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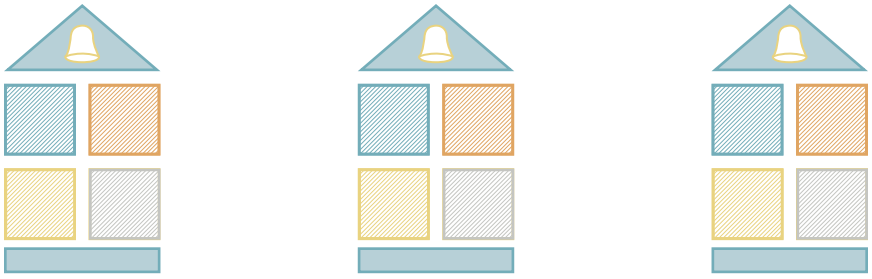

Philadelphia's Renaissance Schools Initiative: 18 Month Interim Report

February 2012

Prepared for the Accountability Review Council by Research for Action

Authors

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About Research for Action

Research for Action (RFA) is a Philadelphia-based nonprofit organization. We seek to use research as the basis for the improvement of educational opportunities and outcomes for traditionally underserved students. Our work is designed to strengthen public schools and postsecondary institutions; provide research-based recommendations to policymakers, practitioners, and the public at the local, state, and national levels; and enrich the civic and community dialogue about public education. For more information, please visit our website at www.researchforaction.org.

Acknowledgments

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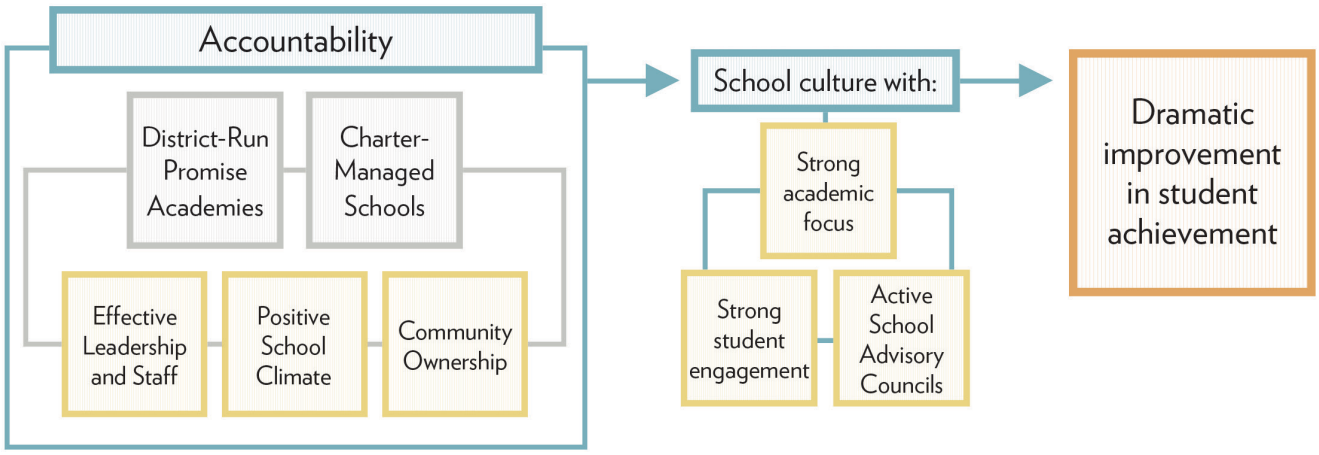

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Executive Summary

Introduction

This report presents Year One (2010-11) school level achievement and attendance outcomes and case study findings from fall 2011 that focused on school leadership and instruction.

Thirteen schools were included in the first year of Philadelphia's Renaissance Schools Initiative (2010-11). Of these schools:

Four K-8 schools were District-operated as Promise Academies	Seven K-8 schools were operated by four charter school providers	Two high schools were District-run Promise Academies

The analyses provide the most rigorous evaluation available regarding the impact of the reform model.

First-year results are positive. However, because the outcomes analyses were conducted using data from only the first year of the Initiative, it is too early to determine whether the preliminary results summarized here will be sustained over time.

Student Outcomes: Renaissance Schools vs. Comparison Schools

K-8 Schools (11 Schools)

Student achievement and attendance at 11 K-8 Renaissance Schools during the first year of implementation were compared to a group of 72 K-8 schools with similar School Performance Indices (SPIs). Performance was tracked five years prior to the beginning of the Initiative (2006-10); and after one year of the Renaissance Schools Initiative (2010-11).

Finding 1

Student achievement in K-8 Renaissance Schools improved to a significantly greater degree than did achievement in similar schools not included in the Initiative. Specifically, Renaissance school student achievement gains significantly outpaced those of Comparison Schools on the following measures:

- Math and Reading PSSA scale scores
- Percentage of Students Proficient or Above in Math and Reading
- Percentage of Students Below Basic in Math and Reading

Finding 2

Student attendance at Renaissance Schools increased significantly more than did attendance at Comparison Schools.

The school-level effect sizes associated with participation in the Renaissance Schools Initiative for both student achievement and attendance ranged from 1.0 to 2.25, which are substantially greater than is typically seen in educational research.

High Schools (2 Schools)

Due to the small number of schools, meaningful significance tests of differences between Renaissance High Schools and Comparison High Schools were not possible. Findings from descriptive analyses are as follows:

Finding 3

Descriptive analysis of student achievement and attendance reveal no observable changes at Renaissance High Schools in Year One of the Renaissance Schools Initiative, while the Comparison High Schools have continued to improve slightly over the six-year study period.

Student Outcomes: Promise Academies vs. Charter-Managed Schools

The 11 K-8 Renaissance middle schools were operated by both the District and Charter providers. We conducted analyses to estimate differences among the Renaissance Charters, Promise Academies, and the Comparison Schools. Results of these analyses are as follows:

Finding 4

There was no statistically significant difference in either student achievement or attendance between the K-8 Promise Academies and the Charter-managed Renaissance Schools. Both sets of schools significantly out-performed the Comparison Schools in terms of increases in student achievement and attendance.

Student Outcomes: Comparisons by Individual Provider

The 11 K-8 Renaissance middle schools in Year One were operated by five providers: District-run Promise Academies (four schools); Mastery (three schools); Universal (two schools); ASPIRA (one school); and Young Scholars Academy (one school). Due to the small number of schools overseen by each provider, it was not possible to assess the significance of observed differences among the five Renaissance School providers. Results of descriptive analyses are as follows:

Finding 5

Descriptive comparisons of Renaissance Schools reveal roughly equivalent performance along student achievement and attendance measures across all operators.

It is important to note that the schools chosen to participate in the Renaissance initiative were among the lowest-performing schools in the District at the start of the reform effort. Even with the significant gains in Year One of the Initiative, they remain among the lowest-performing schools in the District.

Year Two: Promising Practices

This report also highlights promising District policies and school practices that could impact future turnaround efforts in Philadelphia or in other locales. These include the following:

1) The **Promise Academies received extra resources and attention from the District**, which placed them in the spotlight and **generated greater public interest** in their progress.
2) The **teachers' union supported the Renaissance Schools Initiative** by signing a collective bargaining agreement that was consistent with the principles of the reform effort.
3) Principals and teachers felt part of "**something big.**"
4) **Principals built their own teams** of teachers through site selection.
5) Principals built **systems that promoted and reinforced teacher learning and growth**.
6) **Data *and* student work were used to assess learning** and make instructional decisions.
7) **Principals and teachers exercised professional judgment to adapt the curriculum**, within the parameters of the *Promise Academy Way*.

Year Two: Emerging Challenges

The context in which Year Two (2011-12) of the Renaissance Schools Initiative unfolded changed markedly from that of the first year of the reform. The Renaissance Schools Initiative was conceived and implemented at a time when the District had significantly more financial resources, but 2011 brought drastic cuts in state funding that resulted in a substantial reduction in Central Office staffing, deep teacher and staff layoffs, and widespread program and budget cuts. Additionally, there was an unprecedented amount of turnover, including top leadership positions and the departure of former CEO Arlene Ackerman.

During 2011, Renaissance Schools, particularly the District-run Promise Academies, were challenged by:

1) A **late hiring** window, with little time for orientation.
2) **Significant staff and programmatic reductions** as a result of District cut-backs.
3) **High levels of teacher turnover**.
4) **Over-use of corrective reading and math programs** intended to increase student achievement.
5) **Over-reliance on direct instruction**, particularly around prescribed curricula.

Implications and Next Steps

The Year One outcomes for schools in the Renaissance Schools Initiative suggest that something positive is happening in the first cohort of Promise Academies and Renaissance Charters. Year One of the Initiative saw significant gains in the rate of student achievement and attendance; and Year Two case studies point to an emerging set of promising practices that are likely to be related to the success of these schools. But a set of significant challenges also emerged in Year Two. These important contextual factors will require careful monitoring as the Initiative continues.

Ongoing research should address the following questions:

1) Does the rate of growth in student achievement at Renaissance Schools continue in subsequent years?
2) Is the model scalable—that is, as it expands to include more schools, can the successes of the Year One cohort be replicated? What level of resources or supports is necessary to achieve this goal?
3) What is the cost of implementing successful Renaissance schools using the Promise Academy model? The Renaissance charter model? In K-8 schools? In high schools?
4) Do differences between providers emerge over time?
5) Does the success of the model differ by type of school (K-8, high school) or student population (special education, ELL, low-income, high-performing, low-performing)
6) At both Promise Academies and Renaissance Charters, what replicable policies and practices are contributing to increased student achievement?
7) What is the collateral effect for comparable District schools not selected for the Renaissance Schools Initiative?

Philadelphia's Renaissance Schools Initiative: 18 Month Interim Report

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Introduction

In May 2010, the Accountability Review Council (ARC) commissioned Research for Action (RFA) to evaluate Philadelphia's Renaissance Schools Initiative. The Renaissance Schools Initiative was the signature reform of Dr. Arlene Ackerman, Superintendent of the School District of Philadelphia (the District) from 2008 through 2011; the reform has continued since her departure. Implemented in 2010 at a time of greater District resources, the Renaissance Schools Initiative targets a select number of persistently low performing schools by providing additional resources, increased attention, and strategies designed to spur dramatic increases in student performance in a few years.

In its first year, the Renaissance Schools Initiative consisted of two models:

Six Promise Academies	Seven Renaissance Charter Schools
Remained under District management and underwent reforms similar to "turnarounds" as defined by the U.S. Department of Education.[1] Two principals who had been at their schools for only one year were permitted to stay and all the other principals and at least half the teaching staff at every school were replaced. In addition, learning time was extended, and schools received additional funding and support staff.	Were matched with charter managers, similar to the federal "restart" model, but remained neighborhood schools. They operated with relative autonomy from the District, which allowed for variation in the reforms implemented at the schools. Renaissance Charters received some District oversight and support, and regularly reported to the District on student outcomes.

In September 2010, the first 13 Renaissance schools opened their doors.[2] In the first year of the Initiative the schools faced three overarching challenges:

1) The process of assigning schools to models began in March 2010; matching charter providers to schools was not completed until May 2010, which resulted in a rushed timeline for staffing schools and preparing for school start up.

[1] U.S. Department of Education (2010). Guidance on School Improvement Grants Under Section 1003(g) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. Washington, DC: Author.

[2] The 13 schools included elementary and K-8 schools, two middle schools, and two high schools. Both high schools were Promise Academies.

2) In some charter-managed schools, as well as the Promise Academies, the guidelines for behavior and new curriculum were being implemented throughout the fall, leaving school staff feeling as if the District was "inventing as you go."
3) Central Office staff had to address the many new tasks associated with the reform with limited District capacity, which was further exacerbated by the rushed timeline and the reality that reforms were being continuously invented and implemented.[3] Additionally, the Central Office departments responsible for supporting these new schools went through multiple leadership changes throughout the first year.

In Year Two (September 2011), the first 13 Renaissance Schools re-opened, along with 10 new Renaissance Schools added to the Initiative. The previous summer had seen the turnover of the superintendent, and significant cuts in the District's budget, leading to substantial Central Office staff reductions and District-wide teacher layoffs. A timeline on page 3 chronicles these and other major events since the District first launched the Renaissance Schools Initiative. The impact of these changes on the reform effort is significant, and still unfolding.

This Report: Renaissance Schools Initiative at 18 Months

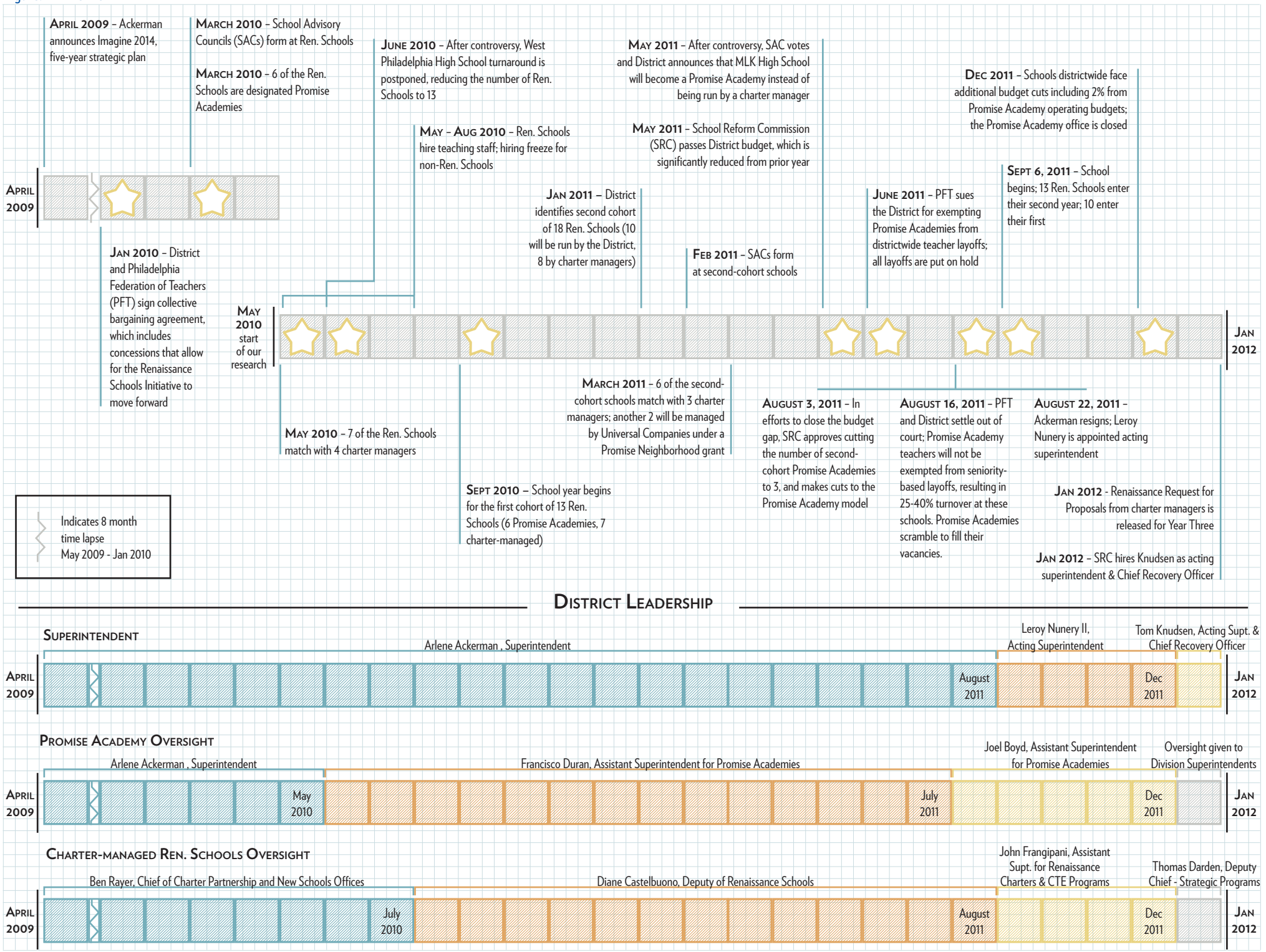
The ARC originally commissioned RFA to conduct a one-year (May 2010-May 2011) mixed-methods study of the start up of the Renaissance Schools Initiative. In May 2011, the ARC extended RFA's contract to December 2012, specifically to assess the impact of the Initiative through an examination of two years of student outcomes, as well as to contextualize these analyses with a set of case studies focused on implementation and factors that supported or inhibited positive change.

This report presents Year One outcomes and Year Two case study findings focused on school leadership and instruction (data from Year One was unavailable at the time of our May 2011 report). A future report will present Year Two outcomes and case studies examining school climate and community ownership.[4] Each section of this interim report provides guiding research questions and the data sources used to address them. Appendices A-D provide supplemental findings, along with detailed quantitative and qualitative methodologies. The sections that follow this introduction are:

- Year One: Promising Outcomes
- Year Two: A Closer Look at Leadership and Instruction in Two Promise Academies
- Conclusion

[3] Gold, E., Good, D., Roberson-Kraft, C., & Callahan, M. K. (2011). *Philadelphia's Renaissance Schools: A report on start up and early implementation*. Philadelphia: Research for Action.
[4] Although community ownership through the School Advisory Councils was not a major focus of our fall 2011 research, we include an update on development in Appendix A.

Figure. 1 Timeline



Year One: Student Outcomes

During Year One of the Renaissance Schools Initiative, RFA conducted interviews, focus groups, and observations in all 13 first-cohort schools. While we found variation across schools in their implementation of the Initiative, the majority of schools showed early improvements in attendance and reported calmer, safer school climates. All 13 schools had School Advisory Councils (SACs), albeit with varying degrees of functionality. Despite a rushed timeline to open school on time, all 13 schools had site-selected their teaching staff and were – to varying extents – establishing systems to support and monitor instruction.[5]

At the time of our May 2011 report, end-of-year data on outcomes were not yet available, and therefore we could not assess academic achievement in the Renaissance Schools. In the months since, RFA has obtained District and charter data from the first year of the Initiative (the 2010-11 school year), and performed analyses guided by the following research questions:[6]

1) How do changes in the Renaissance Schools compare to those of Comparison Schools in Year One of the Renaissance Schools Initiative?
   - Student enrollment
   - Student retention
   - Student demographics
   - Student:teacher ratios

2) How do changes in the Year One performance of Renaissance Schools compare to those of similar schools along the following outcomes?
   - Performance on the PSSA Math and Reading Assessments (PSSA Scores and PSSA Performance Levels)
   - School Average Daily Attendance

This section presents analyses that compare the 13 first-cohort Renaissance schools to a comparison group of similar District schools. The comparison group selection process is detailed in the next section. We begin with a brief overview of our research methods (more detail is available in Appendix C), followed by descriptive comparisons of student enrollment, mobility, demographics, and student: teacher ratios. Finally, we report on school outcomes through impact analyses of academic performance and school attendance.

[5] Here and throughout this section, we make reference to research presented in our earlier report: Gold, E., Good, D., Roberston-Kraft, C., & Callahan, M. K. (2011). *Philadelphia's Renaissance Schools: A report on start up and early implementation*. Philadelphia: Research for Action.

[6] The original proposal also called for analyses of school climate indicators, along with teacher demographics and turnover. These indicators were either found to be unreliable indicators that are not systematically collected across the District, such as suspensions and violent incidents, or the District has not yet provided the data in response to our data request, such as teacher demographics, experience and mobility.

Research Methods

Data and Methods

The District provided six years of school-level records for every Year One Promise Academy and Comparison School in RFA's study. In addition, the District provided five years of school-level records prior to the beginning of the Renaissance Schools Initiative (years spanning 2005-06 to 2009-10) for every Renaissance charter school. Renaissance Charter providers supplied school-level records for the 2010-11 academic year.

The **descriptive analyses** present basic comparisons among three groups – Promise Academies, Renaissance Charters, and Comparison Schools – along the following indicators:

1) School enrollment
2) Student transfers
3) Student demographics
4) Student:teacher ratio

These analyses establish the overall equivalence of the Renaissance Schools and the Comparison Schools, while highlighting some key descriptive differences among these groups.

The **impact analyses** assess the school-level impact of participation in the Renaissance Schools Initiative using a series of multi-level regression models.[7] These models were designed to estimate the school-level change of six different outcome measures of student achievement and attendance, while controlling for change over time and for school-level indicators commonly known to exert an influence on student achievement and attendance. These analyses were specifically designed to assess the difference between the Renaissance Schools and the Comparison Schools for each outcome measure. Detailed tables of school-level performance on each outcome measure are included in Appendix B.

Comparison Schools

The Comparison Schools for the impact analyses in this section are comprised of 72 K-8 and 19 high schools with a School Performance Index (SPI)[8] score of 7-10 at the end of the 2009-10 academic year. The SPI rates every school in the District on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 indicates a school in the top decile, and 10 in the lowest. The index is based on Student Progress (growth on PSSA); Student Achievement (PSSA); Postsecondary Readiness; and Satisfaction and Engagement of Students, Parents and Teachers. In consultation with District research staff, the SPI measure was used as the standard for selecting the comparison group of schools since the SPI was the metric used in the identification of Renaissance Schools.[9] The comparison group chosen for these analyses shared characteristics most similar to those of the Renaissance Schools (see Appendix B for historical comparisons between the Renaissance Schools and the Comparison Schools).

[7] For a detailed account of the modeling used for these analyses and outputs from these models please see Appendix C.
[8] See: http://webgui.phila.k12.pa.us/offices/a/accountability/school-performance-index-spi
[9] Renaissance Schools were identified based on being in the pool of schools with an SPI of 10, the lowest rating.

Setting the Stage: Renaissance School Profiles

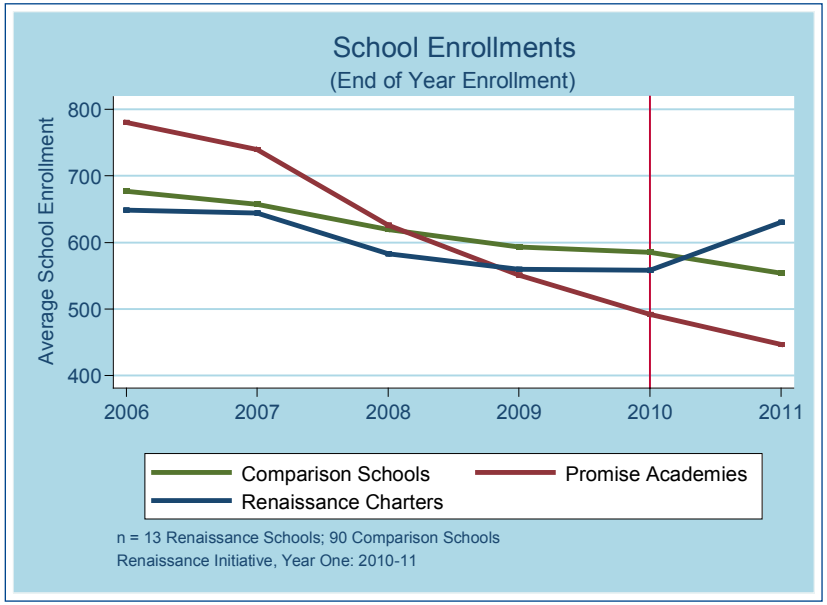
School Enrollments and Populations

In November 2010, data provided by the District and charter providers showed significant increases in student enrollment at Renaissance charter schools, but not at the District-run Promise Academies. Figure 2 shows that at the end of the 2010-11 school year, overall enrollments at Renaissance Charters increased, while enrollments at Promise Academies and the Comparison Schools continued on a downward trajectory.

Interviews in fall 2010, at the outset of the initiative, suggested that when the school buildings were transitioned to charter-run schools – a process which involved significant parent and community member input – they attracted increased attention; Promise Academies, however, did not receive the same level of visibility. The additional attention received by the Renaissance Charters may help to explain their increased enrollments in the first year of the Renaissance Schools Initiative.

As seen in Figure 3, on average, a lower percentage of students enrolled in Renaissance Charters transferred out of their schools in the first year of the Initiative than transferred out of Promise Academies or the Comparison Schools. These differences are likely magnified due to the sharp increase in enrollment at the Renaissance Charters throughout the course of the 2010-11 academic year.

