



2016-17 SBAC: How did Hartford Students Perform?

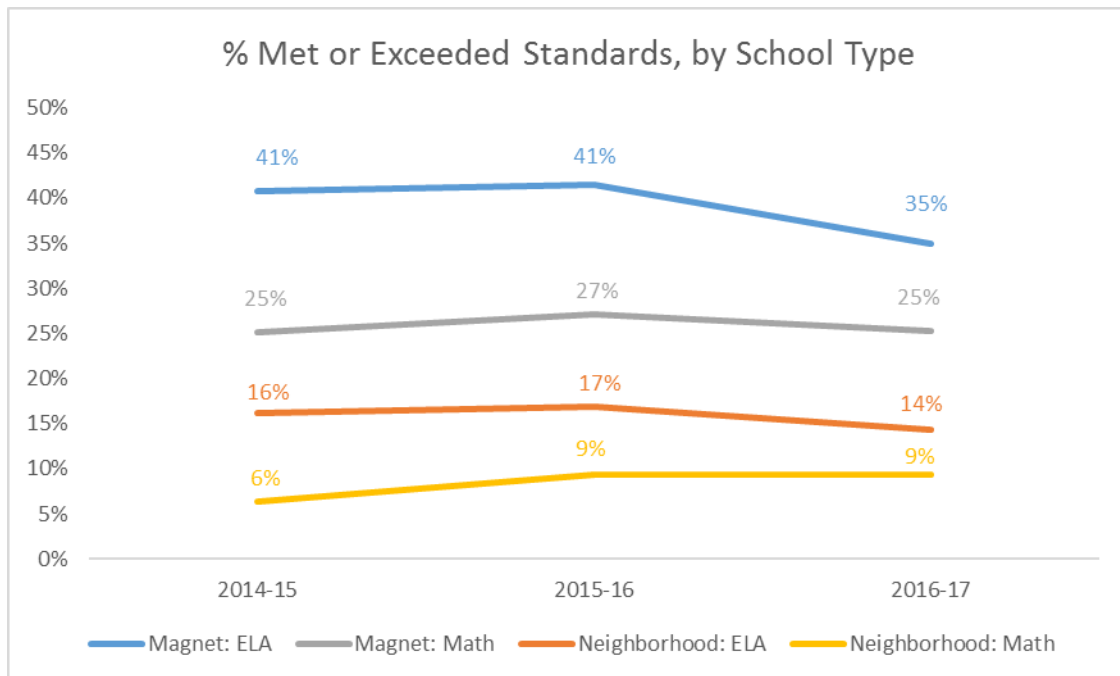
Mini-Report 2: School and District Comparisons

Background

The data presented in this report is the most recent SBAC performance data for students in the Hartford Public Schools (HPS)¹, available from the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE), through <http://edsight.ct.gov>. The test is administered in the spring, and results are released in the fall. CSDE also provides important information regarding changes to the Smarter Balanced assessments in 2015-16.

How did neighborhood school students compare to magnet school students on the SBAC in 2016-17?

While our [first report](#) on SBAC this year was focused on student grade levels and cohorts, here we look at what was going on at the school level and district level. Overall, 22% of Hartford students met or exceeded the standard in English Language Arts (ELA) in 2016-17, while just 16% did so in Math. These numbers reflect the performance of all students with scored tests from Grades 3 through 8. The district-wide scores mask a much bleaker story for only those students attending Hartford’s neighborhood schools. The graph below illustrates just how wide the achievement gap is between students in HPS neighborhood schools and students in HPS magnet schools.



Even though the clear downturn in overall SBAC achievement at HPS this past year appears to have hit the magnet schools harder, it remains the case that neighborhood schools are consistently trailing magnets by over 20 percentage points in ELA, and over 15 percentage points in Math. Full tables of individual school results over are presented below; magnets are highlighted in blue, neighborhood schools in orange. The tables are sorted by the most recent year’s results.

Careful examination of the table below for ELA proficiency reinforces that the magnets were not spared from the district-wide decrease in ELA proficiency:

