.079 (0.043)	-0.156 *** (0.035)
Observations	7412	6860	4052	6171
R2	0.685	0.776	0.738	0.783
Adj. R2	0.636	0.740	0.699	0.749

*** p < 0.001; ** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05.

Note. Majority white schools defined as those with mean enrollment of white students greater than 60%. All models include controls for the lagged non-proficiency rate in mathematics for all students and for white students, the percent of teachers with less than 3 years of experience, the percent of teachers with MAs or above, the percent of English Language Learners, the percent of students qualifying for free or reduced price lunch, and the natural log of total school enrollment. Heteroscedastic-robust standard errors clustered at the school level are in parentheses.

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