Figure 2. School Enrollment



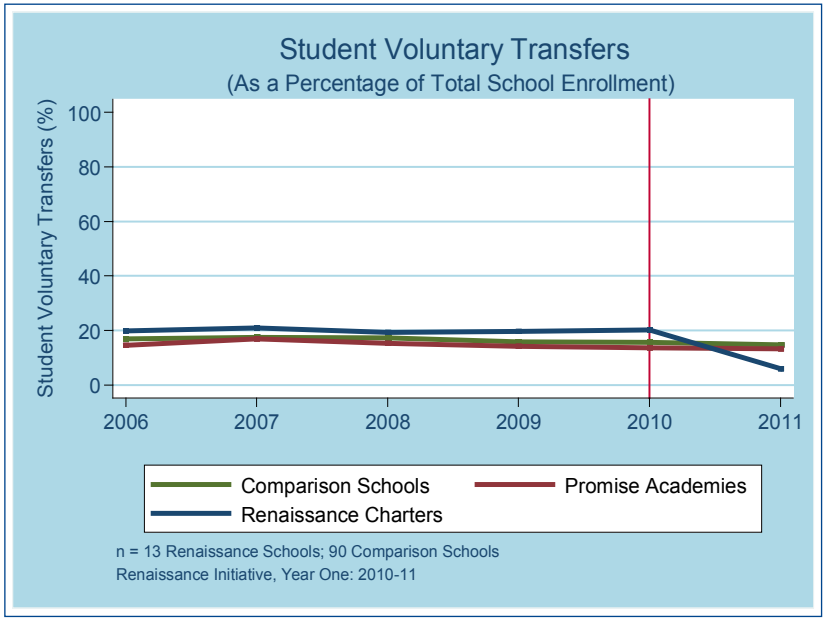
Prior to the Renaissance Schools Initiative:

- From 2006-10 enrollments, at all schools were steadily declining.

After one year of the Renaissance Schools Initiative (2011):

- The newly opened Renaissance Charters increased enrollments at their schools, while the Promise Academy and Comparison School enrollments continued to decline.

Figure 3. Voluntary Student Transfers[10]



Prior to the Renaissance Schools Initiative:

- From 2006-10, the percentage of students transferring out of future Promise Academies and the Comparison Schools was roughly equivalent, with the future Renaissance Charters having slightly higher transfer rates.

After one year of the Renaissance Schools Initiative (2011):

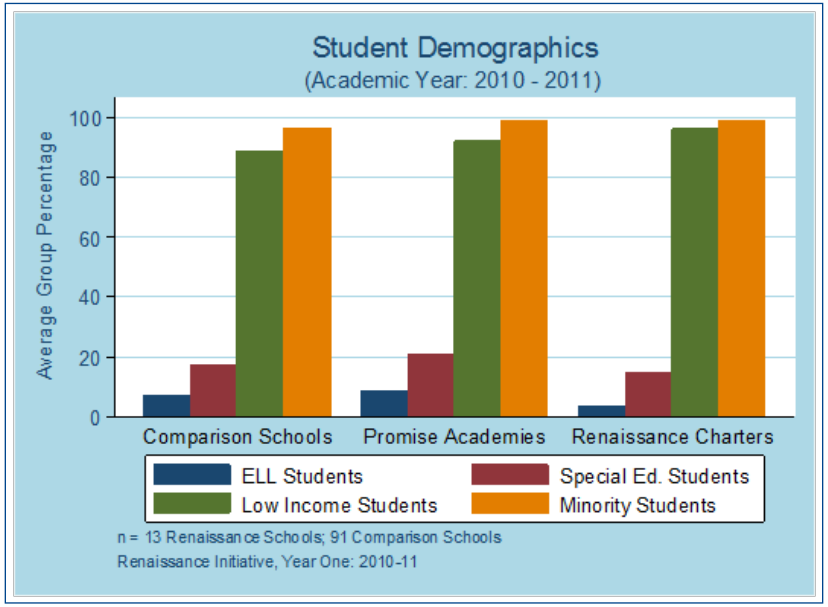
- A smaller percentage of students at Renaissance Charters transferred out of their schools than from either the Promise Academies or the Comparison Schools.

[10] A percentage of 'voluntary transfers' was calculated as the number of voluntary transfers divided by (total end of year enrollment + total voluntary transfers + total disciplinary transfers).

Figure 4 provides an overview of student demographics in the Promise Academies, Renaissance Charters, and Comparison Schools. The higher percentage of English Language Learners (ELLs) at the Promise Academies reflects the concentration of ELL students in two of the four Promise Academies.

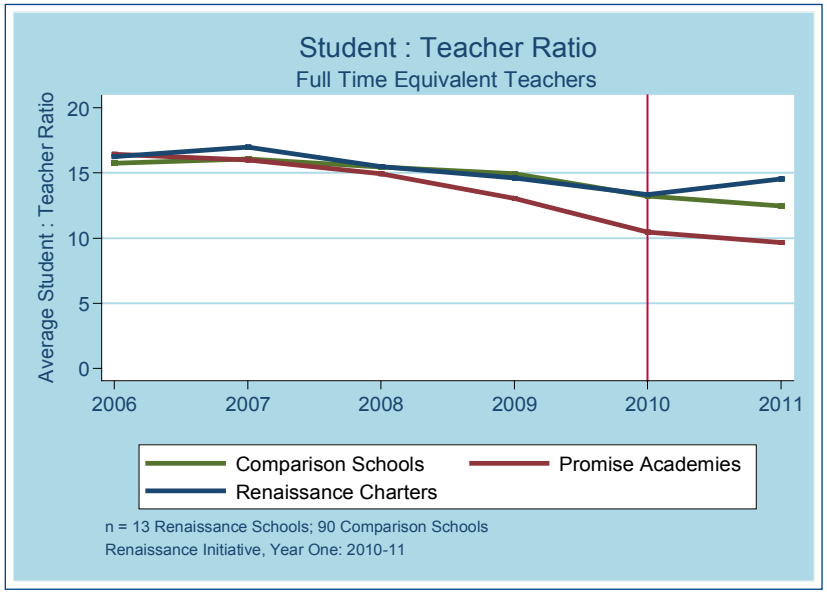
Figure 5 reveals that in Year One, the student:teacher ratio at Renaissance Charters slightly increased from the previous year and was roughly five students per teacher higher than at Promise Academies. **The student:teacher ratio is derived from the total number of students in a building to the total number of full-time equivalent teachers in a building. This does not equate to class size; classroom teachers represent only a portion of full-time equivalent teachers.**

Figure 4. Student Demographics



- Schools in the study served roughly similar student populations in 2010-11.
  - These student populations have remained consistent throughout the study period: 2005-06 through 2010-11 (Gold et al., 2011)
- Renaissance Charters served slightly fewer Special Education and ELL students than either the Promise Academies or Comparison Schools in 2010-11.

Figure 5. Student:Teacher Ratio



Prior to the Renaissance Schools Initiative:

- Student:teacher ratios had been declining in all schools from 2007 through 2010.

After one year of the Renaissance Schools Initiative (2011):

- Promise Academies had the lowest student:teacher ratio, just below 10:1, while Renaissance Charters' average student: teacher ratio increased to just under 15:1.

Assessing Impact: School Attendance and Academic Performance[11]

The Renaissance Schools Initiative was conceived as a school turnaround effort designed to generate drastic student achievement gains in two to three years. Our analysis compares the historical performance of the first cohort of Renaissance Schools to Comparison Schools, and includes performance outcomes for five years prior to the Initiative plus the first year of the Initiative. The results presented in the following pages show that:

In Year One, attendance and academic performance at Renaissance Schools improved significantly more than at Comparison Schools. This improvement was true for *both* the Promise Academies and the Renaissance Charters; no statistically significant differences were found between these two groups.

Regression Model Indicators

Multi-level regression models were developed for our outcome measures to assess the impact of participation in the Renaissance Schools Initiative. (See outcome measures listed in Table 1, below.) The Renaissance Schools Initiative is included in each model as the primary "treatment," along with school-level control measures commonly associated with student achievement and attendance. A full description of the formal modeling strategy, along with the outputs for each model, is outlined in Appendix C.

In addition to the seven models run to compare the performance of all Renaissance Schools with the Comparison Schools, seven additional models were run to assess whether there were statistically significant differences along each outcome between Renaissance Charters and Promise Academies. These models did not reveal any significant differences between Renaissance Charters and Promise Academies along any of the outcome measures considered. The results of these models are presented in Appendix C.

[11] High Schools were excluded from the impact analyses for the following reasons: 1) With only two Promise high schools, this did not represent a large enough 'treatment group' to perform a separate high school impact analysis for the Initiative. 2) The general non-equivalence of K-8 schools and high schools makes combining the performance of 11th graders with that of 3rd - 8th graders misleading since traditionally high schools respond quite differently to reform efforts than K-8 schools. High schools are more complex institutions, and have historically had a much worse track record than K-8s in school turnaround initiatives. (e.g., de la Torre, M., Allensworth, E., Jagesic, S., Sebastian, J., Salmnowicz, M., Meyers, C., & Gerdeman, R. D. *Turning around low-performing schools in Chicago*. Chicago: University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research.) 3) With so few schools in the Initiative, including high schools in the 'treatment group' would have likely exerted a negative influence on the overall performance of the Renaissance Schools group as a whole, potentially masking impact at the K-8 level. 4) There were no Renaissance Charter high schools in Year One, and therefore no point of comparison between the two Renaissance models.

Table 1. Regression Model Indicators

School Level Outcome Measures	Treatment	Control Measures
Student Achievement 1) Average PSSA Scaled Scores – Math 2) Average PSSA Scaled Scores – Reading 3) % of Students Proficient or Above – Math 4) % of Students Proficient or Above – Reading 5) % of Students Below Basic – Math 6) % of Student Below Basic – Reading **Attendance** 7) School Average Daily Attendance	Participation in the Renaissance Schools Initiative	**Time** • Pre-Intervention (2005-06 → 2009-10) **Comparison Group** • Elementary and Middle schools with an SPI of 7-10 in the 2009-10 academic year **Grade Level** • 3rd grade as the comparison group **School Level Controls** • Elementary v. Middle School • Socio-demographics ○ % ELL, Special Ed., Free/Reduced Lunch • Enrollment • Student Retention[12] • Average Teacher Years at current school • Student: Teacher Ratio[13]

Regression Model Findings

Table 2 presents estimates from the seven different regression models displaying the statistical significance of differences between Renaissance Schools and the Comparison Schools for each outcome measure, controlling for all of the other factors listed in Table 1, above. The columns in Table 2 present for each school level outcome: 1) the estimated amount of the initial difference between Renaissance Schools and the Comparison Schools in 2005-06; 2) the estimated amount of the difference between Renaissance Schools and the Comparison Schools' rate of growth from 2005-06 through 2010-11; and 3) the estimated amount of difference in the overall amount of change between Renaissance Schools and Comparison Schools in Year One of the Renaissance Schools Initiative (2010-11).

[12] "Student Retention" was calculated as the percentage of students who attended a single school in consecutive years, i.e. for the 2010-11 school year a school's 'student retention' would be calculated at the percentage of students in 2010-11 who also attended the same school in 2009-10.

[13] Data on "Teachers" provided by the District and charter school providers represent the number of full-time-equivalent teachers at each school for each year. Full-time equivalent teachers include Bilingual Teachers, Art Teachers, Special Education Classroom Teachers, Title I "Like" Staff, Guidance Counselors, Teacher Aides (instructional & certified), Librarians, Music Teachers, Physical Education Teachers, Psychologists, Social Workers, Speech Therapists, Department Heads, and School Based Instructional Staff.

Table 2. Student Outcomes: Renaissance Schools vs. Comparison Schools[14]

Outcome	Initial Level Difference[15] (2005-06)	Growth Rate Difference[16]	Post-Intervention Difference[17] (2010-11)
Math Scale Score	-46.3**	-2.5	82.5**
Math % Proficient or Above	-8.2**	-1.1	17.9**
Math % Below Basic	8.8**	0.7	-18.1**
Reading Scale Score	-36.6**	-2.3	64.2**
Reading % Proficient or Above	-7.2**	-0.9	11.1**
Reading % Below Basic	8.1**	0.5	-16.7**
Attendance Rates	-0.97	-0.02	1.49*

* Indicates that differences are statistically significant at p<.05
** Indicates that differences are statistically significant at p<.01

As an example of how to read Table 2, consider Math percent of proficient or above:

As expected given the selection criteria, in 2005-06 the Renaissance Schools performed significantly worse on average than the Comparison Schools, with roughly 8% fewer students scoring proficient or above on the Math PSSA. There is no statistical difference between the future Renaissance Schools' growth rate and the Comparison Schools' growth rate. However, in Year One of the Initiative, the Renaissance Schools increased the percentage of their students scoring proficient or above on the Math PSSA on average by almost 18 percentage points more than the Comparison Schools.

[14] It is important to note that the findings presented represent only a single year of observed performance of Renaissance Schools in 2010-11. With only one year of 'post-implementation' results it is not possible to estimate 'post-implementation growth' along each of the outcomes. The observed levels of each outcome simply point to a single year shift in the performance of the Renaissance Schools and cannot be interpreted as shifts in the rate of growth at these schools.
[15] Initial Level Difference represents the difference between the Renaissance School Averages and the Comparison School Averages after controlling for the following cohort and school level factors: grade level, school grade configuration, school enrollment, student socio-demographics (percent Minority, ELL, Special Ed., Free Lunch), student retention, average teacher years at school, and student : teacher ratio.
[16] Growth Rate Difference represents the difference between the future Renaissance Schools' average rate of growth and the Comparison School average rate of growth for each outcome from 2005-06 through 2010-11, controlling for all the other indicators included in each model.
[17] Post-Intervention Difference represents the difference between the Renaissance Schools' average change for each outcome and the Comparison Schools' average change for each outcome in Year One of the Renaissance Initiative, controlling for all the other indicators included in each model.

The summary findings in Table 2 reveal:

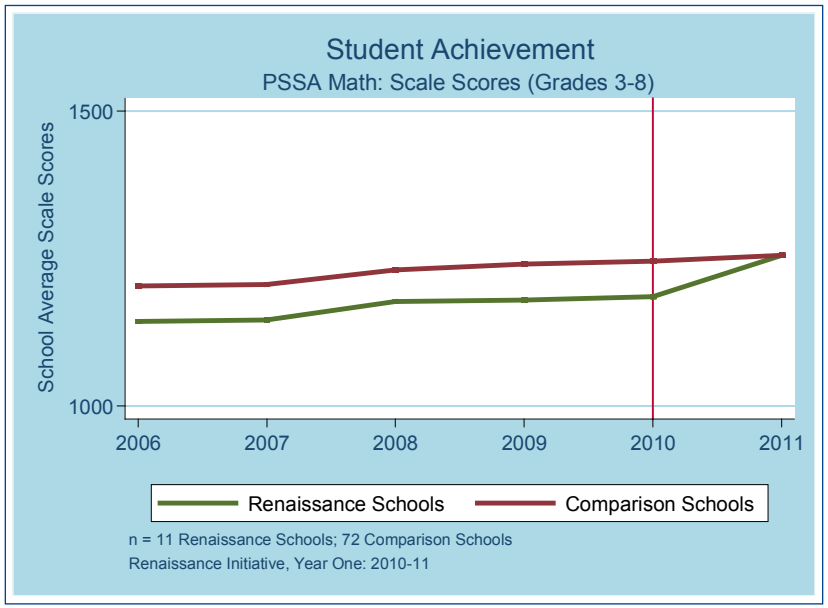
Schools that would become Renaissance Schools performed at a significantly lower level than Comparison Schools along each outcome in 2005-06.	Schools that would become Renaissance Schools and Comparison Schools experienced roughly equivalent growth rates along each outcome from 2005-06 through 2010-11.	Renaissance Schools experienced significantly more improvement than the Comparison Schools along each outcome in Year One of the Renaissance Schools Initiative.

Academic Achievement and Attendance Outcome Trends Over Time

Figures 6 through 12 present a set of comparative trend lines for the *observed performance* of school-level academic achievement and attendance outcomes for the Renaissance Schools and the Comparison Schools.

The analyses presented here suggest that the Renaissance Schools Initiative exerted a positive influence on participant schools in Year One, narrowing the gap between Renaissance Schools and the Comparison Schools along every outcome.

Figure 6. PSSA Math Scores[18]



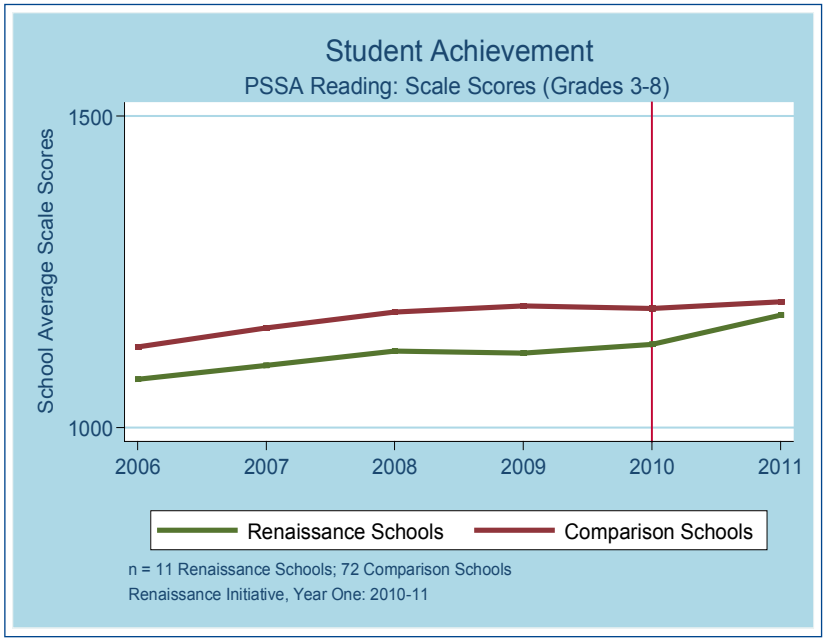
Prior to the Renaissance Schools Initiative:

- From 2006-10, the Comparison Schools' average math scale scores were *higher* than the future Renaissance Schools' scores at a constant margin.

After one year of the Renaissance Schools Initiative (2011):

- **The Renaissance Schools' performance on the Math PSSA was roughly equivalent to the Comparison Schools.**

Figure 7. PSSA Reading Scores



Prior to the Renaissance Schools Initiative:

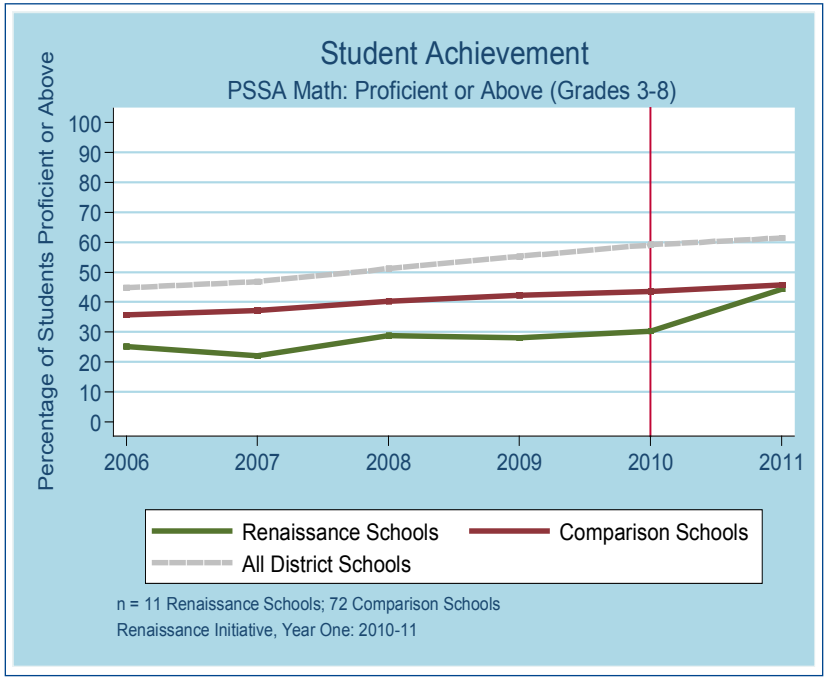
- From 2006-10, the Comparison Schools' average reading scale scores were *higher* than the future Renaissance Schools' scores at a constant margin.

After one year of the Renaissance Schools Initiative (2011):

- **The Renaissance Schools' performance on the Reading PSSA was roughly equivalent to the Comparison Schools.**

[18] Scale Scores are the unit of measurement for the PSSA Math and Reading assessments. The range of possible scores increases with each grade level making the overall school average scale scores a difficult number to interpret. The key findings in Figures 6 and 7 are the upward trends of average scale scores and the significant improvements observed in Year One of the Renaissance Schools Initiative.

Figure 8. PSSA Math Performance: Proficient or Above



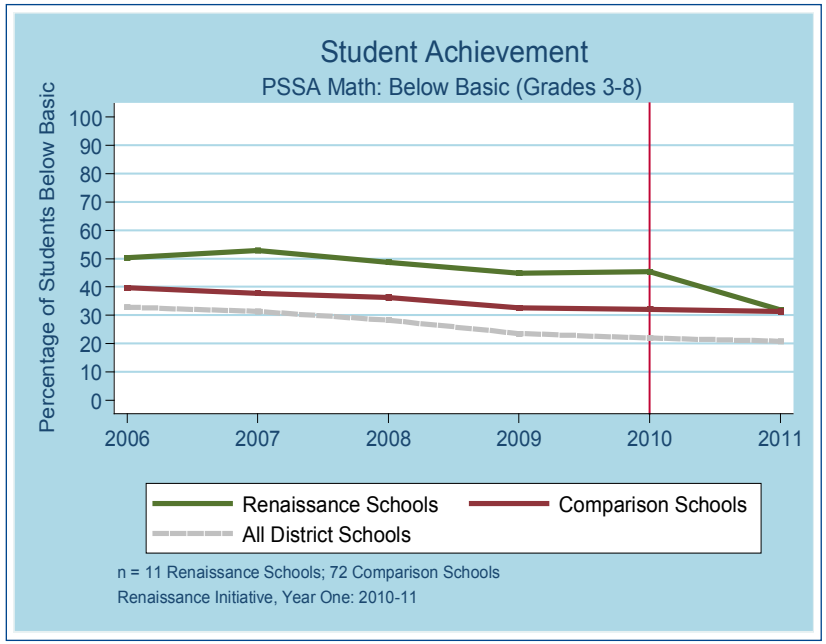
Prior to the Renaissance Schools Initiative:

- From 2006-10, the percentage of students scoring *Proficient or above* on the Math PSSA was consistently *higher* among the Comparison Schools than at the future Renaissance Schools.

After one year of the Renaissance Schools Initiative

- **On average, the percentage of students at each Renaissance School scoring Proficient or above on the Math PSSA increased from 30% in 2010 to 44% in 2011.**

Figure 9. PSSA Math Performance: Below Basic



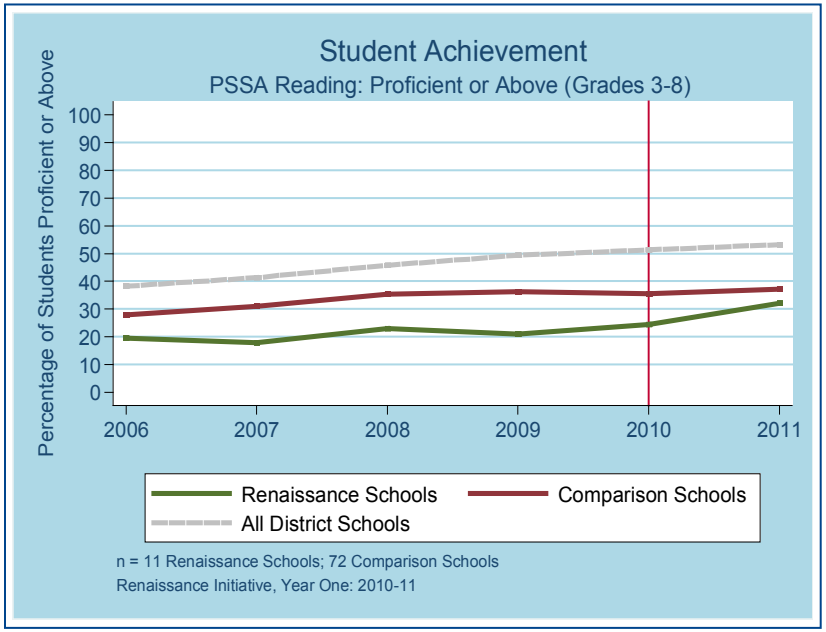
Prior to the Renaissance Schools Initiative:

- From 2006-10, the percentage of students scoring *Below Basic* on the Math PSSA was consistently *lower* among the Comparison Schools than at the future Renaissance Schools.