School	% met or exceeded ELA		
	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Renzulli Gifted and Talented Academy	*	69%	63%
STEM Magnet School at Annie Fisher	57%	69%	52%
Breakthrough Magnet School	44%	44%	44%
Webster Micro Society Magnet School	46%	42%	40%
Environmental Sciences Magnet School at Mary M Hooker	44%	47%	39%
Montessori Magnet School at Annie Fisher	44%	48%	37%
Kinsella Magnet School of Performing Arts	45%	43%	36%
Hartford Magnet Trinity College Academy	42%	43%	36%
Montessori Magnet at Moylan School	*	49%	35%
Betances STEM Magnet School	39%	35%	32%
Classical Magnet School	35%	29%	29%
Breakthrough II School	31%	28%	26%
Sports and Medical Sciences Academy	31%	31%	25%
Naylor/CCSU Leadership Academy	25%	31%	24%
Betances Early Reading Lab Magnet School	16%	26%	21%
Global Communications Academy	26%	20%	19%
Capital Preparatory Magnet School	34%	33%	18%
West Middle School	33%	23%	17%
Rawson School	17%	16%	17%
Kennelly School	19%	20%	16%
Expeditionary Learning Academy at Moylan School	21%	20%	16%
Simpson-Waverly School	13%	11%	14%
SAND School	9%	9%	13%
Sanchez School	24%	23%	13%
Batchelder School	12%	18%	13%
M. D. Fox Elementary School	9%	13%	12%
McDonough Middle School	13%	9%	11%
Parkville Community School	17%	14%	10%
M. L. King School	17%	14%	10%
Burr School	15%	15%	9%
Milner Elementary School	10%	8%	9%
Burns Latino Studies Academy	5%	7%	7%
Wish Museum School	10%	13%	6%
Asian Studies Academy	13%	9%	4%

**Data not available.*

Still, the magnet/neighborhood dichotomy is no statistical quirk—while there is some overlap in the middle of the score distribution, the majority of magnet schools continue to outperform neighborhood schools. The clear exception to the rule is the Renzulli Gifted and Talented Academy, but one can hardly be surprised when the gifted and talented program gets the best scores in the district.

Almost everything said above about the ELA rankings can also be said for Math, presented below:

School	% met or exceeded math		
	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
STEM Magnet School at Annie Fisher	44%	57%	47%
Renzulli Gifted and Talented Academy	*	48%	42%
Environmental Sciences Magnet School at Mary M Hooker	38%	39%	35%
Webster Micro Society Magnet School	32%	31%	35%
Breakthrough Magnet School	28%	33%	34%
Montessori Magnet at Fisher School	35%	30%	26%
Betances STEM Magnet School	22%	24%	23%
Sports and Medical Sciences Academy	20%	23%	22%
Kinsella Magnet School of Performing Arts	21%	22%	22%
Hartford Magnet Trinity College Academy	21%	23%	21%
Montessori Magnet at Moylan School	*	25%	18%
Breakthrough II School	11%	20%	17%
Sanchez School	14%	17%	17%
Expeditionary Learning Academy at Moylan School	9%	15%	17%
Classical Magnet School	17%	15%	16%
Naylor/CCSU Leadership Academy	14%	14%	15%
West Middle School	16%	19%	14%
Kennelly School	7%	12%	12%
Batchelder School	4%	7%	11%
Rawson School	6%	9%	10%
Parkville Community School	8%	9%	10%
Capital Preparatory Magnet School	21%	18%	9%
Global Communications Academy	11%	10%	8%
Burr School	7%	7%	7%
M. D. Fox Elementary School	3%	9%	7%
SAND School	*	5%	6%
Burns Latino Studies Academy	*	2%	5%
Simpson-Waverly School	5%	4%	5%
McDonough Expeditionary Learning School	3%	3%	4%
Milner Elementary School	*	3%	3%
Asian Studies Academy	4%	2%	3%
Betances Early Reading Lab Magnet School	11%	17%	*
Wish Museum School	5%	6%	*
M. L. King School	4%	4%	*