After one year of the Renaissance Schools Initiative

- **On average, the percentage of students at each Renaissance School scoring Below Basic on the Math PSSA decreased from 45% in 2010 to 32% in 2011.**

Figure 10. PSSA Reading Performance: Proficient or Above



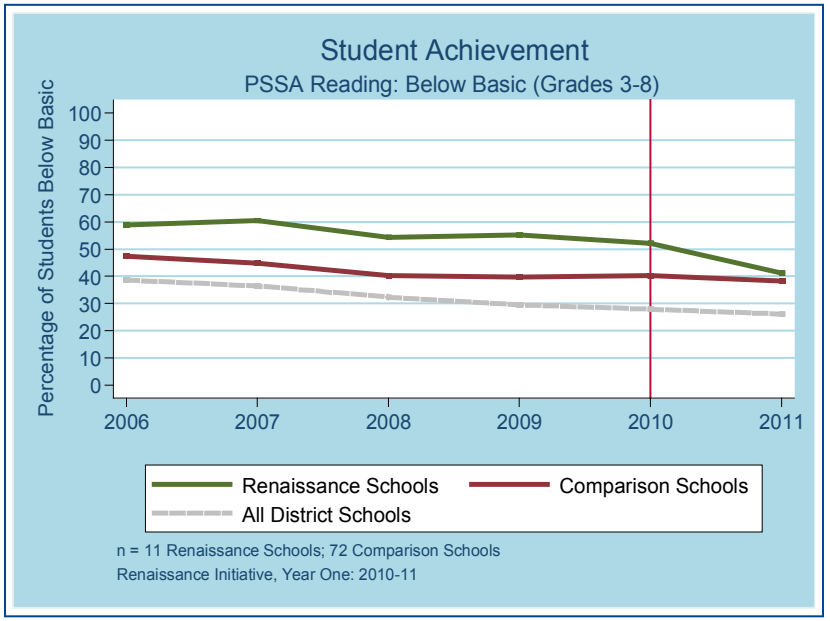
Prior to the Renaissance Schools Initiative:

- From 2006 – 2010, the percentage of students scoring *Proficient or above* on the Reading PSSA was consistently *higher* at the Comparison Schools than at the future Renaissance Schools.

After one year of the Renaissance Schools Initiative (2011):

- **On average, the percentage of students at each Renaissance School scoring Proficient or above on the Math PSSA increased from 24% in 2010 to 32% in 2011.**

Figure 11. PSSA Reading Performance: Below Basic



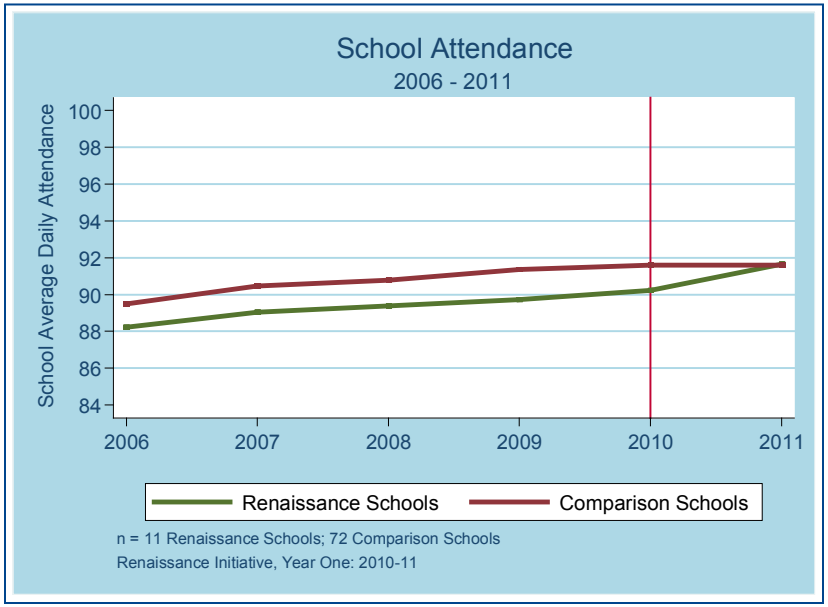
Prior to the Renaissance Schools Initiative:

- From 2006 – 2010, the percentage of students scoring *Below Basic* on the Reading PSSA was consistently *lower* at the Comparison Schools than at the future Renaissance Schools.

After one year of the Renaissance Schools Initiative (2011):

- **On average, the percentage of students at each Renaissance School scoring Below Basic on the Math PSSA decreased from 52% in 2010 to 41% in 2011.**

Figure 12. Average Daily Attendance



Prior to the Renaissance Schools Initiative

- In 2006, there was no significant gap between the future Renaissance Schools group and the Comparison Schools in Average Daily Attendance.

After one year in the Renaissance Schools Initiative

- **On average, the Average Daily Attendance at Renaissance Schools increased from 90% in 2010 to 92% in 2011.**

Descriptive Performance of Promise Academy High Schools

The figures presented on the following pages provide descriptive comparisons of the six-year performance of Promise Academy High Schools and a comparison group of high schools along each of the seven outcome measures reviewed above for the elementary and middle schools. The Promise Academy High Schools were not included in the inferential analysis presented in the preceding analyses for the following reasons:

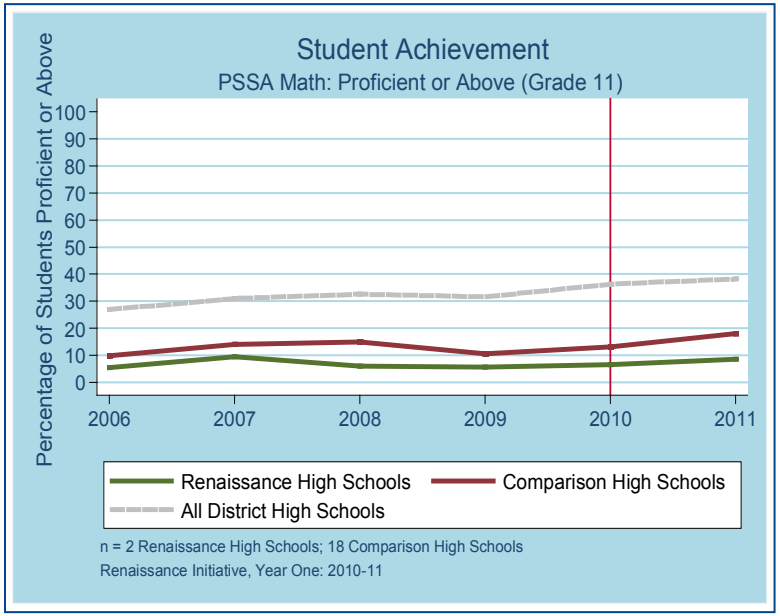
1) The general non-equivalence of K-8 schools and high schools makes combining the performance of 11th graders with that of 3rd - 8th graders misleading since, traditionally, high schools respond quite differently to reform efforts than K-8 schools. High schools are more complex institutions, and historically have had a much worse track record than K-8 schools in school turnaround initiatives.[19]
2) With only two Promise Academy High Schools, there was not a large enough 'treatment group' to perform a separate high school impact analysis for the Renaissance Schools Initiative.

Overall, the Promise Academy high schools did not experience the discernible improvements in student achievement and attendance seen in the elementary and middle schools in Year One of the Renaissance Schools Initiative.

While the observed performance of the Promise Academy High Schools does not show similar gains to those of the elementary and middle schools, an initial year of descriptive findings should not be considered a "failure" of the Initiative at the high school level. Rather, these findings simply suggest that in Year One, Promise Academy High Schools did not show gains; this is consistent with previous research on school turnaround initiatives at the high school level.

[19] de la Torre, M., Allensworth, E., Jagesic, S., Sebastian, J., Salmnowicz, M., Meyers, C., & Gerdeman, R. D. *Turning around low-performing schools in Chicago*. Chicago: University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research.

Figure 13. PSSA Math Scale Scores



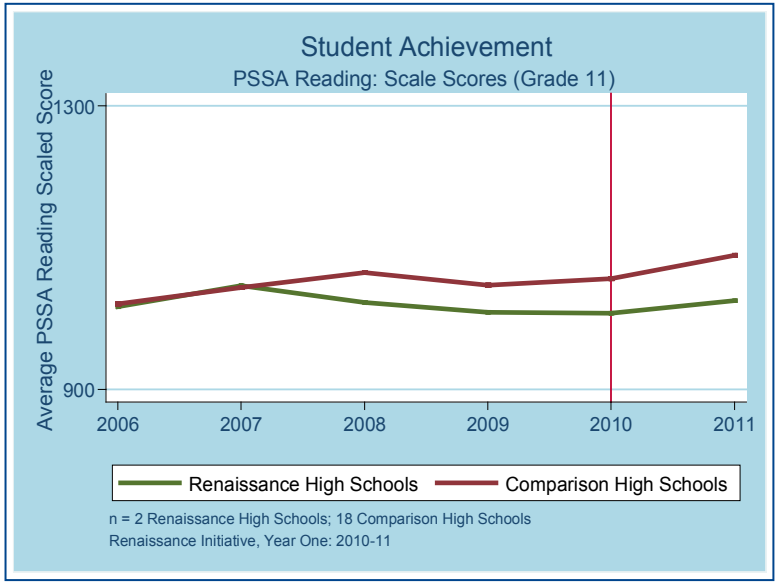
Prior to the Renaissance Schools Initiative:

- On average, Renaissance High School 11th grade students' PSSA Math scale scores had been slightly lower than students in Comparison High Schools prior to the intervention.

After one year of the Renaissance Schools Initiative (2011):

- **The Comparison High Schools continued to trend slightly higher in PSSA Math scale scores. Similarly, the Renaissance High Schools show slight gains in Year One of the Renaissance Schools Initiative.**

Figure 14. PSSA Reading Scale Scores



Prior to the Renaissance Schools Initiative:

- On average, Renaissance High School 11th grade students' PSSA Reading scale scores had been slightly lower than students in Comparison High Schools prior to the intervention.

After one year of the Renaissance Schools Initiative (2011):

- **The Comparison High Schools continued to trend slightly higher in Reading PSSA scale scores. Similarly, the Renaissance High Schools show slight gains in Year One of the Renaissance Schools Initiative.**

Figure 15. PSSA Math Performance: Proficient or Above

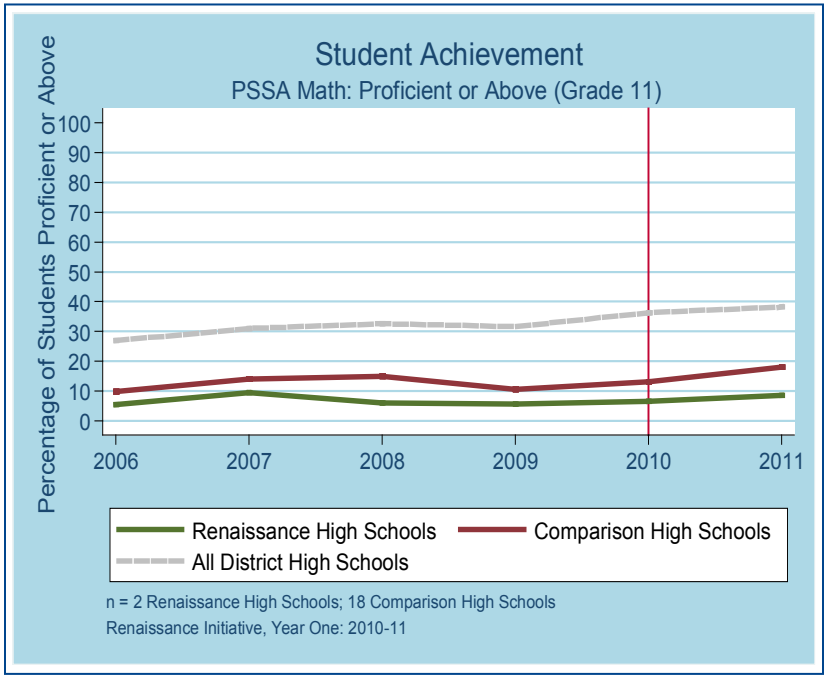
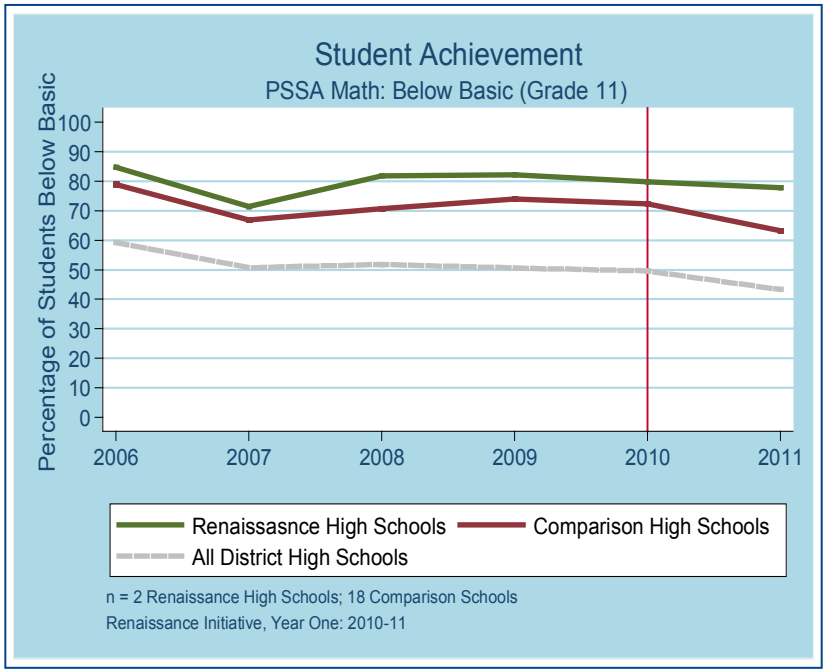


Figure 16. PSSA Math Performance: Below Basic



Prior to the Renaissance Schools Initiative:

- On average, Renaissance High Schools had a slightly lower percentage of 11th grade students' scoring Proficient or above on the Math PSSA than the Comparison High Schools prior to the intervention.

After one year of the Renaissance Schools Initiative (2011):

- **Both the Renaissance and Comparison High Schools trend slightly higher in the percentage of 11th grade students' scoring Proficient or above on the math PSSA, while the Renaissance High Schools continued to have fewer students scoring Proficient or above in Year One of the Initiative.**

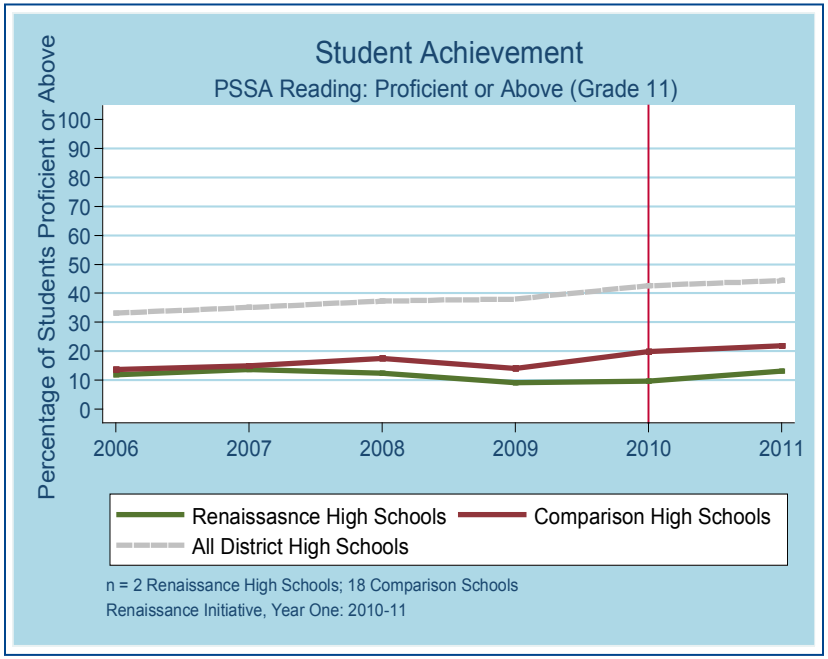
Prior to the Renaissance Schools Initiative:

- On average, Renaissance High Schools had a slightly higher percentage of 11th grade students' scoring Below Basic on the Math PSSA than the Comparison High Schools prior to the intervention.

After one year of the Renaissance Schools Initiative (2011):

- **Both the Renaissance High Schools and the Comparison High Schools continue to trend slightly lower in the percentage of 11th grade students' scoring Below Basic on the Math PSSA, while the Renaissance High Schools continued to have more students scoring Below Basic in Year One of the Initiative.**

Figure 17. PSSA Reading Performance: Proficient or Above



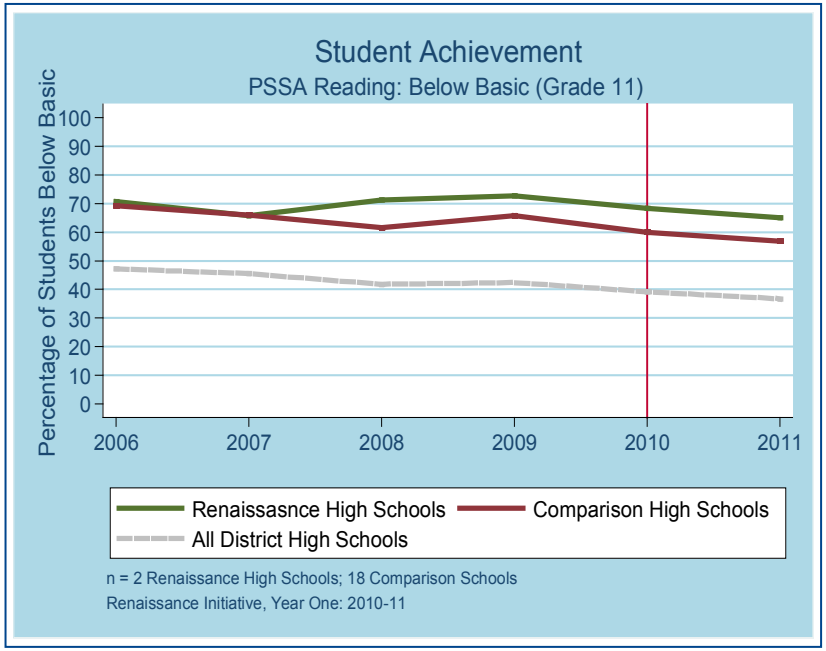
Prior to the Renaissance Schools Initiative:

- On average, the Renaissance High Schools had a slightly lower percentage of 11th grade students scoring Proficient or above on the Reading PSSA than the Comparison High Schools prior to the intervention.

After one year of the Renaissance Schools Initiative (2011):

- **Both the Renaissance and Comparison High Schools trend slightly higher in the percentage of 11th grade students' scoring Proficient or above on the Reading PSSA, while the Renaissance High Schools continued to have fewer students scoring Proficient or above in Year One of the Initiative.**

Figure 18. PSSA Reading Performance: Below Basic



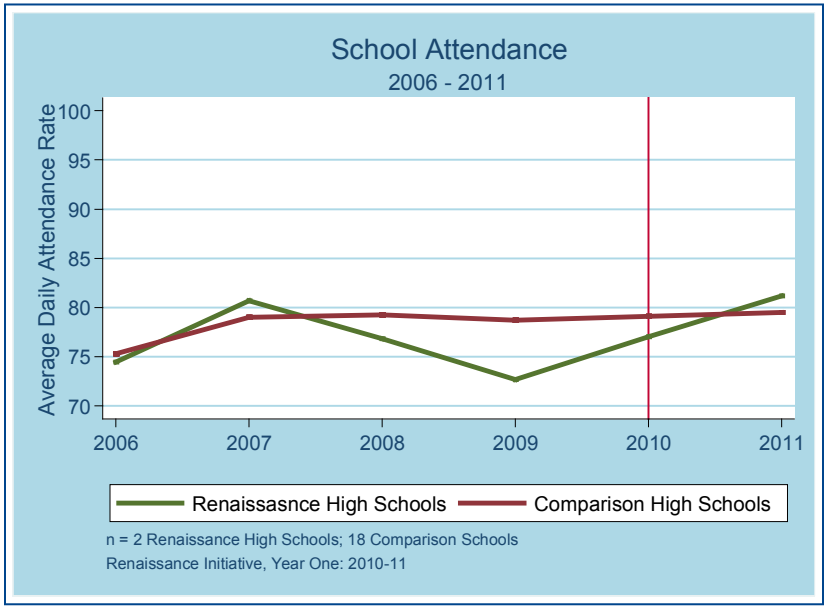
Prior to the Renaissance Schools Initiative:

- On average, the Renaissance High Schools had a slightly higher percentage of 11th grade students scoring Below Basic on the Reading PSSA than the Comparison High Schools prior to the intervention.

After one year of the Renaissance Schools Initiative (2011):

- **The Renaissance High Schools and the Comparison High Schools continue to trend slightly lower in the percentage of 11th grade students' scoring Proficient or above on the Reading PSSA; the Renaissance High Schools continued to have more students scoring Below Basic in Year One of the Initiative.**

Figure 19. Average Daily Attendance



Prior to the Renaissance Schools Initiative:

- Since 2009, Average Daily Attendance the Renaissance High Schools has been steadily increasing, while enrollment at the Comparison High Schools remained flat.

After one year of the Renaissance Schools Initiative (2011):

- **In 2011, the Renaissance High Schools closed the gap on Average Daily Attendance to become roughly equivalent to the Comparison High Schools.**

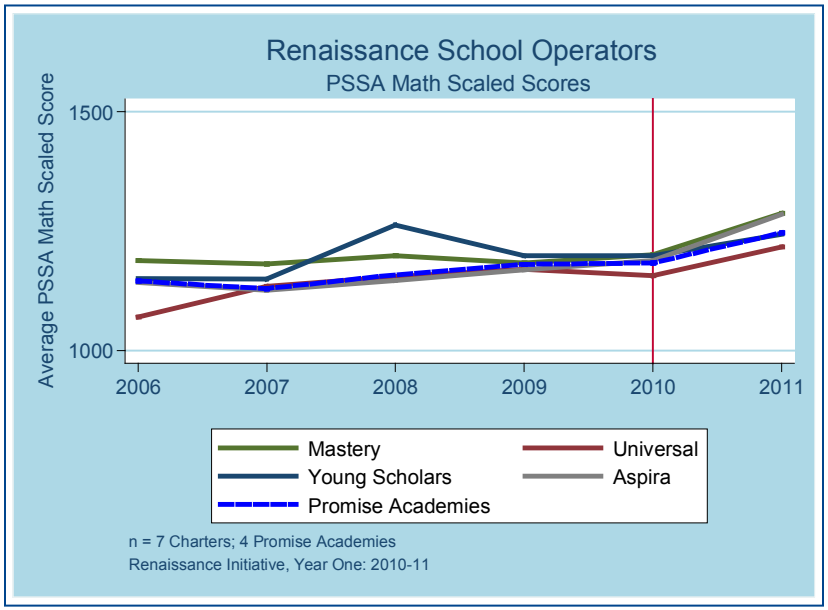
Descriptive Comparisons of K-8 Renaissance School Operators

The following figures present descriptive comparisons of the performance of Renaissance School operators – including Charter providers and District-run Promise Academies – to demonstrate the relative equivalence of the gains experienced at these schools in Year One of the Initiative.[20]

As mentioned previously in the review of the multi-level modeling results, there were no significant differences between the Renaissance Charters and Promise Academies in their performance along any outcome measure in Year One of the Initiative. The figures below provide descriptive verification of the 'across the board' gains experienced by all elementary and middle schools in Year One of the Renaissance Initiative. Model results testing the significance of differences between Promise Academies and Renaissance Charters can be found in Appendix C.

[20] Promise Academy high schools are not included in these figures. See previous section for explanation for their exclusion from these comparisons.

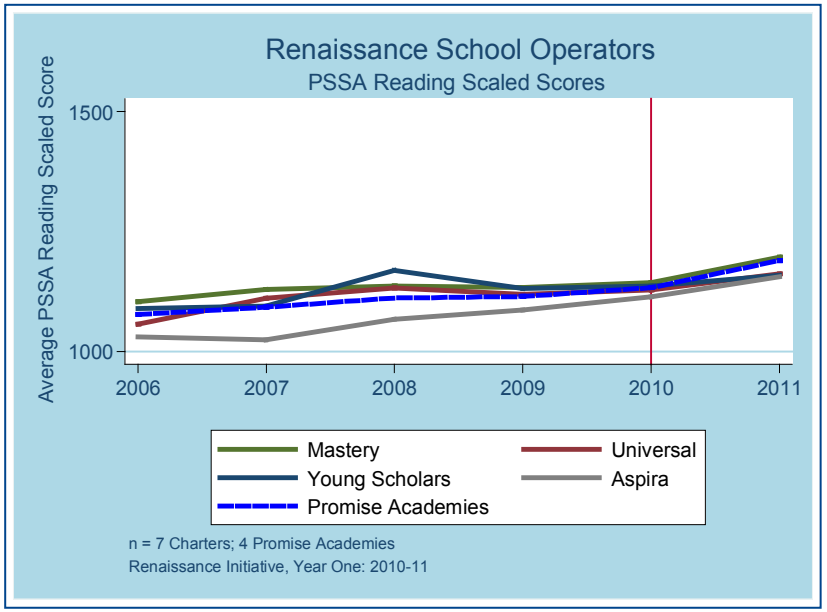
Figure 20. PSSA Math Scale Scores



After one year of the Renaissance Schools Initiative:

- Every Renaissance School operator made substantial and roughly similar gains in their PSSA Math scale scores.

Figure 21. PSSA Reading Scale Scores



After one year of the Renaissance Schools Initiative:

- Every Renaissance School operator made substantial and roughly similar gains in their PSSA Reading scale scores.

Figure 22. PSSA Math Performance: Proficient or Above

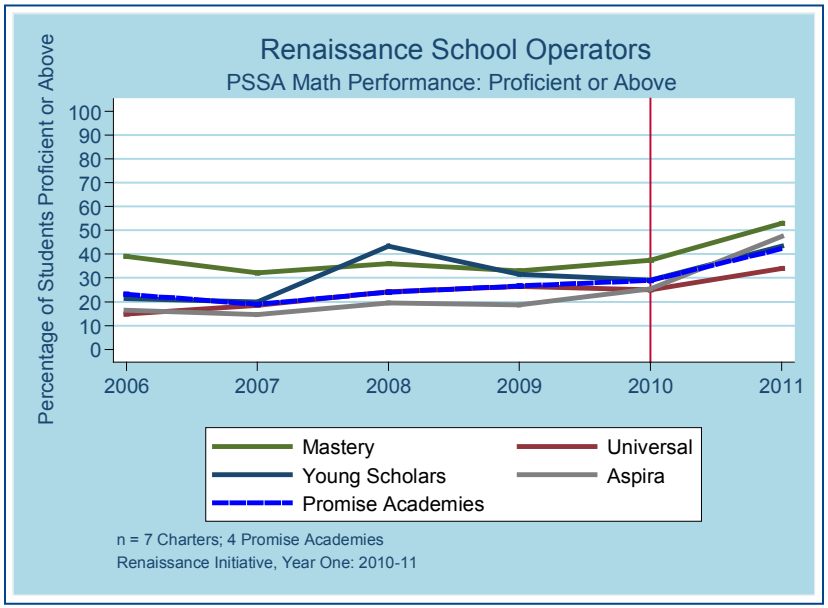
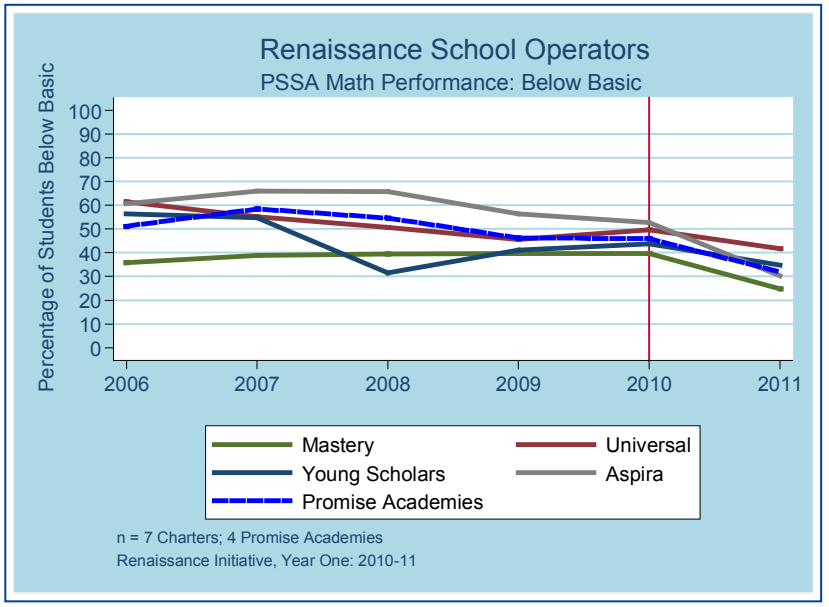


Figure 23. PSSA Math Performance: Below Basic



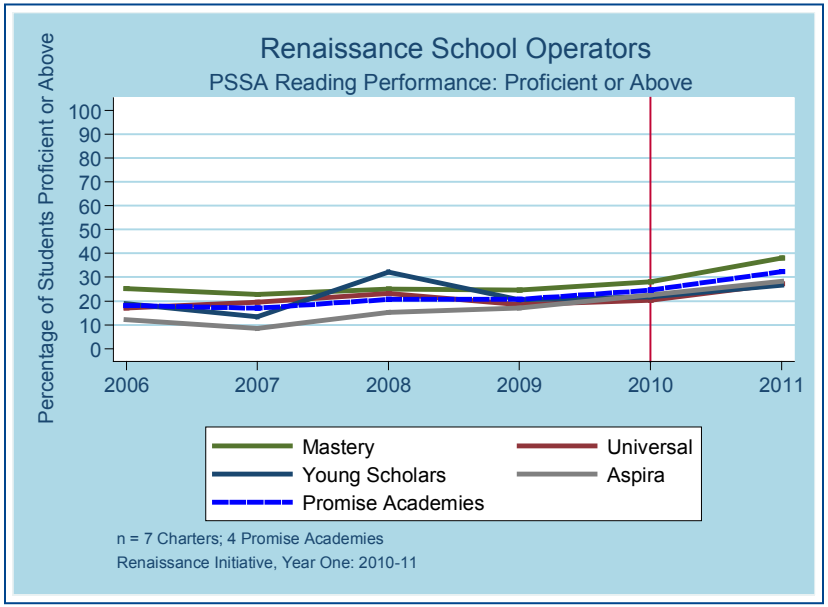
After one year of the Renaissance Schools Initiative:

- Every Renaissance School operator made substantial and roughly similar gains in the percentage of their students scoring Proficient or above on the PSSA Math test in Year One of the Initiative.

After one year of the Renaissance Schools Initiative:

- Every Renaissance School operator made substantial and roughly similar reductions in the percentage of their students scoring Below Basic on the PSSA Math test in Year One of the Initiative.

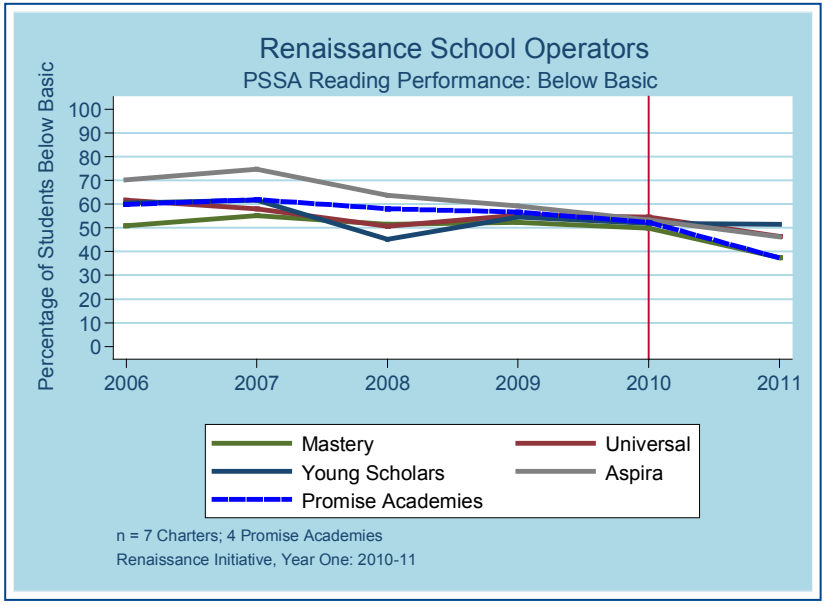
Figure 24. PSSA Reading Performance: Proficient or Above



After one year of the Renaissance Schools Initiative:

- Every Renaissance School operator made substantial and roughly similar gains in the percentage of their students scoring Proficient or above on the PSSA Reading test in Year One of the Initiative.

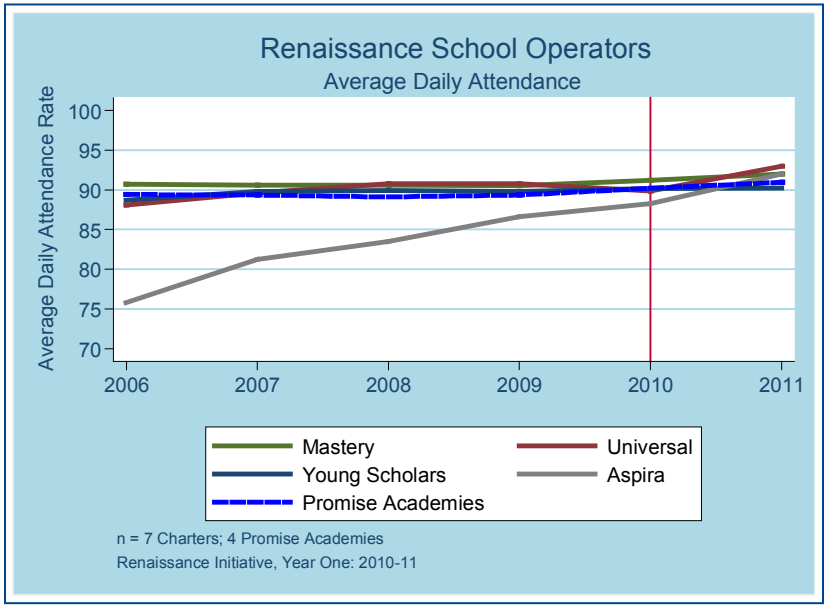
Figure 25. PSSA Reading Performance: Below Basic



After one year of the Renaissance Schools Initiative:

- Every Renaissance School operator made substantial and roughly similar reductions in the percentage of their students scoring Below Basic on the PSSA Reading test in Year One of the Initiative.

Figure 26. Average Daily Attendance



After one year of the Renaissance Schools Initiative:

- Every Renaissance School operator made roughly similar gains in their overall school attendance in Year One of the Initiative.

Summary of Year One Outcomes

Overall Performance

- During Year One of the Initiative, K-8 Renaissance School performance improved significantly more than the Comparison Schools across every Student Achievement and Attendance outcome.
    - While group differences between all Renaissance Schools and the Comparison Schools were significant, there were no significant differences between the performance of Renaissance Charters and Promise Academies.
- Renaissance High Schools did not experience gains similar to those observed in Renaissance Elementary and Middle Schools.

Academic Achievement

- In 2010-11, K-8 Renaissance Schools achievement levels increased significantly more than the Comparison Schools for every outcome:
    - Math and Reading Scale Scores;
    - Math and Reading Students Proficient or Above; and
    - Math and Reading Students Below Basic
- Renaissance Schools made greater Math gains in Year One than Reading gains.
    - This pattern is consistent with other school turnaround results in which larger math gains are typically observed.[21]

Against Comparison Schools, Renaissance Schools made gains at both ends of the achievement distribution on both the Math and Reading PSSAs.	
There were significant increases in the percentage of students scoring Proficient or above and…	there were significant decreases in the percentage of students scoring Below Basic.

Attendance

- On average, Renaissance Schools experienced a significant increase in attendance rates in 2010-2011 as compared to the Comparison Schools.

Enrollment

- In Year One of the Renaissance Initiative, enrollments at Renaissance Charters increased, while enrollments at Promise Academies and the Comparison Schools continued to decline.

These findings suggest that the Renaissance Schools Initiative is having a strong, positive effect on K-8 students and schools, in both the Renaissance Charters and the Promise Academies.

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[21] de la Torre, M., Allensworth, E., Jagesic, S., Sebastian, J., Salmnowicz, M., Meyers, C., & Gerdeman, R. D. *Turning around low-performing schools in Chicago*. Chicago: University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research; Fryer, R.G. (2011). *Creating "No Excuses" (Traditional) Public Schools: Preliminary Evidence from an Experiment in Houston*. (NBER Working Paper 17494). Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research. Retrieved from http://www.nber.org/papers/w17494.

However, although these schools made progress in Year One of the Initiative, they remain among the lowest performing schools in the District. Despite the gains reported here, on average, fewer than half of students at the Renaissance Schools and the Comparison Schools scored proficient or above on the Math PSSA, and just over half of students were Proficient or above in Reading. Indeed, both groups, Renaissance Schools and the Comparison Schools, remain substantially *below* the District levels of proficiency in both Math and Reading, and continue to have a *higher* share of their students scoring Below Basic in both Math and Reading. In addition, Renaissance High Schools did not experience similar gains to those seen in the elementary and middle schools in Year One of the Initiative.

Year Two: A Closer Look at Leadership and Instruction at Two Promise Academies

The summer of 2011 was a tumultuous period for the District, as the timeline on page 3 suggests. In May, the School Reform Commission (SRC) passed a budget that called for an unprecedented $629 million reduction in staffing and supports District-wide. Additional cuts were made in December 2011, including two percent from Promise Academy operating budgets and closure of the Promise Academy division office. Importantly, this chapter is based on fieldwork completed before this most recent round of cuts.

The summer 2011 budget reductions included seniority-based teacher layoffs across all District-managed schools, except for the Promise Academies. This led the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers (PFT) to file a lawsuit against the District for violations of their contract.[22] In mid-August, the PFT and District settled out of court, with the District agreeing to apply the seniority-based layoff policy equally across all schools, including Promise Academies. On August 22, after a summer marked by tension and criticism, Superintendent Arlene Ackerman – the initial champion behind the Renaissance Schools Initiative – resigned after the city of Philadelphia and the District jointly bought out her contract.

Meanwhile, in response to the District's mounting budget crisis, the SRC approved a decision to reduce the number of second-cohort Promise Academies from eleven to three, and to make cuts to the Promise Academy model. As Figure 27 illustrates, several components of the model that made Promise Academies unique, such as extended learning time and a special summer orientation for teachers, were reduced.[23]

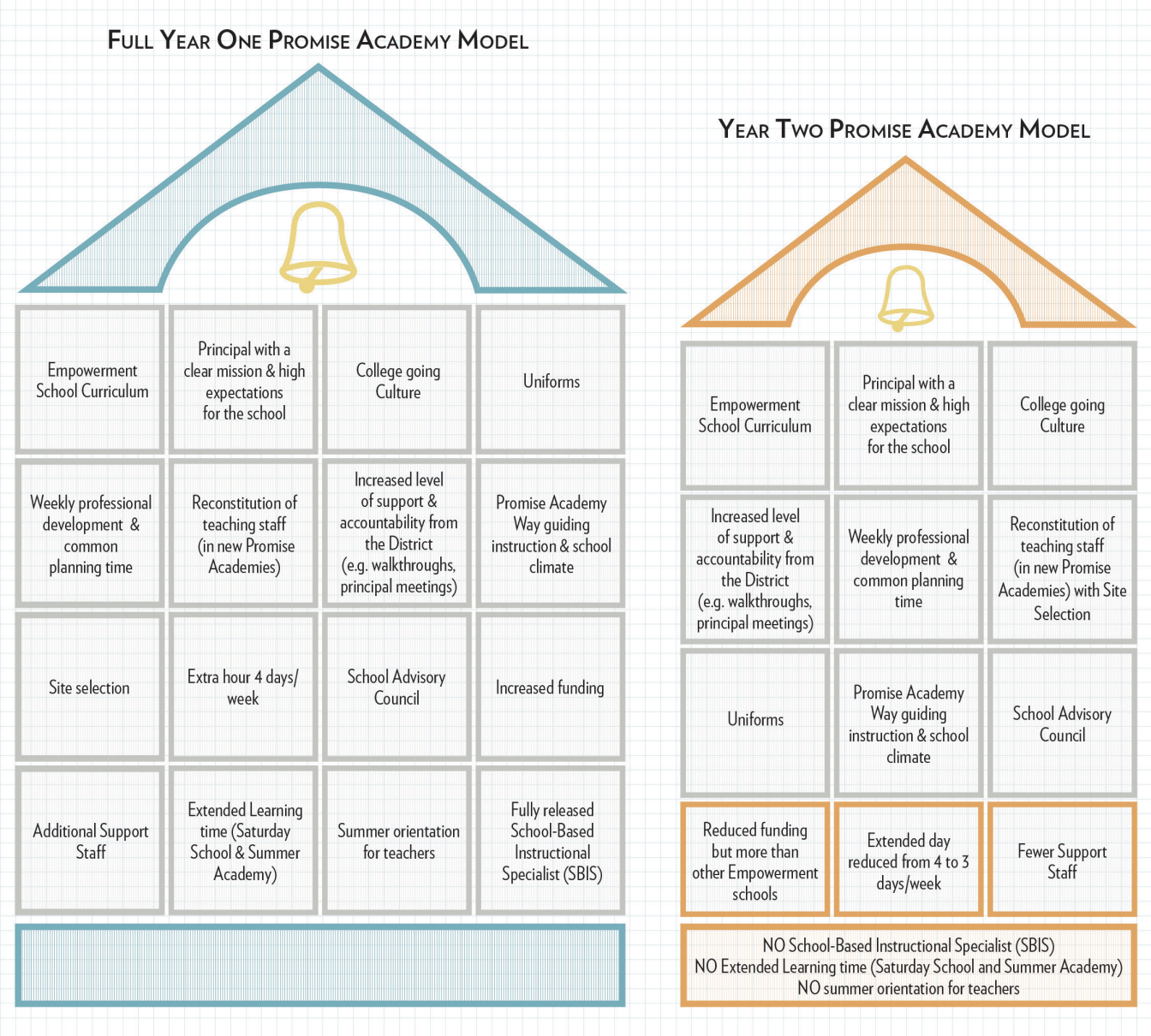
Despite these changes in the District, Promise Academies still entered Year Two funded at higher levels than other Empowerment Schools, and still receiving priority for services and support from District offices. For example, the District was still facilitating Promise Academy principal meetings and conducting regular walkthroughs. Schools were guided by the *Promise Academy Way* and were staffed by principals and teachers specifically selected for the task of turnaround. The start-up of Year Two was challenging, but as one District official observed:

> *The constraints that were placed on us because of the context in which we work were extraordinary, but given those constraints, I think our leadership team—and that's the principals and school-based leadership teams—did a phenomenal job to make sure they did not miss a beat for the youngsters.*

[22] The positive relations forged between the District and the PFT when they signed the CBA had soured during Year One when the District announced the Renaissance Initiative would include seven charter schools, whose teachers would not belong to the union. Furthermore, the PFT was disappointed when they were not invited to the table to partner in designing the Promise Academy interventions.

[23] The *Promise Academy Way*, a "leadership handbook" developed by the District in the fall of Year One, outlines expectations for Promise Academies in the following areas: vision and mission, climate and culture, systems and procedures, academic programs, and parental partnerships.

Figure 27. Promise Academy Models – Year One and Two



As the schools entered Year Two, the media continued to follow the Renaissance Schools Initiative, and a variety of community and local reform groups had their eyes on the Initiative and the District's decision to continue funding. Our research over the summer and into the fall suggests that Promise Academy staff maintained the notion that they were part of a broad turnaround effort. The sense in Year One that the Promise Academies had to "invent as you go" was replaced in Year Two by a calmer climate, familiarity with instructional programs, and enthusiasm for growth that students had made in Year One. We heard optimism from both teachers and principals. "I think it is just going to keep getting better," said one teacher. "I don't see it regressing at this point. We have come a really long way."

Case Study Research Methods

In fall 2011, RFA began the first phase of our proposed 16-month case study research. According to our design, we would look more deeply at the turnaround process in two Promise Academies and two charter-managed schools, selected from the first 13 Renaissance Schools. With the support of the District, we selected two Promise Academies; to date, none of the Renaissance charter providers have agreed to allow their schools to participate. The purpose of our case study research is to identify emergent practices that are contributing to accelerated school improvement, as well as barriers impeding the schools' success. The following questions guide the case study research:

1) How do schools vary along the three key drivers of turnaround—Effective School Leadership and Staffing, Positive School Climate, and Parent and Community Engagement?
   a. What best practices are emerging that contribute to strengthening schools along these dimensions?

2) What district and contextual conditions contribute to the Renaissance reform model working most effectively? What district and contextual conditions prevent Renaissance Schools from functioning more effectively?

The two Promise Academy schools selected for study include elementary and/or middle grades, and reflect variation in terms of geographic location, student demographics, and early indicators of success in areas of academic performance, school climate, and SAC functionality.[24] Table 3, below, shows the differences between the two schools in relation to the Renaissance Schools average, as of the end of Year One.

Table 3. Comparison of Case Study Schools to Renaissance Average

Renaissance School Averages	Mean (standard deviation)	School A*	School B*
Total School Enrollment	546 (181)	-0.84	0.90
Percent Minority Students	99% (2%)	-0.67	0.00
Percent ELL Students	6% (9%)	-0.62	2.13
Percent Special Ed. Students	17% (5%)	-0.46	1.80
Percent Free Lunch Students	94% (4%)	-0.75	0.00
Percent Proficient: Math PSSA	39% (16%)	0.52	-0.13
Percent Proficient: Reading PSSA	29% (9%)	-0.11	0.00

* Values represent standard deviation units away from the overall Renaissance School group average.

[24] We did not select either of the Renaissance high schools for case study because we wanted to be able to make meaningful comparisons among case study schools. High schools are complex institutions and respond differently to reform efforts. With only two high schools in the first cohort, both Promise Academies, comparisons across case study schools would have meant comparing elementary schools to high schools, and our ability to identify promising practices across schools would have been limited. We therefore eliminated the two high schools from our case study selection process. For more detail on our process for selecting case study schools, see Appendix D.

The findings presented in this section of the report are based on the following data sources:

Table 4. Data Sources

Timeframe: September 2011 – January 2012		
Interviews	**Document review**	**School site visits**
• Six District officials • Two PFT representatives	District and school materials • *Promise Academy Way* • Grade group meeting agendas • School Quality Reviews from early 2010	At each case study school: • Interview with principal • Interview with teacher leader • Two teacher focus groups (new and returning) • Three classroom observations • One grade group meeting observation and/or a professional development session

The focus of our fall 2011 fieldwork was on school leadership and instructional capacity in two Promise Academies. By the end of Year One, we had noted considerable positive change in school climate, and principals had conveyed that they expected Year Two to be one of dramatic academic improvement. For this reason, we believed it important to begin our case study work with a focus on how school leaders and staff were building capacity to bring about dramatic academic improvement.[25] In the following sections, we describe promising practices related to leadership and instruction at our two case study schools as they entered Year Two, followed by a brief description of obstacles the two schools faced in these efforts.

Promising Practices

In Year Two, both case study schools remained focused on the goal of turning around low student performance. Students and teachers had become familiar with the behavioral standards, academic expectations, and prescribed curriculum of the *Promise Academy Way*. While their structures differed, leadership at both schools shared a common focus on improving instruction. Staff at both schools believed that building the instructional capacity of their teachers, while holding them accountable for rigor and meeting the needs of their students, was the route to student success.

School principals were the driving force behind the promising practices below. These seven promising practices emerged in our research at both case study schools. While we are unable to draw direct links to student improvement, our data suggest that these practices are supporting teaching and learning at both schools.

[25] We intend to return in spring 2012 to revisit issues related not only to leadership, staffing and instruction, but also to school climate and to continue to follow the development of the SACs. In summer/fall 2012 we would conclude with a last round of school interviews.

PROMISING PRACTICE: Principals are goal-oriented and cultivate buy-in from staff.

Principals at both schools clearly communicated a mission of high expectations for students and teachers. Teachers in both schools echoed the principals' goals, and respected their principals as strong leaders.

School A	School B
Principal: "What you want to look for is student growth. Moving students is a success."	**Principal:** "We are offering the accelerated courses…so that our kids won't be forced to go to the neighborhood high school."
Teacher: Our current principal is "a good leader just because [his/her] accountability standards are much higher than any other principal that I've ever had."	**Teacher:** "Having the same leader and having people in the school who buy into [the principal's] vision is what will make this school successful from my perspective."

PROMISING PRACTICE: Principals site-select.

At both schools, site selection contributed to a staff who wanted to be part of a change initiative. In contrast, teachers who were centrally placed (*i.e.*, *not* site selected) due to the rushed hiring timeline did not all wish to teach at a Promise Academy.