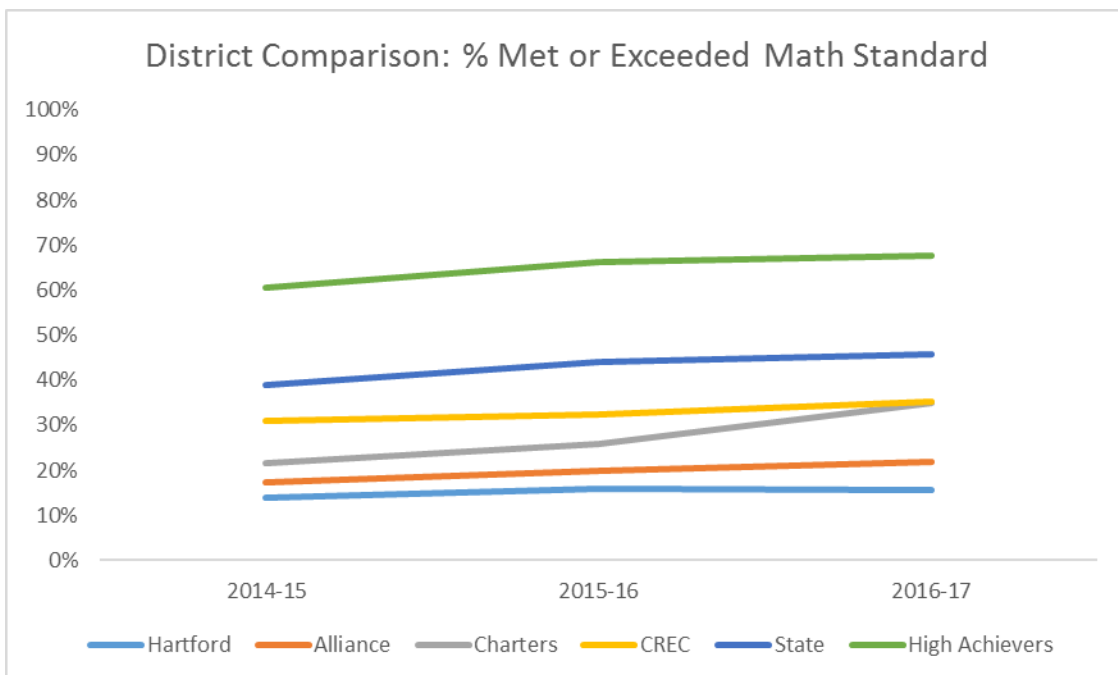
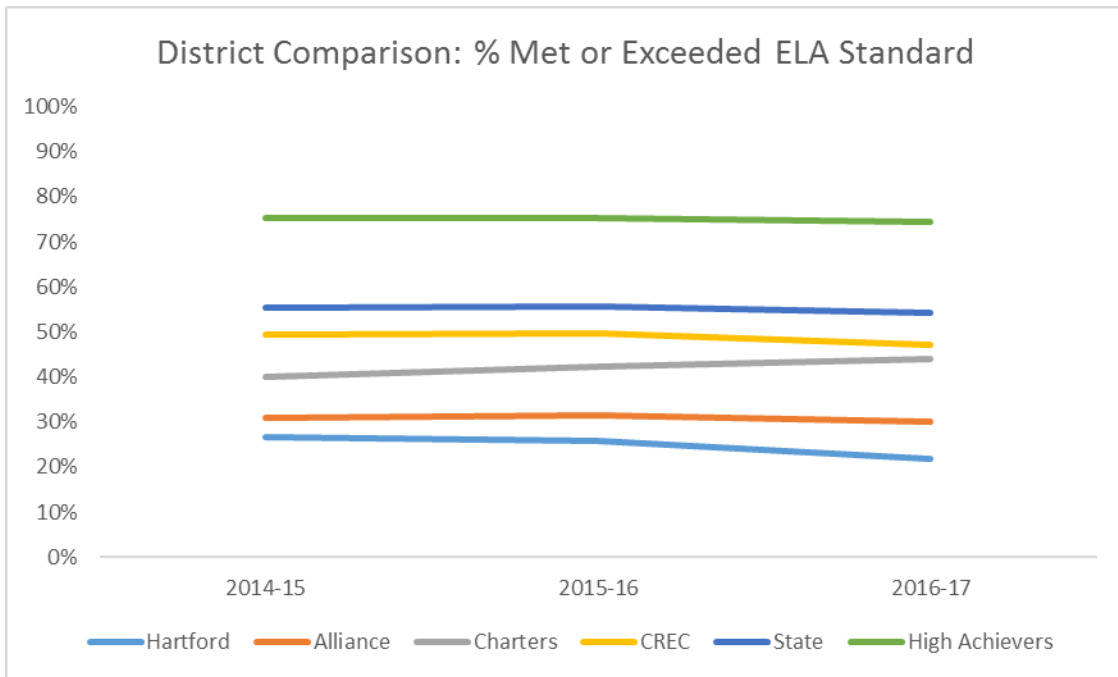
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The big exception here is Capital Preparatory Magnet School, which has gone from 21% to 9% proficiency since the first year of testing. While this mirrors their proficiency losses in ELA, it contrasts with the otherwise flat trend in Math proficiency district-wide. STEM Magnet School at Annie Fisher also saw a sharp decline, yet retained its status as the top-ranked HPS school in SBAC math. Importantly, their scores are still better than they were in the first year of test administration.

Performance by district

In previous years we've simply laid out a data table of the performance of various districts as compared to Hartford. While those tables are still included below, we have combined some districts into categoriesⁱⁱ to better visualize the ladder of achievement.

Both graphs below reveal the same pattern: Hartford, at the bottom, with a lower ELA proficiency rate than our index of Alliance Districts; CREC, edging out the Charters, but still falling short of the State; and our index of High Achievers (suburban districts), with proficiency rates well above the rest.