School A	School B
Teacher: "The Promise Academy initiative was attractive to me because I wanted to help be part of an initiative to help turn around schools…I went through the selection process for that. It was exciting."	**Principal:** Selecting staff is "almost the most important element" of the Promise Academy model.

PROMISING PRACTICE: School leaders support teacher growth with ongoing observation, assessment, and professional development to improve instruction.

Both principals believed that teacher development was the pathway to student growth. They directed a coordinated system of teacher supports that included weekly professional development, common planning time, and regular informal observations, as mandated by the *Promise Academy Way*. As illustrated in Figure 28 below:

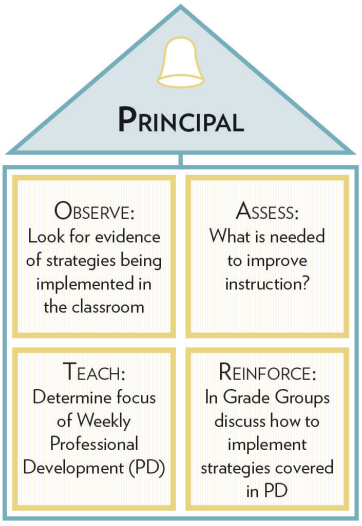
- Principals and their leadership teams used student data, feedback from District walkthroughs, and/or their own observations of classrooms to determine the focus of Monday afternoon professional development (PD) sessions prescribed by the *Promise Academy Way*.
- Teachers then met weekly as grade groups—also mandated by the *Promise Academy Way*—to discuss the implementation of the strategies or initiatives covered in PD.

- In informal classroom observations, principals, assistant principals, and teacher leaders looked for implementation of these same strategies, provided teachers with individual feedback, and sometimes modeled the new strategy or initiative for the teachers in the classroom.

This coordinated system provided teachers with continuous feedback on their instruction. In addition to their informal observations, school leaders were to conduct at least two formal evaluations annually. Teachers at both schools said the regular observations and feedback "kept them on their toes" and provided concrete suggestions for improving their practice.

School A	School B
Teacher: "Our principal does informal observations and takes notes. You can always go to him and ask for his feedback and see if he has ideas about implementing lessons."	**Principal:** "If we can constantly provide the support, and monitor the growth, and monitor the level of support to teachers, [then] in turn student success will be as high if not higher than it was on last year's test…Everything ties in to the level of teacher growth and the level of support that is provided to the teaching staff so that they are successful."
	Teacher: "There is a pretty comprehensive feedback form that is used. It is standardized across the entire school. It is usually like two 'goods' and an 'improve' is what is listed on there."

Figure 28. Mutually-Reinforcing Mechanisms for Improving Instruction



PROMISING PRACTICE: School leaders and teachers use multiple data sources to track student progress and adjust instruction.

Both schools accessed and used multiple forms of data to chart progress and inform instructional strategies. Among the types of data mentioned were:

- Data from SchoolNet
- Predictive data
- PSSA data
- Formal and informal classroom observations
- District walkthrough observations
- Portfolios of student work
- Anecdotal notes and report card comments made by teachers

As illustrated by Figure 28, school leaders used these data sources to assess where teachers needed support. In addition, teachers used data individually, in grade groups, and in PD sessions to identify areas where their students needed reinforcement and to decide how to differentiate instruction. PD included sessions focused on how to access data and how to use it to assess students and meet their instructional needs.

PROMISING PRACTICE: Principals encourage teachers to adapt the curriculum within the Promise Academy Way.

Principals and teachers saw the *Promise Academy Way* and prescribed curriculum as the framework in which they were working. In Year One, many teachers felt overwhelmed by the need to learn many new curricula and by the constraints of the curricular programs they were to implement. In Year Two, however, they were beginning to feel familiar enough with the curriculum to start adjusting their lessons where they saw limitations.

Both principals were introducing strategies that lessened direct instruction. Adjustments included:

- Emphasis on writing and the use of writing portfolios;
- More time spent in guided reading;
- Use of choice boards; and
- Teacher-designed activities to support students at different levels so, in the words of one teacher, "all levels of students can understand the material."

School A	School B
Principal: "I don't want too much direct instruction. Some teachers are good at it because they're forceful and they have a presence. Some teachers, the kids don't even know they are in the room, so direct instruction doesn't work for them. I'd rather they have kids in groups working independently on a project."	**Teacher Leader:** "So whatever your creativity is, you're working within that structure [of the Promise Academy Way]…How much student voice am I allowing? Am I making sure that I am hitting the eligible content? Am I doing the same thing every week or am I keeping it interesting for the students? So there is ownership of that process and that falls within the Promise Academy Way, because ultimately we want to move all of the kids."

PROMISING PRACTICE: Principals encourage teacher collaboration.

Both principals encouraged teachers to share ideas with each other – both informally and during the formal grade group meetings. Teachers met before and after school, during common prep periods, and during lunch. Some also said they texted, called, and emailed each other at night and on the weekends to sustain the collaboration. One principal encouraged teachers to use a prep period to observe a teacher who was strong in an area where they struggled.

School A	School B
Teacher: "A lot of times, we'll talk before school. We'll talk after school. We talk at lunch time…We text and email. It's not always during school time that we communicate."	**Teacher:** "People are more willing to share their knowledge [now that we are a Promise Academy]. I know there was a time here when teachers couldn't even knock on each other's doors because [they thought] 'I have this and I'm keeping it,' but now it is about sharing…It is to increase the knowledge base of the students, and most of the staff is really willing to do that, and to follow that directive from the principal."

PROMISING PRACTICE: The PAR program supports ongoing PD.

The Peer Assistance and Review program (PAR) matches struggling teachers with teacher mentors, and has strong, experienced teachers design and carry out research projects. At School B, teachers who were matched with PAR mentors spoke highly of them. They valued the "outside, unbiased opinion" of their mentors. School A had experienced teachers working on research projects, but the mentoring program was not yet in place. The principal planned to implement it next year for teachers getting unsatisfactory write-ups.

School A	School B
Principal: "I do like that [the PAR program] is not punitive. It's meant to support the teacher and help the teacher."	**Teacher:** "I got the PAR support program. That has been phenomenal. … [My mentor teacher] has been great. If I didn't have her I think I would have been completely clueless. … That's where I have gotten most of my classroom changing advice from."

Teacher Satisfaction

With these promising practices in place, and one year behind them, teachers on the whole spoke with more optimism and focus than they had in the fall of Year One:

Teachers felt like they were part of something "big." Given (1) the attention the Renaissance Schools Initiative received from the District—including its status as the signature reform of former

superintendant Arlene Ackerman; (2) the way the Initiative has been spotlighted in the local media; and (3) the federal government's promotion of school turnaround efforts, teachers were energized by the sense that they were participating in something beyond the scope of their individual classrooms.

Teacher morale in our two case study schools was higher among teachers who were returning for their second year at the same school. When we conducted interviews in the fall of Year One, teachers in our case study schools spoke of being overwhelmed and frustrated by constant changes. In Year Two, returning teachers appeared to be familiar with the *Promise Academy Way*, expressed confidence in school leadership, and felt encouraged by evidence that their schools had made improvements in Year One.

School A

Teacher: "What made me stay was, I actually did see a difference, at least from the beginning of the year to the end of the year. Just talking to other teachers, [they said] 'my, have things changed since last year.' So that was a good sign. I know that things take time to evolve. So I thought next year would be even better; we would see even more progress."

Teacher morale was not as high among those who were new to the school in Year Two. Principals worked hard to help acclimate these teachers, many of whom arrived at a Promise Academy because they had been force-transferred from elsewhere in the District.

School B

Teacher: "I think what I am seeing with the teachers that were, I guess, transferred from other schools … was some of them worked at other schools six years, five years, or two years, even –and they come here and they don't want to work at a Promise Academy. They let it be known, they tell you that, and you see it in their actions and you can see it in their voices

Obstacles to Improvement

While principals and teachers were instituting these promising practices and expressing optimism that they would continue to see improvement in their schools in Year Two and beyond, they also identified factors that may hinder progress. A number of the obstacles they described were the result of turmoil and change at the District level.

CHALLENGE: Staff reductions.

At School A, staff reductions meant the end of small group pull-outs, an increase in classroom size (from under 25 to 25-30 students), and elimination of in-school substitutes. At School B, special education teachers were cut (from 15 to 9), which limited services for those students.

School A	School B
Teacher: "You can't have a turnaround school and pile 25 needy, needy [kindergartners] into one room and expect miracles to happen."	**Principal:** "Last year we were able to have at least two or three learning support teachers in every grade which allowed time for the push-in and pull-out in small group sessions. This year we were not afforded that opportunity so in a class room you are seeing 15 kids per one special education teacher."

CHALLENGE: Teacher turnover.

Because of their high number of new teachers in Year One, both schools reported teacher turnover of 25-40% following District-PFT settlement and subsequent seniority-based layoffs that occurred in mid-August 2011. The turnover delayed principals' efforts to achieve common vision and norms among their staff. Teachers new to the school in Year Two were not acclimated to the principals' turnaround mission and high expectations.

School A	School B
Principal: "You know they wiped us out, with the teachers. I had to begin to get teachers back. At the very last minute, I was able to get a lot of my teachers back who were here last year but then on the other hand, I didn't get all my teachers back."	**Principal:** "Now the teachers that are new to us, most are at the beginner stage because what good instruction looks like at [our school] might not have looked the same in their former school. Things that are monitored here may have never been monitored at their former school. So as you're training and building them up through the scaffolding approach, you're also breaking bad habits."

CHALLENGE: Late hiring and no orientation.

Principals had less than a month to fill vacancies following the August 2011 layoffs. As a result, the hiring process was rushed and site selection was compromised. Most of the available teachers were forced transfers that did not necessarily want to be at Promise Academies. One principal interviewed candidates but did not have time to conduct observations. The other school still had over fifteen vacancies after site selection had ended, which were filled centrally. Site selection was a promising practice in both schools (see above), and principals said that having it undercut in this way slowed improvement at their schools.

The combination of late hiring and budget cuts meant there was no summer orientation for the new teachers. In one school, teacher assignment did not settle until October, which led one teacher to describe the first month of school as "a ball of confusion."

CHALLENGE: Over use of corrective reading and math.

Teachers at both schools said that Corrective Reading and Corrective Math should be used more selectively with students showing need. They did not see positive gain from its wholesale use. The critique of Corrective Math was especially common.[26]

School A	School B
Teacher Leader: "I think it should be used like a Band-Aid, and not across the board. … I think the way it is implemented, it's not really that effective."	**Teacher Leader:** "Honestly kids don't love it, teachers don't love it, and I think that it is great for a specific population, as that's how it was designed … but it's being utilized as an intervention for everybody."

CHALLENGE: Over-reliance on direct instruction.

The prescribed curriculum for Promise Academies calls predominantly for direct instructional approaches. In response, principals at both schools were introducing alternative strategies that encouraged student-centered instruction and small group work. Their efforts to adapt the curriculum were described as a promising practice.

Discussion of Case Study Findings

Our close look at two Promise Academies in Year Two of the Renaissance Schools Initiative highlights the important role played by school principals. School leaders articulated a clear mission and goals for the school, and they understood that teacher development had to be the primary pathway to student growth. Even in the face of challenges created by budget cuts, teacher layoffs, and restrictive curricular demands, principals believed they could build momentum through formal and informal systems that supported teachers' learning. In the words of one District leader, principals were "resilient" in the face of curtailed resources, and they and their staff were working to improve outcomes for students.

As of this writing, however, additional reductions are being made to the Promise Academy model. District and union officials reported that the reductions and general uncertainty in the Promise Academies are jeopardizing morale in the schools. One District leader questioned how much it still stands apart from the Empowerment School model, and whether it will result in the growth they hope for:

[26] On February 13, 2012, the District announced to the SRC that beginning as soon as fall 2012, they will no longer mandate use of Corrective Reading and Corrective Math. See: Herold, B. (2012, February 13). District to stop mandating use of scripted curricula. *The Philadelphia Public School Notebook*. Retrieved from http://www.thenotebook.org.

The model needs more clarity; we need to know what it is and the schools need to know what is extra for them. They still have some additional time, they do have priority in some way in the District, and they have teachers that have chosen in some way to be there, as opposed to being assigned there, though that did happen a bit at the end. I am a little frustrated and disappointed with where the model is. I don't think it's where we intended it to be. I think we will see growth and improvement, but if we wanted to see accelerated growth—I'm frustrated.

While the future of the Promise Academies remains uncertain, the promising practices identified here are supported by existing research on leadership practices and instructional systems that lead to teacher and student growth.[27] These practices, when well-implemented, hold the potential to improve teaching and learning not only in the Renaissance Schools but in other schools and in other districts.

Conclusion

As of this writing, the District remains in an unprecedented state of flux. Four of the five SRC members are new to their appointments; the SRC is facing the need to make an extraordinary number of budget cuts due to a grave shortage of funds; the mayor has taken on a new, activist role given the dire state of District finances; and a national search is underway for a new superintendent. The process for a third round of Renaissance schools started late, in January 2012, but the process is in motion and the plan includes converting another set of persistently low-performing District schools to Renaissance Charter schools, with no announced plans for new Promise Academies.

There is little doubt that the Renaissance Schools Initiative was launched under less than ideal circumstances, and they continue to operate within a context that is fraught with change and uncertainty. Yet despite these circumstances, this interim report shows encouraging signs for the Renaissance Schools Initiative in both the Promise Academies and the Renaissance Charters:

Both models – Renaissance Charters and District-run Promise Academies – made strong positive gains toward improving student achievement and school attendance. Gains in the 11 K-8 Renaissance schools were significantly greater than those in comparison schools in:

- **Math and Reading PSSA scale scores**
- **Percentage of Students Proficient or above in Math and Reading**
- **Percentage of Students Below Basic in Math and Reading**
- **Average Daily Attendance**

No differences in effectiveness among the five providers (School District and four charter providers) were discerned.

[27] Christman, J. B., Brown, D., Burgess, S., Kay, J., Maluk, H. P., & Mitchell, C. (2009). *Effective organizational practices for middle and high school grades: A qualitative study of what's helping Philadelphia students succeed in grades 6-12*. Philadelphia: Research for Action; Bryk, A., Sebring, P. B., Allensworth, E., Luppescu, S., & Easton, J. Q. (2010). *Organizing schools for improvement: Lessons from Chicago*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press; Herman, R., Dawson, P., Dee, T., Greene, J., Maynard, R., Redding, S., & Darwin, M. (2008). *Turning around chronically low-performing schools: A practice guide* (NCEE #2008-4020). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved from http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/publications/practiceguides.

This report also highlights promising District policies and school practices that could have importance for future turnaround efforts in Philadelphia or in other locales. These include the following:

1) The **Promise Academies received extra resources and attention from the District**, which placed them in the spotlight and **generated grater public interest** in their progress.
2) The **teachers' union supported the Renaissance Schools Initiative** by signing a collective bargaining agreement that was consistent with the principles of the reform effort.
3) Principals and teachers felt part of **something "big."**
4) **Principals built their own teams** of teachers through site selection.
5) Principals built **systems that promoted and reinforced teacher learning and growth.**
6) **Data *and* student work were used to assess learning** and make instructional decisions.
7) **Principals and teachers exercised professional judgment to adapt the curriculum**, within the parameters of the *Promise Academy Way*.

Implications and Next Steps

The Year One outcomes for schools in the Renaissance Schools Initiative suggest that something positive is happening in the first cohort of Promise Academies and Renaissance Charters. Year One of the Initiative saw significant positive gains in the rate of student achievement and attendance; and Year Two case studies point to an emerging set of promising practices that are likely to be related to the success of these schools.

Given these notable changes in Year One, we believe that ongoing research should address the following questions:

1) Does the rate of growth in student achievement at Renaissance Schools continue in subsequent years?
2) Is the model scalable—that is, as it expands to include more schools, can the successes of the Year One cohort be replicated? What level of resources or supports is necessary to achieve this goal?
3) What is the cost of implementing successful Renaissance schools using the Promise Academy model? The Renaissance charter model? In K-8 schools? In high schools?
4) Do differences between providers emerge over time?
5) Does the success of the model differ by type of school (K-8, high school) or student population (special education, ELL, low-income, high-performing, low-performing)
6) At both Promise Academies and Renaissance Charters, what replicable policies and practices are contributing to increased student achievement?
7) What is the collateral effect for comparable District schools not selected for the Renaissance Schools Initiative?

RFA's ongoing research will continue to monitor key student outcomes through Year Two of the Renaissance Schools Initiative, and our case studies of two Promise Academies will continue through the remainder of the 2011-12 school year. The study would be bolstered by the addition of charter schools to the case study design to ensure that the promising practices of these schools are also documented in our research. We will continue to reach out to charter school operators in the hopes of gaining entre to one or two of the Renaissance Charter schools.

Appendix A: School Advisory Councils

This appendix provides a brief update on the development of School Advisory Councils (SACs) in Year Two, including a closer look at the SACs in the two Promise Academies we have begun to follow as case studies. A more extensive examination of SACs will be part of our December 2012 report. This update is based on the following data sources gathered between September 2011 and January 2012:

- Interviews with 6 District officials
- Observation of a District-organized meeting for principals and SAC chairs/members
- Observation of a SAC Working Group meeting
- Document review of District materials (e.g. *SAC Handbook*, FAQ Sheet, and *Overview of SACs* handout)
- Document review of materials produced by SACs and community groups
- Research activities at each case study school:
    - Interview with principal
    - SAC meeting observation
    - Survey completed by SAC chairs
    - SAC reports on goals to the District

In the following section, we examine:

1) An increased level of support for Promise Academy SACs in Year Two
2) Promising practices in the development of SACs at our two case study schools
3) Challenges that SACs continue to face.

We do not report on Charter Renaissance SACs because we did not have access yet to Renaissance charter schools.

Increased Support for SACs in Year Two

In Year One, we found that multiple school and Central Office staff were providing guidance to the Promise Academy SACs, and that the SACs would benefit from a single source of Central Office support.[28] Year Two began with guidance to the Promise Academy SACs consolidated under the Office of Parent, Family, Community Engagement and Faith-Based Partnerships (OPFCEF). As one member of that office commented about its new relationship to SACs: "I'm holding myself personally accountable for goals. I want to hear from SACs and principals together. What are the goals? What are parents working on? It's not just attending meetings. How do we measure, what are benchmarks, what is the timeline for these goals?"

To solidify this new relationship with the Promise Academy SACs, the OPFCEF took the following steps:

- Designated one OPFCEF staff person to provide direct support to each SAC, including helping with parent outreach for meetings and attending most SAC meetings;
- Revised the *SAC Handbook*;

[28] See: Gold, E., Good, D., Roberston-Kraft, C., & Callahan, M. K. (2011).

- Planned an October 2011 SAC Summit "for all members of the SACs as well as for any parents of Philadelphia public schools interested in forming a SAC at their school"[29]:
- Incorporated training on SACs into the agenda for the principals' retreat;
- Organized a joint meeting of principals and SAC chairs;
- Developed a schedule of regular PD sessions for SAC chairs and members; some of these were planned for the school site and were to be tailored to the needs of that SAC; and
- Developed a report template (requesting school data, a SAC self-assessment, and goal setting) and required that SACs submit the reports bi-annually; these will presumably be shared with District leadership and the SRC.

In addition, by Year Two, considerable public advocacy had grown in support of SACs—not only in the Renaissance schools but throughout the District. The OPFCEF coordinated a SAC Working Group that includes members of five to seven advocacy and community and youth organizing groups. The SAC Working Group, which has met on a near-monthly basis since the summer, assisted with planning trainings, the SAC Summit, and the revised SAC Handbook—including promoting the new requirement that high school SACs include three high school students.

Several of the groups represented in the SAC Working Group are also members of *Our City - Our Schools,* a coalition that is actively advocating for the development of SACs beyond the Renaissance schools, and for the strengthening of the decision-making and accountability roles of SACs. According to their tally, 55 District schools have SACs thus far and at least 18 more are working on creating one, suggesting that this component of the Renaissance Schools Initiative is already being replicated in other settings. The coalition has developed a platform, which calls on the District to "keep and strengthen SACs," and is meeting with District leaders and SRC members, as well as with city officials, to build a shared understanding of what it would take to create strong parent, youth, and public engagement through the SACs.

Promising Practices in Year Two SACs

Table A1 points to several promising practices that emerged in our case study research at two Promise Academies. Overall there were differences between the two SACs, but both were more organized and purposeful than in Year One, and had improved relationships with their principals. They were primarily focused on building relationships with parents and recruiting them to participate in their efforts. One of the two also articulated a clear mission of developing their school as a hub of services for parents, families, and the neighborhood at large.

[29] Quoted from the District website.

Table A1: Promising Elements in the Development of the SACs

Promising Practice	In the Case Study Schools
Experienced SAC leadership	At least one SAC chair or co-chair at each case study school remained in place in Year Two and was a school parent. Continuity in leadership appeared to build on the experience of Year One, including an improvement in relationships with their respective principals.
Active SACs	Although it was too early to tell if the SACs were fully functional and what their strongest contributions to their schools were, SACs at both schools were meeting regularly and organizing a variety of activities for parents and community members.
Increased principal engagement	In Year Two, both case study SACs appeared to be working cooperatively with their principals. One SAC chair said the relationship had significantly improved from last year. SAC chairs at both schools reported that their principals attended SAC meetings more than half the time. A District official commented that now that principals realize SACs "are not going away," communication in general is improving. A principal new to his school—a non-case study school—noted at a city-wide meeting: "Working with the SAC is how I was able to get the community to accept the transition. The SAC has been instrumental in allowing me to build that community relationship that is so important to the school."
Strong focus on outreach	A primary activity of the SACs at both schools was parent and community outreach. One principal noted how important it was for SACs to be proactive in recruitment: "They initiate a lot of things. They have computer and health workshops. All of those things bring parents in, and then you can do your recruiting." This SAC was looking as well for opportunities to build partnerships with community organizations and local churches to increase resources available to the school and neighborhood families. They were focused, in their words, on "Build[ing] the community by addressing issues that create barriers within the lives of the families of our students to in turn create environments that foster learning and success."

Continuing Challenges

The challenges that emerged in our Year Two research echo those we reported on in Year One with a few changes. For example, while we have consistently found that building positive relationships between SACs and principals has been challenging, we heard a new need in Year Two for collaboration *among* SACs and SAC chairs. As we have reported in the past, recruiting parents and obtaining resources for planning their activities are ongoing needs for SACs. In our observations, these needs sometimes became the SACs' primary agenda items, overriding their role in providing, as the *SAC Handbook* describes it, "a real voice in school-based decision-making."

Table A2: Obstacles to Improvement

Challenge	The challenge in schools
Some new SAC chairs conveyed a sense of feeling isolated.	We observed in a District-wide meeting that new SAC chairs wanted opportunities to learn and share with other SAC chairs, especially around issues such as needing to recruit parents.
Concept of shared leadership is not a familiar one.	Year Two began with better principal-SAC relations in both case study schools, but the concept of shared leadership, and the role of the SAC in decision-making, remains an area for exploration. One District staff reflected: "How do school administrators and staff collaborate with parents and community around school improvement goals? How do they really share leadership and share decision-making so that voices are represented at the table and all of the stakeholders have a say and that it gets the consensus?"
Sustaining parent engagement	Parent participation in SACs continued to be sporadic rather than sustained in many of the Promise Academy SACs, and SACs were continuously needing to initiate activities that would attract parents and community members. Both case study SACs were planning events for parents in hopes of recruiting new members.
Resources for refreshments, childcare, and translation services and printing	Obtaining a small amount of funding for basic expenses remained a challenge for most SACs. Both case study SACs reported that they had no money to spend on their activities.

In Year Two, our case study SACs showed evidence that they were now established, had worked through some of the early tensions with their principals, and were clearly focused on reaching out to school community members and parents. The progress we saw in the two case study SACs may portend a role for SACs that not only aims to influence decisions made inside their school but strengthens the neighborhood as a whole. One SAC in particular was addressing the intersection of interests between school and community—holding workshops on truancy and attendance, and facilitating services to community members in areas related to health, housing and education.

The fact that SACs are being implemented in schools beyond the Renaissance Schools Initiative holds promise for ongoing strides forward in school-community relations. Future research, however, is needed to examine the range of ways in which SACs are contributing to neighborhood and school improvement, and to develop qualitative and quantitative measures of their contributions.

Appendix B: Supplemental Tables

Renaissance Schools: School by School Performance

Table B1

Dr. Ethel Allen School K-6 (Promise Academy)

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
PSSA Math Average Scale Score	1127.8	1135.5	1156.9	1168.0	1170.5	1240.8
Percent Proficient or Above in Math	29.0%	21.4%	25.6%	24.2%	32.2%	46.6%
Percent Below Basic in Math	46.2%	49.5%	49.4%	44.2%	41.7%	29.3%
PSSA Reading Average Scale Score	1053.3	1128.2	1128.8	1111.1	1115.3	1175.4
Percent Proficient or Above in Reading	14.2%	17.1%	21.6%	17.9%	24.1%	27.9%
Percent Below Basic in Reading	62.3%	59.5%	50.6%	56.8%	51.8%	38.0%
Enrollment	389	394	336	342	390	394
Student Daily Attendance	89.1%	89.3%	89.2%	89.1%	91.4%	91.6%

Roberto Clemente Middle School 5-8 (Promise Academy)

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
PSSA Math Average Scale Score	1162.7	1160.5	1208.0	1231.2	1201.9	1237.5
Percent Proficient or Above in Math	18.7%	21.1%	29.2%	33.8%	27.2%	37.3%
Percent Below Basic in Math	55.3%	56.9%	47.6%	41.1%	49.6%	40.3%
PSSA Reading Average Scale Score	1076.3	1049.3	1115.0	1114.5	1123.0	1177.1
Percent Proficient or Above in Reading	18.1%	17.7%	22.5%	23.5%	25.1%	29.4%
Percent Below Basic in Reading	60.8%	60.6%	54.3%	52.1%	52.1%	41.7%
Enrollment	1265	1073	865	694	693	708
Student Daily Attendance	86.9%	87.5%	88.8%	88.0%	88.6%	90%

Paul L. Dunbar School K-8 (Promise Academy)

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
PSSA Math Average Scale Score	1170.1	1109.3	1103.6	1135.8	1159.1	1236.7
Percent Proficient or Above in Math	24.3%	15.9%	15.3%	18.0%	24.5%	45.8%
Percent Below Basic in Math	44.4%	65.0%	65.3%	53.9%	49.1%	23.4%
PSSA Reading Average Scale Score	1123.6	1116.0	1088.4	1106.6	1135.8	1230.2
Percent Proficient or Above in Reading	22.3%	18.1%	16.6%	17.1%	19.8%	38.3%
Percent Below Basic in Reading	53.0%	60.6%	67.5%	65.9%	57.5%	25.2%
Enrollment	291	266	235	214	180	169
Student Daily Attendance	93.4%	91.1%	88.8%	89.7%	90.8%	92.0%

Thomas Potter School K-8 (Promise Academy)

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
PSSA Math Average Scale Score	1121.0	1112.6	1165.5	1186.5	1201.3	1245.6
Percent Proficient or Above in Math	20.7%	17.2%	26.2%	30.5%	31.9%	39.4%
Percent Below Basic in Math	58.9%	62.5%	56.3%	45.8%	43.5%	34.7%
PSSA Reading Average Scale Score	1053.5	1075.7	1112.9	1126.0	1157.2	1175.5
Percent Proficient or Above in Reading	18.0%	15.0%	22.2%	24.5%	29.1%	33.7%
Percent Below Basic in Reading	63.5%	66.8%	59.9%	51.7%	48.2%	44.7%
Enrollment	607	568	516	471	474	414
Student Daily Attendance	88.3%	89.5%	89.6%	90.6%	90.0%	90.3%

University City High School 9-12 (Promise Academy)

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
PSSA Math Average Scale Score	1043.9	1042.7	1017.7	1056.1	1011.9	1050.3
Percent Proficient or Above in Math	9.2%	3.2%	5.9%	8.4%	3.1%	9.0%
Percent Below Basic in Math	78.6%	76.1%	82.0%	79.9%	85.1%	79.5%
PSSA Reading Average Scale Score	1061.0	1018.1	1033.3	1035.4	970.3	1027.2
Percent Proficient or Above in Reading	16.1%	10.4%	11.6%	11.7%	6.3%	13.5%
Percent Below Basic in Reading	58.5%	73.0%	67.6%	67.6%	76.7%	66.5%
Enrollment	1787	1738	1392	1131	812	655
Student Daily Attendance	70.8%	78.5%	76.6%	72.8%	77.7%	80.1%

Vaux High School 9-12 (Promise Academy)

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
PSSA Math Average Scale Score	1006.8	1151.4	1021.7	1021.9	1059.8	1048.7
Percent Proficient or Above in Math	1.8%	15.8%	6.1%	2.8%	9.9%	8.0%
Percent Below Basic in Math	90.9%	66.7%	81.7%	84.4%	74.6%	76.1%
PSSA Reading Average Scale Score	972.8	1074.3	1012.3	982.5	1044.9	1023.2
Percent Proficient or Above in Reading	7.5%	17.0%	13.3%	6.5%	12.9%	12.5%
Percent Below Basic in Reading	83.0%	58.5%	74.7%	77.8%	60.0%	63.6%
Enrollment	343	398	413	455	401	339
Student Daily Attendance	78.2%	82.9%	77.1%	72.5%	76.3%	82.3%

Guion S. Bluford / William B. Hanna School K-6 (Charter - Universal Companies)

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
PSSA Math Average Scale Score	1033.8	1149.2	1168.1	1170.3	1156.7	1189.8
Percent Proficient or Above in Math	16.8%	22.4%	28.8%	27.4%	25.3%	27.2%
Percent Below Basic in Math	59.6%	49.3%	44.9%	43.4%	48.4%	46.3%
PSSA Reading Average Scale Score	1053.1	1124.9	1157.0	1118.4	1116.5	1124.0
Percent Proficient or Above in Reading	17.7%	23.4%	29.4%	17.6%	17.3%	22.1%
Percent Below Basic in Reading	61.4%	54.1%	45.0%	54.4%	57.4%	53.4%
Enrollment	679	711	563	592	490	554
Student Daily Attendance	88.5%	89.6%	91.3%	90.4%	90.1%	94.0%

Samuel Daroff School K-8 (Charter - Universal Companies)

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
PSSA Math Average Scale Score	1105.3	1120.1	1140.8	1170.0	1157.0	1243.1
Percent Proficient or Above in Math	13.0%	14.5%	19.7%	25.5%	24.6%	40.6%
Percent Below Basic in Math	63.3%	61.0%	56.3%	48.0%	51.0%	37.1%
PSSA Reading Average Scale Score	1060.9	1097.3	1108.1	1118.6	1138.7	1200.0
Percent Proficient or Above in Reading	16.3%	15.8%	16.8%	19.5%	23.5%	32.4%
Percent Below Basic in Reading	61.9%	62.1%	56.4%	56.3%	51.9%	39.5%
Enrollment	796	842	796	693	693	715
Student Daily Attendance	87.7%	89.7%	90.3%	91.2%	89.6%	92.0%

Frederick Douglas School K-8 (Charter - Young Scholars)

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
PSSA Math Average Scale Score	1150.7	1149.7	1262.5	1198.3	1198.5	1243.2
Percent Proficient or Above in Math	21.4%	19.8%	43.4%	31.5%	29.0%	43.5%
Percent Below Basic in Math	56.5%	54.9%	31.6%	41.0%	43.7%	34.8%
PSSA Reading Average Scale Score	1089.1	1094.4	1168.8	1131.6	1136.0	1158.5
Percent Proficient or Above in Reading	18.9%	13.5%	32.2%	20.4%	21.7%	26.7%
Percent Below Basic in Reading	60.5%	61.8%	45.2%	54.5%	52.0%	51.5%
Enrollment	577	492	451	478	499	637
Student Daily Attendance	88.7%	89.8%	89.9%	89.8%	90.2%	90.2%

William F. Harrity School K-8 (Charter - Mastery Charter Schools)

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
PSSA Math Average Scale Score	1162.8	1158.3	1185.4	1173.1	1218.0	1300.3
Percent Proficient or Above in Math	34.9%	26.7%	31.2%	26.4%	36.8%	54.8%
Percent Below Basic in Math	41.3%	42.9%	40.8%	44.9%	37.8%	24.9%
PSSA Reading Average Scale Score	1076.3	1108.5	1120.8	1134.0	1150.5	1205.8
Percent Proficient or Above in Reading	18.3%	21.8%	22.0%	22.3%	25.6%	36.7%
Percent Below Basic in Reading	59.5%	57.7%	56.7%	52.1%	49.0%	37.1%
Enrollment	564	641	537	580	649	789
Student Daily Attendance	92.2%	92.1%	91.9%	89.9%	90.5%	92.0%

William B. Mann School K-5 (Charter - Mastery Charter Schools)

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
PSSA Math Average Scale Score	1197.9	1208.8	1232.1	1212.1	1229.4	1315.3
Percent Proficient or Above in Math	42.4%	34.8%	43.8%	44.0%	46.4%	59.0%
Percent Below Basic in Math	34.3%	36.9%	30.4%	29.1%	30.6%	20.0%
PSSA Reading Average Scale Score	1175.8	1170.1	1187.4	1172.2	1193.6	1211.3
Percent Proficient or Above in Reading	35.3%	26.8%	34.5%	33.1%	39.9%	44.1%
Percent Below Basic in Reading	34.3%	48.0%	36.1%	39.2%	36.6%	31.3%
Enrollment	444	429	412	378	384	429
Student Daily Attendance	90.8%	90.9%	91.0%	91.9%	92.8%	92.0%

Franklin Smedley School K-5 (Charter - Mastery Charter Schools)

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
PSSA Math Average Scale Score	1202.5	1174.6	1176.8	1163.2	1155.4	1244.3
Percent Proficient or Above in Math	39.9%	34.9%	33.1%	28.3%	29.0%	44.9%
Percent Below Basic in Math	31.9%	36.8%	47.2%	44.9%	50.6%	29.6%
PSSA Reading Average Scale Score	1058.7	1109.3	1100.2	1094.3	1087.2	1173.0
Percent Proficient or Above in Reading	22.1%	19.6%	18.5%	18.1%	18.9%	33.2%
Percent Below Basic in Reading	59.2%	59.9%	61.6%	65.5%	63.8%	43.7%
Enrollment	668	630	619	600	565	607
Student Daily Attendance	89.1%	88.7%	88.9%	89.7%	90.4%	92.0%

John B. Stetson Middle School 5-8 (Charter - Aspira)

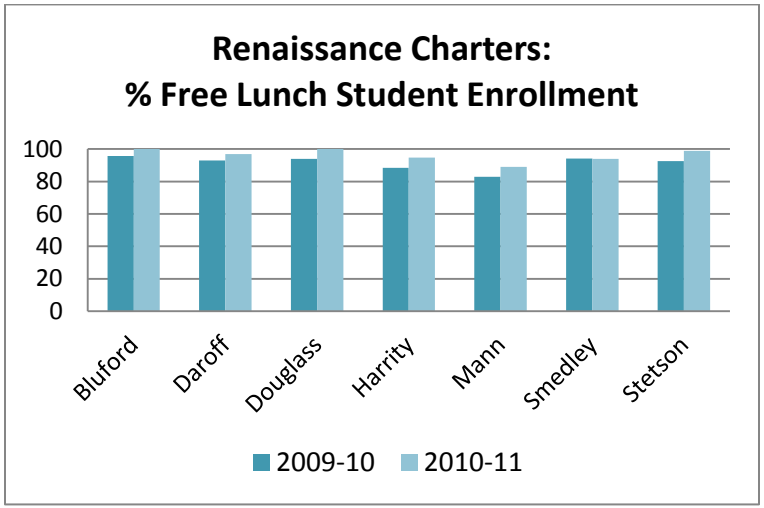
	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
PSSA Math Average Scale Score	1142.7	1125.8	1146.2	1169.2	1188.3	1284.7
Percent Proficient or Above in Math	16.4%	14.5%	19.4%	18.6%	25.4%	47.4%
Percent Below Basic in Math	60.8%	65.9%	65.9%	56.4%	52.7%	30.4%
PSSA Reading Average Scale Score	1030.4	1024.5	1067.1	1086.7	1113.6	1155.8
Percent Proficient or Above in Reading	12.1%	8.5%	15.3%	17.2%	22.6%	28.2%
Percent Below Basic in Reading	70.3%	74.8%	63.8%	59.3%	53.3%	46.1%
Enrollment	810	765	703	597	629	681
Student Daily Attendance	75.8%	81.2%	83.5%	86.6%	88.2%	92.0%

Renaissance Charters: Comparison of Student Subgroup Enrollment

Table B8

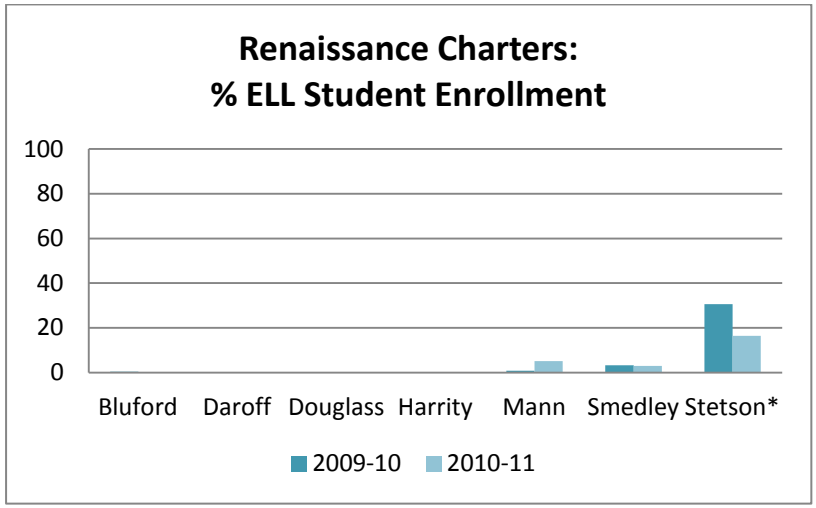
	% Free Lunch Student Enrollment		% ELL Student Enrollment		% Special Ed. Student Enrollment		% Minority Student Enrollment	
	2009-10	2010-11	2009-10	2010-11	2009-10	2010-11	2009-10	2010-11
Bluford	95.7	100.0	0.4	0.0	14.1	15.2	100.0	100.0
Daroff	92.9	97.0	0.1	0.0	11.3	13.6	99.9	99.6
Douglass	94.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	13.6	14.8	99.6	99.8
Harrity	88.4	94.7	0.2	0.3	11.1	9.9	99.7	99.9
Mann	82.9	89.0	0.8	5.1	7.0	9.6	99.7	100.0
Smedley	94.2	93.9	3.2	3.0	13.8	19.8	94.2	94.4
Stetson	92.5	99.0	30.5	16.4	19.9	19.1	97.0	98.2

Figure B9



- There was a slight increase in the percentage of students eligible for free lunch in all but one of the Renaissance Charter Schools from the 2009-2010 school year to the 2010-2011 school year.

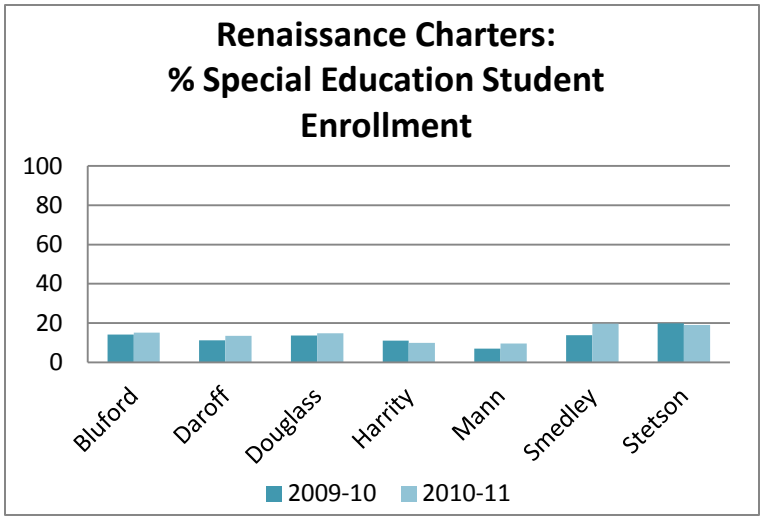
Figure B10



- There was little or no in the percentage of ELL students in all but two of the Renaissance Charter Schools from the 2009-2010 school year to the 2010-2011 school year.

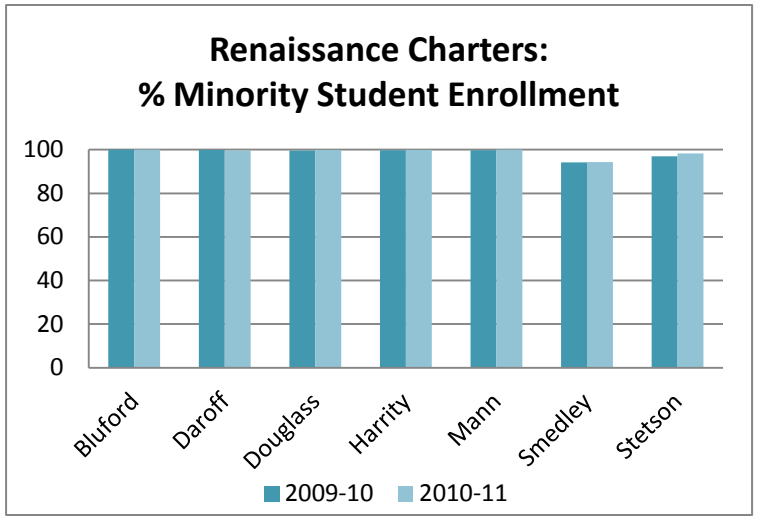
* Stetson reported 112 ELL students in 2010-11 school year to RFA for this report, or roughly 17% of their overall student population. In the same year, Stetson reported 177 ELL students tested on the Math PSSA to the PA Department of Education, or roughly 26% of their overall student population.

Figure B11



- There was a slight increase in the percentage of special education students in all but two of the Renaissance Charter Schools from the 2009-2010 school year to the 2010-2011 school year.

Figure B12



- There was little or no change in the percentage of minority students in each of the Renaissance Charter Schools from the 2009-2010 school year to the 2010-2011 school year.

Appendix C: Quantitative Methodology

Data and Study Population

The population for the analyses described in this Technical Appendix includes 11 Renaissance Schools[30] and a comparison group of 85 K-8 District schools that received a 7-10 on the District's School Performance Index after the 2009-10 academic year. The District provided school level records, and grade level PSSA performance measures, for six years (2005-06→2010-11): the five years prior to the start of the Renaissance Schools Initiative and the first year of the Initiative itself. Renaissance Charter providers submitted school level records, and grade level PSSA performance, for the 2010-11 academic year.

Multi-Level Modeling

The statistical analysis for school outcomes relied on multi-level models. Student achievement outcomes presented in the main findings are based on a series of 3-Level models with grade levels nested within years (time points) nested within schools. The school attendance models are 2-Level models with school aggregate attendance rates nested within time. In each of the models run for these analyses, the outcomes were school level aggregate measures that vary each year. The analyses presented in the main findings of the report were generated from seven separate models, one for each of the seven outcomes:

1) Math PSSA Scale Scores;
2) Reading PSSA Scale Scores;
3) The percentage of students scoring proficient or above on the Math PSSA;
4) The percentage of students scoring proficient or above on the Reading PSSA;
5) The percentage of students scoring below basic on the Math PSSA;
6) The percentage of students scoring below basic on the Reading PSSA;
7) Average Daily Attendance.

The general model below represents the formal model structure that was employed for each of the six student achievement outcomes and represent a 3-Level nested data structure, with grade levels at Level 1, nested within different years (time points) at Level 2, and within schools at Level 3.

Following the formal modeling structure, is a table presenting the indicators that make up each of the models presented in this Appendix.

[30] The two Promise High Schools, Vaux and University City, were not included in this analysis due to the grade level differences and the general non-equivalence of K-8 schools and High Schools.

Formal Summary of the Multi-Level Models

Level-1 Model (between grade cohorts)

Y (Outcome) = P0*(Intercept) + P1*(Grade 4) + P2*(Grade 5) + P3*(Grade 6) + P4*(Grade 7) + P5*(Grade 8) + E

Level-2 Model (between years)

P0 = B00 + B01*(Year) + B02*(Post-Intervention Year) + B03*(Total Enrollment) + B04*(%FRL) + B05*(Student Transfers) + B06*(Teacher Experience) + B07*(% Black) + B08*(% Native Am.) + B09*(% Asian) + B010*(% Hispanic) + B011*(% Other Ethnicity) + B012*(% Female) + B013*(% ELL) + B014*(% Spec. Ed.) + B015*(Student/Teacher Ratio) + R0

P1 = B10
P2 = B20 + R2
P3 = B30 + R3
P4 = B40 + R4
P5 = B50 + R5

Level-3 Model (between schools)

B00 = G000 + G001*(Elementary School) + G002*(Treatment) + U00
B01 = G010 + G011*(Treatment) + U01
B02 = G020 + G021*(Treatment) + U02
B03 = G030
B04 = G040
B05 = G050
B06 = G060
B07 = G070
B08 = G080
B09 = G090
B010 = G0100
B011 = G0110
B012 = G0120
B013 = G0130
B014 = G0140
B015 = G0150
B10 = G100
B20 = G200 + U20
B30 = G300 + U30
B40 = G400 + U40
B50 = G500 + U50

Table C1. Multi-Level Model Indicators

School Level Outcome Measures	Treatment	Control Measures
Student Achievement 1) Average PSSA Scaled Scores – Math 2) Average PSSA Scaled Scores – Reading 3) % of Students Proficient or Above – Math 4) % of Students Proficient or Above – Reading 5) % of Students Below Basic – Math 6) % of Student Below Basic – Reading Attendance 7) School Average Daily Attendance	Participation in the Renaissance Schools Initiative	Time • Pre-Intervention (2005-06 → 2009-10) Comparison Group • Elementary and Middle schools with an SPI of 7-10 in the 2009-10 academic year Grade Level • 3rd grade as the comparison group School Level Controls • Elementary v. Middle School • Socio-demographics ○ % ELL, Special Ed., Free/Reduced Lunch, % Minority • Enrollment • Student Retention[31] • Average Teacher Years at current school • Student:Teacher Ratio[32]

Model Specification & Review

At Level 1, P0 represents aggregate 3rd grade performance along each outcome measure, and coefficient for P1 - P5 represent the difference between each grade level's performance (grades 4 – 8) and 3rd grade performance along each of the different PSSA measures. In each model, each grade was modeled as a separate dummy variable as growth patterns varied by specific grade level.

Variation was analyzed between treatment impacts and each grade level, however no consistent patterns emerged. While some differences seemed to exist superficially these were neither consistent nor statistically significant. Given the low number of treatment schools in the sample, the standard error of the estimates is large, particularly when measuring interactions between multiple factors. A larger sample size may reveal differences in the treatment effect by specific grade levels that are statistically significant, but, at the same time, any effects could also disappear with more schools if any observed variation had been driven by individual schools in this small sample. Another factor that may explain the lack of 'grade level' effects is the idiosyncratic qualities inherent in each individual cohort of students each year in each grade at a given school. For the purposes of these analyses, there was no clear variation in treatment effects by grade level.

[31] "Student Retention" was calculated as the percentage of students who attended a single school in consecutive years, i.e. for the 2010-11 school year a school's 'student mobility' would be calculated at the percentage of students in 2010-11 who also attended the same school in 2009-10.
[32] "Teachers" were reported as the number of full time equivalent teachers at each school for each year.

At Level 2, B00 represents schools' initial and aggregated outcome levels in the 2005-06 school year, having already controlled for the grade level variation at Level 1. B01 represents natural yearly growth rates in a schools aggregate outcome levels over time. B02 in these models represents any overall change in outcome levels *for all schools* after the implementation of the Renaissance Schools Initiative in the school district in the 2010-11 school year. B03-015 represents a vector of the moderating variables and school characteristics that vary from year to year to control for variation across these indicators among the schools in both the study and comparison populations.

At level 3, G001 represents a control for whether a school was an elementary or a middle school and G002 represents the treatment group differences in initial outcome levels in 2005-06. G011 represents treatment group differences on growth rate over time, and G021 represents the treatment impact on outcomes in the 2010-11 school year. U00 through U02 represent the unique variations between schools in initial outcomes levels, change over time, and change in 2010-11 specifically.

Growth along each outcome was consistent by individual years, and so time (school year) was measured as a continuous variable, with the addition of a dummy variable representing 2010-11, or the post-intervention time-point. All other control measures were grand mean centered, thus results of the models are for schools with the sample averages of those measures. The relations between time and grade levels and the outcomes were allowed to vary randomly by year and school, but the relationships between the demographic and contextual factors and outcomes were fixed as they did not have significant or consistent variation. This also allows for greater ease and consistency in reporting.