That Hartford is performing poorly by comparison is not a surprise; that it is performing poorly by the standards of Alliance Districts is more troubling. It is no illusion caused by the index calculation—the full tables below break out each district individually, and Hartford’s proficiency rates are clearly lower than almost everyone else’s, except Bridgeport and New Britain.

ELA				
Category	District	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
High Achievers	Farmington School District	78%	79%	79%
High Achievers	Glastonbury School District	78%	79%	77%
High Achievers	West Hartford School District	72%	71%	71%
State	State of Connecticut	55%	56%	54%
Charters	Achievement First Hartford Academy Inc. District	42%	45%	51%
Alliance	Stamford School District	49%	50%	48%
CREC	Capitol Region Education Council	49%	50%	47%
Alliance	Manchester School District	39%	40%	36%
Charters	Jumoke Academy District	38%	39%	33%
Alliance	New Haven School District	29%	32%	31%
Alliance	East Hartford School District	33%	32%	30%
Alliance	Waterbury School District	26%	27%	26%
Alliance	Bridgeport School District	24%	22%	22%
Hartford	Hartford School District	27%	26%	22%
Alliance	New Britain School District	23%	22%	19%

Math				
Category	District	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
High Achievers	Farmington School District	64%	73%	74%
High Achievers	Glastonbury School District	67%	75%	74%
High Achievers	West Hartford School District	55%	58%	61%
State	State of Connecticut	39%	44%	46%
Alliance	Stamford School District	37%	41%	44%
Charters	Achievement First Hartford Academy Inc. District	26%	30%	43%
CREC	Capitol Region Education Council	31%	32%	35%
Alliance	Manchester School District	28%	30%	30%
Charters	Jumoke Academy District	16%	20%	22%
Alliance	New Haven School District	13%	18%	21%
Alliance	Waterbury School District	13%	16%	18%
Alliance	East Hartford School District	17%	17%	17%
Hartford	Hartford School District	14%	16%	16%
Alliance	Bridgeport School District	9%	10%	13%
Alliance	New Britain School District	14%	13%	12%

Conclusions:

On the magnet vs. neighborhood front, we saw more of the same. On average, students at HPS magnets are achieving at levels similar to our local charters—which is to say, not great, but well above what we report as the district-wide averages. Those district-wide averages are hiding—and being pulled down by—the very low performance at Hartford’s neighborhood schools. While there is still much progress to be made at our magnet schools, it is important to focus where the need is greatest. That this disparity continues within the District is unfair, unequal, and unacceptable.

Additionally, we hope HPS makes available Hartford resident and non-resident student data for each of the magnet schools it operates. It is difficult to find anyone who would deny that a marked disparity exists between those two groups within each school, yet it has been very difficult to find disaggregated data by school for HPS – as well as CREC – magnet schools.

Our standing among our comparison districts has likewise remained approximately the same, but creating and graphing groups within this list reveals an important point. While it is a disservice to the students of Hartford for us to aim low, so too would it be unwise to expect that Hartford schools’ performance can suddenly become Glastonbury’s overnight—or even over a few years.

The fact that there are so many other districts in between who face similar challenges yet get better results gives us short-term goals to shoot for, but is also sobering. There was a time when Hartford gained some measure of pride from out-performing the other low performers (namely, Waterbury, New Britain, and Bridgeport), but that time has passed now that students are taking a new and more rigorous battery of tests. Also of concern is the difference between Hartford’s and New Haven’s performance this year and last. To be so close to the bottom is a dire state of affairs.

But this, still, is not the whole picture. CSDE has released a second year of data regarding their SBAC Growth Model, and a third report in this series will soon be published on the subject of year over year cohort growth – as opposed to proficiency.

In the meantime, do not forget: We are a community, and every part of our community is responsible for Hartford kids. The primary lesson from years of reform efforts is that we cannot simply demand that the Hartford Public Schools make change; we must find ways to create that change, together.

ⁱ In previous years, we have recalculated the numbers for Hartford to include the Achievement First Hartford Academy District (AF), due to an agreement that exists between HPS and AF. For various reasons including a desire for consistency with state reporting, this will no longer be our practice.

ⁱⁱ Hartford, CREC, and the state are presented individually; “Alliance” includes 7 other Alliance Districts (Bridgeport, East Hartford, Manchester, New Britain, New Haven, Stamford, and Waterbury); “Charters” includes 2 local charter districts (Achievement First Hartford and Jumoke); and “High Achievers” includes 3 nearby high-achieving districts (Farmington, Glastonbury, and West Hartford).