Below are the estimates from each of the seven models that were run for the analyses in this report, measuring treatment as participation in the Renaissance Schools Initiative in comparison to the group SPI 7-10 schools.

In addition to the seven models presented here, seven additional models were run in which the Renaissance Schools group was split into Renaissance Charters and Promise Academies to assess any statistically significant differences in the performance of Renaissance Charters and Promise Academies along each outcome measure. These models showed no significant differences between Renaissance Charters and Promise Academies, and the results of these models follow the seven main models run for the analyses in the interim report.

Treatment Effect Sizes

The tables on the following pages present the treatment differences along each outcome over time; these differences were extracted from the output of each individual model. There are three tables, one for all Renaissance schools combined, a second for Charter schools, and a third for Promise Academies (although the estimates of the latter two are shown separately, the results were derived from the same model). While the effect sizes presented in each of the tables below are substantial and represent significant change in the treatment group of schools in Year One of the Renaissance Schools Initiative, it is important to consider the historical context at the study schools and within the District to fully assess the overall impact of the intervention.[33]

[33] Hill, C. J., Bloom, H. S., Black, A. R., & Lipsey, M. W. (2008). Empirical benchmarks for interpreting effect sizes in research. *Child Development Perspectives, 2*, 172–177.

The effect size columns present the treatment effects in terms of how large a shift they represent in the sample population, in the measure of standard deviation units. The column "Effect Size" does this using the sample distribution and standard deviations at the individual grade and cohort levels for each outcome, while the column "School Level Effect Size" does this using the sample distribution and standard deviations at the aggregated school level for each outcome. The first represents the effect size in terms of the 'unit of observation' as the outcomes are observed and measured at the level of each individual grade and cohort, and this is the typical way in which effect sizes are reported. However, the latter represents the effect size in terms of the 'unit of treatment', and is the more relevant from a theoretical point of view to the questions raised in this study. The latter are also larger as it is more difficult to raise an entire school's average outcome by "X" amount than it is to raise an individual grade's or cohort's. However, for this specific set of results, both sets of effect sizes are substantial and educationally relevant.

Table C2. Student Outcomes: Renaissance Schools v. Comparison Schools

Outcome Measure	Initial Level[34] (2005-06)	Growth Rate[35]	Post-Intervention[36] (2010-11)	Effect Size[37]	School Level Effect Size[38]
Math Scale Score	-46.3*	-2.5	82.5*	1.11	2.21
Math % Proficient or Above	-8.2*	-1.1	17.9*	1.12	2.14
Math % Below Basic	8.8*	0.7	-18.1*	-1.12	-2.27
Reading Scale Score	-36.6*	-2.3	64.2*	.83	1.79
Reading % Proficient or Above	-7.2*	-0.9	11.1*	.75	1.55
Reading % Below Basic	8.1*	0.5	-16.7*	-1.08	-2.17
Attendance Rates	-0.97	-0.02	1.49*	.77	.97

* Indicates that group differences are statistically significant, p<.05

[34] Initial Level Difference represents the difference between the Renaissance School Averages and the Comparison School Averages after controlling for the following cohort and school level factors: grade level, school grade configuration, school enrollment, student socio-demographics(percent Minority, ELL, Special Ed., Free Lunch), student retention, average teacher years at school, and student : teacher ratio.

[35] Growth Rate Difference represents the difference between the Renaissance Schools' average rate of growth and the Comparison School average rate of growth for each outcome from 2005-06 through 2010-11, controlling for all the other indicators included in each model.

[36] Post Intervention Difference represents the difference between the Renaissance Schools' average change for each outcome and the Comparison Schools' average change for each outcome in Year One of the Renaissance Schools Initiative, controlling for all the other indicators included in each model.

[37] Effect Size represents the standard deviation unit shift in the overall sample population as a result of the treatment at the level of each individual grade and cohort.

[38] School Level Effect Size represents the standard deviation unit shift in the overall sample population as a result of the treatment at the school level. School Level Effect Sizes are much larger because the variation is much smaller at the school level due to fewer numbers of schools in the overall sample.

Table C3. Student Outcomes: Renaissance Charters v. Comparison Schools^

Outcome Measure	Initial Level[39] (2005-06)	Growth Rate[40]	Post-Intervention[41] (2010-11)	Effect Size[42]	School Level Effect Size[43]
Math Scale Score	-42.2*	-2.2	83.7*	1.13	2.24
Math % Proficient or Above	-7.1*	-0.7	15.7*	.98	1.88
Math % Below Basic	7.7*	0.6	-14.2*	-.88	-1.78
Reading Scale Score	-34.7*	-1.0	38.0*	.49	1.06
Reading % Proficient or Above	-7.3*	-0.7	8.4*	.57	1.17
Reading % Below Basic	7.7*	0.2	-10.2*	-.66	-1.32
Attendance Rates	-1.41	0.17	1.22	.63	.79

* Indicates that group differences are statistically significant, p<.05

[39] Initial Level Difference represents the difference between the Renaissance School Averages and the Comparison School Averages after controlling for the following cohort and school level factors: grade level, school grade configuration, school enrollment, student socio-demographics(percent Minority, ELL, Special Ed., Free Lunch), student retention, average teacher years at school, and student : teacher ratio.

[40] Growth Rate Difference represents the difference between the Renaissance Schools' average rate of growth and the Comparison School average rate of growth for each outcome from 2005-06 through 2010-11, controlling for all the other indicators included in each model.

[41] Post Intervention Difference represents the difference between the Renaissance Schools' average change for each outcome and the Comparison Schools' average change for each outcome in Year One of the Renaissance Schools Initiative, controlling for all the other indicators included in each model.

[42] Effect Size represents the standard deviation unit shift in the overall sample population as a result of the treatment at the level of each individual grade and cohort.

[43] School Level Effect Size represents the standard deviation unit shift in the overall sample population as a result of the treatment at the school level. School Level Effect Sizes are much larger because the variation is much smaller at the school level due to fewer numbers of schools in the overall sample.

Table C4. Student Outcomes: Promise Academies v. Comparison Schools^

Outcome Measure	Initial Level (2005-06)[44]	Growth Rate[45]	Post-Intervention (2010-11)[46]	Effect Size[47]	School Level Effect Size[48]
Math Scale Score	-52.7*	-3.2	82.5*	1.11	2.21
Math % Proficient or Above	-9.9*	-1.7*	20.3*	1.27	2.43
Math % Below Basic	11.0*	0.8	-22.1*	-1.37	-2.77
Reading Scale Score	-40.6*	-3.4	87.9*	1.14	2.46
Reading % Proficient or Above	-7.2*	-1.3	13.6*	.92	1.90
Reading % Below Basic	9.1	0.7	-23.0*	-1.48	-2.99
Attendance Rates	-0.20	-0.36	1.91*	.98	1.24

* Indicates that group differences are statistically significant, p<.05

[44] Initial Level Difference represents the difference between the Renaissance School Averages and the Comparison School Averages after controlling for the following cohort and school level factors: grade level, school grade configuration, school enrollment, student socio-demographics(percent Minority, ELL, Special Ed., Free Lunch), student retention, average teacher years at school, and student : teacher ratio.

[45] Growth Rate Difference represents the difference between the Renaissance Schools' average rate of growth and the Comparison School average rate of growth for each outcome from 2005-06 through 2010-11, controlling for all the other indicators included in each model.

[46] Post Intervention Difference represents the difference between the Renaissance Schools' average change for each outcome and the Comparison Schools' average change for each outcome in Year One of the Renaissance Schools Initiative, controlling for all the other indicators included in each model.

[47] Effect Size represents the standard deviation unit shift in the overall sample population as a result of the treatment at the level of each individual grade and cohort.

[48] School Level Effect Size represents the standard deviation unit shift in the overall sample population as a result of the treatment at the school level. School Level Effect Sizes are much larger because the variation is much smaller at the school level due to fewer numbers of schools in the overall sample.

Table C5. Student Outcomes: Promise Academies v. Renaissance Charters^

Outcome Measure	Initial Level (2005-06)[49]	Post-Intervention (2010-11)[50]
Math Scale Score	-10.49	-1.21
Math % Proficient or Above	-2.82	4.62
Math % Below Basic	3.34	-7.99
Reading Scale Score	-5.90	49.82
Reading % Proficient or Above	0.09	5.14
Reading % Below Basic	1.37	-12.77
Attendance Rates	1.20	0.69

* Indicates that group differences are statistically significant, p<.05

[49] Initial Level Difference represents the difference between the Renaissance School Averages and the Renaissance Charter Averages after controlling for the following cohort and school level factors: grade level, school grade configuration, school enrollment, student socio-demographics(percent Minority, ELL, Special Ed., Free Lunch), student retention, average teacher years at school, and student : teacher ratio.

[50] Post Intervention Difference represents the difference between the Renaissance Schools' average change for each outcome and the Renaissance Charter Schools' average change for each outcome in Year One of the Renaissance Initiative, controlling for all the other indicators included in each model.

Multi-Level Model Results

Model I: Math Scale Score – All Renaissance Schools v. Comparison Schools

Variable	Coefficient	T-Statistic	P-Value
Prior Level (2005-06)	1158.91	94.954	.000***
Elementary Schools Prior Level	-7.53	-0.710	.480
Renaissance Prior Level	-46.29	-3.796	.000***
Time/Yearly Growth	9.77	5.083	.000***
Renaissance Time/Yearly Growth	-2.45	-0.870	.387
Post-Intervention	-9.42	-2.114	.037*
Renaissance Post-Intervention	82.48	5.157	.000***
Total Enrollment	-0.01	-0.135	.893
% FRL	-0.38	-1.663	.097
Student Transfers	-0.08	-1.245	.214
Teacher Experience	3.24	3.028	.003**
% Black	-0.58	-0.834	.405
% Native	13.38	1.708	.088
% Asian	1.71	1.514	.130
% Hispanic	-0.06	-0.085	.932
% Other Ethnicity	-0.40	-0.183	.855
% Female	0.58	0.530	.596
% ESL	-2.27	-3.485	.001***
% Spec. Ed.	-2.77	-3.224	.002**
Student-Teacher Ratio	-5.72	-4.141	.000***
Grade 4	61.50	20.265	.000***
Grade 5	65.31	13.018	.000***
Grade 6	70.96	14.736	.000***
Grade 7	62.88	8.871	.000***
Grade 8	48.25	8.688	.000***

Model II: Math % Proficient or Advanced – All Renaissance Schools v. Comparison Schools

Variable	Coefficient	T-Statistic	P-Value
Prior Level (2005-06)	44.98	18.822	.000***
Elementary Schools Prior Level	-2.60	-1.283	.203
Renaissance Prior Level	-8.22	-4.139	.000***
Time/Yearly Growth	2.24	5.523	.000***
Renaissance Time/Yearly Growth	-1.08	-1.833	.070
Post-Intervention	-1.76	-1.668	.099
Renaissance Post-Intervention	17.88	5.312	.000***

Total Enrollment	-0.01	-0.320	.749
% FRL	-0.10	-1.524	.128
Student Transfers	-0.01	-0.932	.352
Teacher Experience	0.60	2.526	.012*
% Black	-0.19	-1.837	.066
% Native	3.61	2.355	.019*
% Asian	0.29	1.391	.165
% Hispanic	-0.08	-0.700	.484
% Other Ethnicity	-0.52	-1.173	.242
% Female	0.23	0.943	.347
% ESL	-0.50	-3.886	.000***
% Spec. Ed.	-0.58	-3.147	.002**
Student-Teacher Ratio	-1.35	-4.500	.000***
Grade 4	-2.99	-4.292	.000***
Grade 5	-14.05	-13.341	.000***
Grade 6	-11.84	-10.861	.000***
Grade 7	-13.56	-11.274	.000***
Grade 8	-14.20	-12.104	.000***

Model III: Math % Below Basic – All Renaissance Schools v. Comparison Schools

Variable	Coefficient	T-Statistic	P-Value
Prior Level (2005-06)	27.96	11.677	.000***
Elementary Schools Prior Level	0.85	0.372	.710
Renaissance Prior Level	8.75	4.145	.000***
Time/Yearly Growth	-2.14	-5.871	.000***
Renaissance Time/Yearly Growth	0.71	1.288	.202
Post-Intervention	3.68	4.011	.000***
Renaissance Post-Intervention	-18.13	-5.067	.000***
Total Enrollment	0.01	0.288	.773
% FRL	0.05	0.775	.439
Student Transfers	0.02	1.069	.286
Teacher Experience	-0.72	-3.449	.001***
% Black	0.12	0.800	.424
% Native	-2.61	-1.688	.092
% Asian	-0.23	-0.951	.343
% Hispanic	0.03	0.204	.839
% Other Ethnicity	0.13	0.292	.771
% Female	-0.08	-0.346	.729
% ESL	0.51	4.811	.000***
% Spec. Ed.	0.61	3.659	.001***
Student-Teacher Ratio	1.15	4.207	.000***
Grade 4	13.19	22.022	.000***
Grade 5	13.70	15.077	.000***
Grade 6	15.56	16.100	.000***
Grade 7	21.04	13.372	.000***
Grade 8	20.37	14.795	.000***

Model IV: Reading Scale Score – All Renaissance Schools v. Comparison Schools

Variable	Coefficient	T-Statistic	P-Value
Prior Level (2005-06)	1154.67	116.866	.000***
Elementary Schools Prior Level	7.82	0.845	.401
Renaissance Prior Level	-36.59	-4.048	.001***
Time/Yearly Growth	14.55	8.991	.000***
Renaissance Time/Yearly Growth	-2.31	-0.918	.362
Post-Intervention	-16.51	-3.864	.000***
Renaissance Post-Intervention	64.19	4.386	.000***
Total Enrollment	-0.01	-0.368	.713
% FRL	-0.67	-2.177	.030*
Student Transfers	-0.08	-1.193	.234
Teacher Experience	3.63	3.705	.000***
% Black	-0.40	-0.583	.560
% Native	13.07	2.124	.034*
% Asian	0.93	0.932	.352
% Hispanic	-0.33	-0.442	.658
% Other Ethnicity	-1.41	-0.671	.502
% Female	1.92	1.937	.053
% ESL	-1.04	-1.731	.084
% Spec. Ed.	-2.11	-3.063	.003**
Student-Teacher Ratio	-1.67	-1.386	.166
Grade 4	-39.41	-13.451	.000***
Grade 5	-79.69	-23.071	.000***
Grade 6	-41.54	-10.343	.000***
Grade 7	6.73	1.403	.164
Grade 8	52.20	9.223	.000***

Model V: Reading % Proficient or Advanced – All Renaissance Schools v. Comparison Schools

Variable	Coefficient	T-Statistic	P-Value
Prior Level (2005-06)	32.15	15.459	.000***
Elementary Schools Prior Level	1.28	0.723	.472
Renaissance Prior Level	-7.18	-4.962	.000***
Time/Yearly Growth	2.35	7.242	.000***
Renaissance Time/Yearly Growth	-0.93	-1.897	.061
Post-Intervention	-3.41	-4.095	.000***
Renaissance Post-Intervention	11.05	4.380	.000***
Total Enrollment	0.01	0.880	.380
% FRL	-0.14	-2.086	.037*
Student Transfers	-0.03	-2.133	.033*
Teacher Experience	0.53	2.787	.006**
% Black	-0.12	-1.031	.304
% Native	3.13	2.323	.021*
% Asian	0.23	1.190	.235
% Hispanic	-0.08	-0.634	.526
% Other Ethnicity	-0.42	-0.968	.334
% Female	0.35	1.709	.088
% ESL	-0.29	-2.139	.033*
% Spec. Ed.	-0.37	-2.625	.009**
Student-Teacher Ratio	-0.54	-2.212	.027*
Grade 4	-7.04	-9.550	.000***
Grade 5	-14.99	-19.493	.000***
Grade 6	-12.23	-12.360	.000***
Grade 7	-5.01	-4.330	.000***
Grade 8	5.76	4.777	.000***

Model VI: Reading % Below Basic – All Renaissance Schools v. Comparison Schools

Variable	Coefficient	T-Statistic	P-Value
Prior Level (2005-06)	48.46	23.825	.000***
Elementary Schools Prior Level	-1.44	-0.780	.438
Renaissance Prior Level	8.09	3.501	.001***
Time/Yearly Growth	-2.29	-6.781	.000***
Renaissance Time/Yearly Growth	0.50	0.746	.458
Post-Intervention	2.88	3.312	.002***
Renaissance Post-Intervention	-16.72	-4.152	.000***
Total Enrollment	0.01	0.559	.576
% FRL	0.17	2.400	.017*
Student Transfers	0.01	0.772	.440
Teacher Experience	-0.89	-4.160	.000***
% Black	-0.03	-0.215	.830
% Native	-4.15	-2.987	.003**
% Asian	-0.35	-1.539	.124
% Hispanic	-0.03	-0.153	.879
% Other Ethnicity	-0.10	-0.225	.822
% Female	-0.49	-2.605	.010**
% ESL	0.25	1.712	.087
% Spec. Ed.	0.42	3.017	.003**
Student-Teacher Ratio	0.46	1.975	.048*
Grade 4	1.91	2.729	.007**
Grade 5	12.18	14.966	.000***
Grade 6	3.82	3.557	.001***
Grade 7	-3.69	-1.825	.071
Grade 8	-7.53	-5.082	.000***

Model VII: Attendance Rates – All Renaissance Schools v. Comparison Schools

Variable	Coefficient	T-Statistic	P-Value
Prior Level (2005-06)	88.24	198.638	.000***
Elementary Schools Prior Level	1.85	4.184	.000***
Renaissance Prior Level	-0.97	-1.096	.277
Time/Yearly Growth	0.45	9.334	.000***
Renaissance Time/Yearly Growth	-0.02	-0.086	.932
Post-Intervention	-0.53	-3.849	.000***
Renaissance Post-Intervention	1.49	2.998	.004**
Total Enrollment	-0.01	-1.670	.095
% FRL	-0.01	-0.945	.345
Student Transfers	-0.01	-1.912	.056
Teacher Experience	0.04	0.991	.322
% Black	0.01	0.196	.845
% Native	0.11	0.289	.772
% Asian	0.11	3.054	.003**
% Hispanic	0.01	0.859	.391
% Other Ethnicity	-0.01	-0.126	.900
% Female	0.01	0.148	.883
% ESL	-0.03	-1.855	.064
% Spec. Ed.	-0.04	-2.036	.042*
Student-Teacher Ratio	0.02	0.391	.696

Additional Model Results

The model results on the following pages present models developed that separated the Renaissance Schools group into two separate groups: Promise Academies and Renaissance Charters. Results from these models were pulled for the creation of the Student Outcomes Tables presented earlier in this section. While the models to follow do reveal significant differences between the Promise Academies and the Comparison Schools in addition to significant differences between the Renaissance Charters and the Comparison Schools across most of the student achievement and attendance outcomes, an additional set of models were run to assess the significance of differences in Promise Academy and Renaissance Charter performance. These models changed the reference group to 'Renaissance Charters' and revealed there to be no significant differences between the Promise Academies and this comparison group in the post-intervention measure for each outcome.

Multi-Level Model Results: Promise Academies & Renaissance Charters v. Comparison Schools

Model Ia. Math Scale Score –Comparison Schools Comparison Group

Variable	Coefficient	T-Statistic	P-Value
Prior Level (2005-06)	1158.73	94.171	.000***
Elementary Schools Prior Level	-7.23	-0.672	.503
Charter Schools Prior Level	-42.17	-2.628	.011*
Promise Academies Prior Level	-52.66	-3.779	.000***
Time/Yearly Growth	9.74	5.065	.000***
Charter Schools Time/Yearly Growth	-2.17	-0.602	.548
Promise Academies Time/Yearly Growth	-3.23	-1.015	.313
Post-Intervention	-9.44	-2.107	.038*
Charter Schools Post-Intervention	83.72	4.531	.000***
Promise Academies Post-Intervention	82.51	3.308	.002**
Total Enrollment	-0.01	-0.200	.841
% FRL	-0.38	-1.712	.087
Student Transfers	-0.07	-1.133	.258
Teacher Experience	3.31	3.020	.003**
% Black	-0.57	-0.832	.406
% Native	13.23	1.684	.092
% Asian	1.73	1.525	.128
% Hispanic	-0.05	-0.061	.951
% Other Ethnicity	-0.46	-0.209	.834
% Female	0.61	0.584	.584
% ESL	-2.25	-3.405	.001***
% Spec. Ed.	-2.73	-3.190	.002***
Student-Teacher Ratio	-5.79	-4.175	.000***
Grade 4	61.50	20.264	.000***
Grade 5	65.31	13.016	.000***
Grade 6	70.97	14.738	.000***
Grade 7	65.77	9.214	.000***
Grade 8	48.38	8.713	.000***

Model IIa. Math % Proficient or Advanced – Comparison Schools Comparison Group

Variable	Coefficient	T-Statistic	P-Value
Prior Level (2005-06)	44.99	18.808	.000***
Elementary Schools Prior Level	-2.55	-1.257	.213
Charter Schools Prior Level	-7.08	-3.020	.004**
Promise Academies Prior Level	-9.90	-3.856	.000***
Time/Yearly Growth	2.21	5.462	.000***
Charter Schools Time/Yearly Growth	-0.71	-1.044	.300
Promise Academies Time/Yearly Growth	-1.71	-2.172	.033*
Post-Intervention	-1.73	-1.633	.106
Charter Schools Post-Intervention	15.72	4.261	.000***
Promise Academies Post-Intervention	20.34	3.602	.001***
Total Enrollment	-0.01	-0.151	.880
% FRL	-0.10	-1.652	.099
Student Transfers	-0.02	-1.293	.197
Teacher Experience	0.59	2.505	.013*
% Black	-0.19	-1.852	.064
% Native	3.49	2.282	.023*
% Asian	0.29	1.409	.160
% Hispanic	-0.07	-0.642	.521
% Other Ethnicity	-0.53	-1.212	.227
% Female	0.23	0.928	.354
% ESL	-0.50	-3.856	.000***
% Spec. Ed.	-0.55	-3.030	.003**
Student-Teacher Ratio	-1.36	-4.556	.000***
Grade 4	-3.00	-4.292	.000***
Grade 5	-14.04	-13.334	.000***
Grade 6	-11.83	-10.867	.000***
Grade 7	-13.54	-11.351	.000***
Grade 8	-14.17	-12.167	.000***

Model IIIa. Math % Below Basic – Comparison Schools Comparison Group

Variable	Coefficient	T-Statistic	P-Value
Prior Level (2005-06)	27.84	11.511	.000***
Elementary Schools Prior Level	0.87	0.379	.705
Charter Schools Prior Level	7.65	3.060	.003**
Promise Academies Prior Level	10.99	3.622	.001***
Time/Yearly Growth	-2.11	-5.737	.000***
Charter Schools Time/Yearly Growth	0.57	0.897	.373
Promise Academies Time/Yearly Growth	0.80	1.059	.293
Post-Intervention	3.62	3.923	.000***
Charter Schools Post-Intervention	-14.15	-3.965	.000***
Promise Academies Post-Intervention	-22.14	-3.458	.001***
Total Enrollment	-0.01	-0.130	.897
% FRL	0.05	0.994	.321
Student Transfers	0.02	1.705	.088
Teacher Experience	-0.70	-3.315	.001***
% Black	0.11	0.729	.467
% Native	-2.56	-1.681	.093
% Asian	-0.22	-0.919	.359
% Hispanic	0.02	0.120	.905
% Other Ethnicity	0.12	0.273	.785
% Female	-0.07	-0.323	.747
% ESL	0.51	4.789	.000***
% Spec. Ed.	0.61	3.697	.000***
Student-Teacher Ratio	1.15	4.143	.000***
Grade 4	13.19	22.020	.000***
Grade 5	13.71	15.053	.000***
Grade 6	15.57	16.128	.000***
Grade 7	21.07	13.363	.000***
Grade 8	20.40	14.805	.000***

Model IVa. Reading Scale Score – Comparison Schools Comparison Group

Variable	Coefficient	T-Statistic	P-Value
Prior Level (2005-06)	1155.26	116.204	.000***
Elementary Schools Prior Level	7.94	0.854	.396
Charter Schools Prior Level	-34.68	-3.017	.004**
Promise Academies Prior Level	-40.58	-4.090	.000***
Time/Yearly Growth	14.27	8.824	.000***
Charter Schools Time/Yearly Growth	-0.96	-0.365	.716
Promise Academies Time/Yearly Growth	-3.44	-0.917	.362
Post-Intervention	-15.97	-3.697	.001***
Charter Schools Post-Intervention	38.01	2.355	.021*
Promise Academies Post-Intervention	87.90	3.795	.000***
Total Enrollment	0.01	0.368	.713
% FRL	-0.72	-2.785	.006**
Student Transfers	-0.14	-2.095	.036*
Teacher Experience	3.43	3.563	.001***
% Black	-0.36	-0.526	.599
% Native	12.22	1.986	.047*
% Asian	0.88	0.894	.372
% Hispanic	-0.26	-0.355	.723
% Other Ethnicity	-1.33	-0.615	.539
% Female	1.81	1.822	.069
% ESL	-1.10	-1.945	.052
% Spec. Ed.	-2.08	-3.057	.003**
Student-Teacher Ratio	-1.52	-1.248	.213
Grade 4	-39.41	-13.450	.000***
Grade 5	-79.68	-23.042	.000***
Grade 6	-41.56	-10.352	.000***
Grade 7	6.68	1.390	.168
Grade 8	52.23	9.204	.000***

Model Va. Reading % Proficient or Advanced – Comparison Schools Comparison Group

Variable	Coefficient	T-Statistic	P-Value
Prior Level (2005-06)	32.19	15.449	.000***
Elementary Schools Prior Level	1.31	0.734	.465
Charter Schools Prior Level	-7.25	-5.316	.000***
Promise Academies Prior Level	-7.15	-2.719	.008**
Time/Yearly Growth	2.32	7.174	.000***
Charter Schools Time/Yearly Growth	-0.65	-1.454	.150
Promise Academies Time/Yearly Growth	-1.28	-1.510	.135
Post-Intervention	-3.37	-4.014	.000***
Charter Schools Post-Intervention	8.43	2.750	.008**
Promise Academies Post-Intervention	13.58	3.460	.001***
Total Enrollment	0.01	1.206	.229
% FRL	-0.15	-2.316	.021*
Student Transfers	-0.03	-2.271	.024*
Teacher Experience	0.51	2.699	.008**
% Black	-0.12	-1.011	.313
% Native	3.01	2.225	.026*
% Asian	0.23	1.192	.234
% Hispanic	-0.08	-0.591	.554
% Other Ethnicity	-0.41	-0.938	.349
% Female	0.34	1.663	.097
% ESL	-0.30	-2.247	.025*
% Spec. Ed.	-0.36	-2.596	.010**
Student-Teacher Ratio	-0.53	-2.155	.031*
Grade 4	-7.04	-9.550	.000***
Grade 5	-14.99	-19.477	.000***
Grade 6	12.23	-12.368	.000***
Grade 7	-5.02	-4.337	.000***
Grade 8	5.76	4.778	.000***

Model VIa. Reading % Below Basic – Comparison Schools Comparison Group

Variable	Coefficient	T-Statistic	P-Value
Prior Level (2005-06)	48.35	23.453	.000***
Elementary Schools Prior Level	-1.45	-0.774	.441
Charter Schools Prior Level	7.69	2.389	.019*
Promise Academies Prior Level	9.06	4.597	.000***
Time/Yearly Growth	-2.25	-6.718	.000***
Charter Schools Time/Yearly Growth	0.23	0.309	.758
Promise Academies Time/Yearly Growth	0.73	0.710	.480
Post-Intervention	2.75	3.119	.003***
Charter Schools Post-Intervention	-10.19	-2.669	.010**
Promise Academies Post-Intervention	-22.97	-3.186	.002**
Total Enrollment	-0.01	-0.220	.826
% FRL	0.18	3.409	.001***
Student Transfers	0.03	1.742	.082
Teacher Experience	-0.84	-3.895	.000***
% Black	-0.05	-0.294	.769
% Native	-3.98	-2.791	.006**
% Asian	-0.34	-1.517	.130
% Hispanic	-0.04	-0.261	.794
% Other Ethnicity	-0.10	-0.226	.822
% Female	-0.46	-2.454	.015*
% ESL	0.27	1.933	.053
% Spec. Ed.	0.42	3.060	.003**
Student-Teacher Ratio	0.43	1.791	.073
Grade 4	1.91	2.728	.007**
Grade 5	12.18	14.953	.000***
Grade 6	3.82	3.543	.001***
Grade 7	-3.58	-1.759	.082
Grade 8	-7.40	-4.889	.000***

Model VIIa. Attendance Rates – Comparison Schools Comparison Group

Variable	Coefficient	T-Statistic	P-Value
Prior Level (2005-06)	88.25	196.575	.000***
Elementary Schools Prior Level	1.86	4.188	.000***
Charter Schools Prior Level	-1.41	-1.065	.291
Promise Academies Prior Level	-0.20	-0.313	.755
Time/Yearly Growth	0.45	9.268	.000***
Charter Schools Time/Yearly Growth	0.17	0.461	.646
Promise Academies Time/Yearly Growth	-0.36	-1.781	.078
Post-Intervention	-0.53	-3.846	.000***
Charter Schools Post-Intervention	1.22	1.764	.081
Promise Academies Post-Intervention	1.91	2.874	.006**
Total Enrolment	-0.01	-1.635	.102
% FRL	-0.01	-0.896	.371
Student Transfers	-0.01	-1.931	.054
Teacher Experience	0.04	1.011	.313
% Black	0.01	0.228	.820
% Native	0.10	0.241	.810
% Asian	0.11	3.390	.003**
% Hispanic	0.01	0.928	.354
% Other Ethnicity	-0.01	-0.149	.882
% Female	0.01	0.242	.809
% ESL	-0.03	-1.740	.082
% Spec. Ed.	-0.04	-1.996	.046*
Student-Teacher Ratio	0.01	0.339	.734

Model Results: Promise Academies & Comparison Schools vs. Renaissance Charters

* Highlighting throughout this section indicates non-significant differences between Promise Academies and Renaissance Charters

Math Scale Score – Renaissance Charter Comparison Group

Variable	Coefficient	T-Statistic	P-Value
Prior Level (2005-06)	1116.56	56.218	.000***
Elementary Schools Prior Level	-7.23	-0.614	.541
Promise Academies Prior Level	-10.49	-0.383	.703
SPI Comparison Schools Prior Level	42.17	2.388	.019*
Time/Yearly Growth	7.57	1.508	.135
Promise Academies Time/Yearly Growth	-1.06	-0.131	.897
SPI Comparison Schools Time/Yearly Growth	2.17	0.419	.676
Post-Intervention	74.28	3.763	.001***
Promise Academies Post-Intervention	-1.21	-0.045	.965
SPI Comparison Schools Post-Intervention	-83.72	-4.064	.000**
Total Enrolment	-0.01	-0.200	.841
% FRL	-0.38	-1.712	.087
Student Transfers	-0.07	-1.133	.258
Teacher Experience	3.31	3.020	.003**
% Black	-0.57	-0.832	.406
% Native	13.23	1.684	.092
% Asian	1.73	1.525	.128
% Hispanic	-0.05	-0.061	.951
% Other Ethnicity	-0.46	-0.209	.834
% Female	0.61	0.584	.584
% ESL	-2.25	-3.405	.001***
% Spec. Ed.	-2.73	-3.190	.002***
Student-Teacher Ratio	-5.79	-4.175	.000***
Grade 4	61.50	20.264	.000***
Grade 5	65.31	13.016	.000***
Grade 6	70.97	14.738	.000***
Grade 7	65.77	9.214	.000***
Grade 8	48.38	8.713	.000***

Math % Proficient or Advanced – Renaissance Charter Comparison Group

Variable	Coefficient	T-Statistic	P-Value
Prior Level (2005-06)	37.92	13.096	.000***
Elementary Schools Prior Level	-2.55	-1.257	.213
Promise Academies Prior Level	-2.82	-0.899	.372
SPI Comparison Schools Prior Level	7.08	3.020	.004**
Time/Yearly Growth	1.50	2.346	.022*
Promise Academies Time/Yearly Growth	-1.00	-1.122	.266
SPI Comparison Schools Time/Yearly Growth	0.71	1.044	.300
Post-Intervention	13.98	4.336	.000***
Promise Academies Post-Intervention	4.62	0.731	.467
SPI Comparison Schools Post-Intervention	-15.72	-4.261	.001***
Total Enrolment	-0.01	-0.151	.880
% FRL	-0.10	-1.652	.099
Student Transfers	-0.02	-1.293	.197
Teacher Experience	0.59	2.505	.013*
% Black	-0.19	-1.852	.064
% Native	3.49	2.282	.023*
% Asian	0.29	1.409	.160
% Hispanic	-0.07	-0.642	.521
% Other Ethnicity	-0.53	-1.212	.227
% Female	0.23	0.928	.354
% ESL	-0.50	-3.856	.000***
% Spec. Ed.	-0.55	-3.030	.003**
Student-Teacher Ratio	-1.36	-4.556	.000***
Grade 4	-3.00	-4.292	.000***
Grade 5	-14.04	-13.334	.000***
Grade 6	-11.83	-10.867	.000***
Grade 7	-13.54	-11.351	.000***
Grade 8	-14.17	-12.167	.000***

Math % Below Basic – Renaissance Charter Comparison Group

Variable	Coefficient	T-Statistic	P-Value
Prior Level (2005-06)	35.49	11.094	.000***
Elementary Schools Prior Level	0.87	0.379	.705
Promise Academies Prior Level	3.34	0.901	.371
SPI Comparison Schools Prior Level	-7.65	-3.060	.003**
Time/Yearly Growth	-1.54	-2.413	.018*
Promise Academies Time/Yearly Growth	0.22	0.266	.791
SPI Comparison Schools Time/Yearly Growth	-0.57	-0.897	.373
Post-Intervention	-10.53	3.923	.002***
Promise Academies Post-Intervention	-7.99	-3.287	.273
SPI Comparison Schools Post-Intervention	14.15	-1.105	.000***
Total Enrolment	-0.01	3.965	.897
% FRL	0.05	0.994	.321
Student Transfers	0.02	1.705	.088
Teacher Experience	-0.70	-3.315	.001***
% Black	0.11	0.729	.467
% Native	-2.56	-1.681	.093
% Asian	-0.22	-0.919	.359
% Hispanic	0.02	0.120	.905
% Other Ethnicity	0.12	0.273	.785
% Female	-0.07	-0.323	.747
% ESL	0.51	4.789	.000***
% Spec. Ed.	0.61	3.697	.000***
Student-Teacher Ratio	1.15	4.143	.000***
Grade 4	13.19	22.020	.000***
Grade 5	13.71	15.053	.000***
Grade 6	15.57	16.128	.000***
Grade 7	21.07	13.363	.000***
Grade 8	20.40	14.805	.000***

Reading Scale Score – Renaissance Charter Comparison Group

Variable	Coefficient	T-Statistic	P-Value
Prior Level (2005-06)	1120.58	84.527	.000***
Elementary Schools Prior Level	7.94	0.854	.396
Promise Academies Prior Level	-5.90	-0.437	.663
SPI Comparison Schools Prior Level	34.68	3.017	.004**
Time/Yearly Growth	13.31	5.867	.000***
Promise Academies Time/Yearly Growth	-2.48	-0.607	.545
SPI Comparison Schools Time/Yearly Growth	0.96	0.365	.716
Post-Intervention	22.11	1.503	.137
Promise Academies Post-Intervention	49.82	1.814	.073
SPI Comparison Schools Post-Intervention	-38.08	-2.355	.021*
Total Enrolment	0.01	0.368	.713
% FRL	-0.72	-2.785	.006**
Student Transfers	-0.14	-2.095	.036*
Teacher Experience	3.43	3.563	.001***
% Black	-0.36	-0.526	.599
% Native	12.22	1.986	.047*
% Asian	0.88	0.894	.372
% Hispanic	-0.26	-0.355	.723
% Other Ethnicity	-1.33	-0.615	.539
% Female	1.81	1.822	.069
% ESL	-1.10	-1.945	.052
% Spec. Ed.	-2.08	-3.057	.003**
Student-Teacher Ratio	-1.52	-1.248	.213
Grade 4	-39.41	-13.450	.000***
Grade 5	-79.68	-23.042	.000***
Grade 6	-41.56	-10.352	.000***
Grade 7	6.68	1.390	.168
Grade 8	52.23	9.204	.000***

Reading % Proficient or Advanced – Renaissance Charter Comparison Group

Variable	Coefficient	T-Statistic	P-Value
Prior Level (2005-06)	24.95	13.087	.000***
Elementary Schools Prior Level	1.31	0.734	.465
Promise Academies Prior Level	0.09	0.035	.973
SPI Comparison Schools Prior Level	7.24	5.316	.000***
Time/Yearly Growth	1.68	4.480	.000***
Promise Academies Time/Yearly Growth	-0.64	-0.742	.460
SPI Comparison Schools Time/Yearly Growth	0.64	1.454	.150
Post-Intervention	5.07	1.796	.076
Promise Academies Post-Intervention	5.14	1.070	.288
SPI Comparison Schools Post-Intervention	-8.43	-2.750	.008**
Total Enrolment	0.01	1.206	.229
% FRL	-0.15	-2.316	.021*
Student Transfers	-0.03	-2.271	.024*
Teacher Experience	0.51	2.699	.008**
% Black	-0.12	-1.011	.313
% Native	3.01	2.225	.026*
% Asian	0.23	1.192	.234
% Hispanic	-0.08	-0.591	.554
% Other Ethnicity	-0.41	-0.938	.349
% Female	0.34	1.663	.097
% ESL	-0.30	-2.247	.025*
% Spec. Ed.	-0.36	-2.596	.010**
Student-Teacher Ratio	-0.53	-2.155	.031*
Grade 4	-7.04	-9.550	.000***
Grade 5	-14.99	-19.477	.000***
Grade 6	12.23	-12.368	.000***
Grade 7	-5.02	-4.337	.000***
Grade 8	5.76	4.778	.000***

Reading % Below Basic – Renaissance Charter Comparison Group

Variable	Coefficient	T-Statistic	P-Value
Prior Level (2005-06)	56.05	16.323	.000***
Elementary Schools Prior Level	-1.45	-0.774	.441
Promise Academies Prior Level	1.37	0.441	.689
SPI Comparison Schools Prior Level	-7.69	-2.389	.019*
Time/Yearly Growth	-2.02	-2.936	.005**
Promise Academies Time/Yearly Growth	0.50	0.426	.671
SPI Comparison Schools Time/Yearly Growth	-0.23	-0.309	.758
Post-Intervention	-7.45	-2.105	.038*
Promise Academies Post-Intervention	-12.77	-1.527	.131
SPI Comparison Schools Post-Intervention	10.19	2.669	.010**
Total Enrolment	-0.01	-0.220	.826
% FRL	0.18	3.409	.001***
Student Transfers	0.03	1.742	.082
Teacher Experience	-0.84	-3.895	.000***
% Black	-0.05	-0.294	.769
% Native	-3.98	-2.791	.006**
% Asian	-0.34	-1.517	.130
% Hispanic	-0.04	-0.261	.794
% Other Ethnicity	-0.10	-0.226	.822
% Female	-0.46	-2.454	.015*
% ESL	0.27	1.933	.053
% Spec. Ed.	0.42	3.060	.003**
Student-Teacher Ratio	0.43	1.791	.073
Grade 4	1.91	2.728	.007**
Grade 5	12.18	14.953	.000***
Grade 6	3.82	3.543	.001***
Grade 7	-3.58	-1.759	.082
Grade 8	-7.40	-4.889	.000***

Attendance Rates – Renaissance Charter Comparison Group

Variable	Coefficient	T-Statistic	P-Value
Prior Level (2005-06)	86.84	61.332	.000***
Elementary Schools Prior Level	1.86	4.188	.000***
Promise Academies Prior Level	1.20	0.820	.415
SPI Comparison Schools Prior Level	1.41	1.065	.291
Time/Yearly Growth	0.61	1.691	.094
Promise Academies Time/Yearly Growth	-0.53	-1.275	.206
SPI Comparison Schools Time/Yearly Growth	-0.17	-0.461	.646
Post-Intervention	0.69	1.058	.294
Promise Academies Post-Intervention	0.69	0.749	.456
SPI Comparison Schools Post-Intervention	-1.22	-1.764	.081
Total Enrolment	-0.01	-1.635	.102
% FRL	-0.01	-0.896	.371
Student Transfers	-0.01	-1.931	.054
Teacher Experience	0.04	1.011	.313
% Black	0.01	0.228	.820
% Native	0.10	0.241	.810
% Asian	0.11	3.390	.003**
% Hispanic	0.01	0.928	.354
% Other Ethnicity	-0.01	-0.149	.882
% Female	0.01	0.242	.809
% ESL	-0.03	-1.740	.082
% Spec. Ed.	-0.04	-1.996	.046*
Student-Teacher Ratio	0.01	0.339	.734

Statistical Power

Power was calculated using the Optimal Design software (Spybrook, et. al., 2008) and its options for Cluster Randomized Trials with person level outcomes, and treatment at Levels 2 or 3, depending on the specific outcome measure and corresponding statistical model. Calculations were based upon an α value of .050, using the study sample data to obtain measures of variance between each level for each individual outcome and to estimate the proportional reduction in error produced by the inclusion of a covariate at the level of treatment (in this case, whether a school was an elementary or middle school). *The results estimate that the evaluated study has a power of 0.80 to calculate effect sizes as low as 0.27 to 0.37 depending on the specific outcome used*.

Given that the effect sizes measured by the study's final statistical models were well above these levels, it can be concluded that the study is sufficiently powered to accurately measure treatment effects within tolerable limits of error. However, power calculations are based upon an experimental design with randomized assignment of treatment, whereas this study is a quasi-experimental design with selective treatment assignment, and represents a case study of the Renaissance Schools Initiative in the School District of Philadelphia.

Comparison Groups

The original research design called for the inclusion of a comparison group consisting of Empowerment Schools to provide a point of reference against the Renaissance Schools. Through a series of conversations with District officials, a comparison group consisting of schools receiving and School Performance Index (SPI) score of 7-10 in the 2009-10 academic year was chosen for this study. The decision against using Empowerment Schools as the comparison group was based on the fact that a significant number of Empowerment Schools, while not meeting AYP due to subgroup performance, are considered among the better performing schools in the District, as measured by their SPI.

Table C6 presents a list of the Comparison Schools for this study along with a list of Empowerment Schools from the same year to reveal the overlap in these two groups. As Table V shows, a comparison group of only Empowerment Schools would have included 29 elementary/middle schools and 13 high schools whose SPI in 2009-10 was a '6' or below. Using this measure, these schools perform roughly in the middle of the District as a whole, not toward the bottom. Based on conversations with the District, these 'higher performing' Empowerment Schools annually miss AYP (the standard for Empowerment School status) due to sub-group populations in their school.

Table C7 presents the performance of the SPI 7-10 schools and the Empowerment Schools juxtaposed to the Renaissance Schools Group. Table C7 presents descriptive comparisons that demonstrate that the SPI 7-10 schools were more similar to the Renaissance Schools in overall school population, percentage of minority student enrollment, and performance on the PSSA reading and math assessments.

Table C6. Comparison Schools (SPI 7-10) & Empowerment Schools

	School Name	2009-10 School Performance Index Rating
Elementary / Middle Schools	Aloysius L. Fitzpatrick School*	2
	Theodore Roosevelt Middle School*	2
	Andrew Jackson School*	3
	Ellwood School*	3
	James R. Ludlow School*	3
	Solomon Solis-Cohen School*	3
	Thurgood Marshall School*	3
	William Cramp School*	3
	John H. Taggart School*	4
	Joseph H. Brown School*	4
	Southwark School*	4
	Thomas Holme School*	4
	William H. Hunter School*	4
	James J. Sullivan School*	5
	John H. Webster School*	5
	Luis Munoz Marin School*	5
	Penn Treaty Middle School*	5
	Roberth E. Lamberton School*	5
	Bache-Martin School*	6
	Chester A. Arthur School*	6
	Francis Hopkinson School*	6
	Gilbert Spruance School*	6
	Jay Cooke Elementary School*	6
	John Wister School*	6
	Joseph C. Ferguson School*	6
	Julia DeBurgos School*	6
	Lewis C. Cassidy School*	6
	Penrose School*	6
	William Dick School*	6
	Alain Locke School*	7
	Andrew J. Morrison School*	7
	Austin Meehan Middle School*	7
	Bayard Taylor School*	7
	Ethan Allen School*	7
	Feltonville School of Arts & Science*	7
	James G. Blaine School*	7
	James R. Lowell School*	7
	Add B. Anderson School*	8
	Allen M. Stearne School*	8
	Anna H. Shaw Middle School*	8
	Charles R. Drew School*	8
	Feltonville Intermediate School*	8
	George Pepper Middle School*	8
	Henry C. Lea School*	8

	Kenderton School*	8
	Laura H. Carnell School*	8
	Mary McLeod Bethune School*	8
	William C. Bryant School*	8
	Edwin H. Vare Middle School*	9
	Fancis P. Pastorius School*	9
	George Clymer School*	9
	Henry R. Edmunds School*	9
	Joseph Pennell School*	9
	Warren G. Harding Middle School*	9
	John Paul Jones Middle School*	10
	Leslie P. Hill School*	10
	Amedee F. Bregy School	7
	Avery D. Harrington School	7
	Benjamin B. Comegys School	7
	Edward Gideon School	7
	Julia Ward Howe School	7
	Leidy School	7
	Logan School	7
	Rudolph Blankenburg School	7
	S. Weir Mitchell School	7
	Samuel Gompers School	7
	William C. Longstreth School	7
	Dimner Beeber Middle School	8
	Edward Steel School	8
	Isaac Sheppard School	8
	John F. McCloskey School	8
	John L. Kinsey School	8
	Laura W. Waring School	8
	Philip H. Sheridan School	8
	Rhoads School	8
	Richard R. Wright School	8
	Robert Morris School	8
	Tanner Duckery School	8
	Thomas G. Morton School	8
	William McKinley School	8
	Alexander Wilson School	9
	Anna B. Pratt School	9
	Genearl John F. Reynolds School	9
	General David B. Briney School	9
	General George C. Meade School	9
	Grover Cleveland School	9
	John F. Hartranft School	9
	John G. Whittier School	9
	Lewis Elkins School	9
	Morton McMichael School	9
	Norris S. Barratt Middle School	9
	Thomas Creighton School	9

	Thomas Mifflin School	9
	Walter G. Smith School	9
	West Sheridan School	9
	Commodore John Barry School	10
	Fairhill School	10
	James Alcorn School	10
	M. Hall Stanton School	10
	William D. Kelley School	10
	William H. Harrison School	10
High Schools	Communications Tech High School*	3
	Northeast High School*	4
	Charles Carroll High School*	5
	E. W. Rhodes High School*	5
	George Washington High School*	5
	Horace Furness High School*	5
	Jules E. Mastbaum High School*	5
	Murrell Dobbins High School*	5
	Swenson Arts & Technology High School*	5
	Abraham Lincoln High School*	6
	Benjamin Franklin High School*	6
	Frankford High School*	6
	Thomas A. Edison High School*	6
	John Bartram High School*	7
	Overbrook High School*	7
	Sayre High School*	7
	Samuel Fels Sr. High School*	8
	Martin Luther King High School*	9
	Roxborough High School*	9
	Simon Gratz High School*	9
	West Philadelphia High School*	9
	Germantown High School*	10
	South Philadelphia High School*	10
	Thomas Fitsizmons High School*	10
	Kensington Capa High School	7
	Kensington Culinary High School	7
	School of the Future	7
	Stephen A. Douglas High School	8
	Olney East High School	9
	Kensington Business & Finance High School	10
	Olney West High School	10

* Indicates Empowerment School in 2009-10

Schools shaded in purple indicates school is part of the Comparison Group

Table C7. Comparison Group Equivalence on Predictors and Outcomes

		2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Average Enrollment	Empowerment Schools	918.0	888.1	830.1	787.5	768.5	735.5
	SPI 7 -10 Schools	671.3	652.0	614.0	588.8	580.8	549.8
	Renaissance Schools	709.2	688.2	602.9	555.8	527.6	545.5
	Promise Academies	780.3	739.5	626.2	559.7	491.7	446.5
	Renaissance Charters	648.3	644.3	583.0	551.2	558.4	630.3
Average Percent Minority Students	Empowerment Schools	90.4	90.6	90.8	91.1	91.3	91.5
	SPI 7 -10 Schools	95.6	95.8	96.0	96.3	96.5	96.5
	Renaissance Schools	99.1	98.9	98.8	98.9	99.0	99.0
	Promise Academies	99.4	99.3	99.2	98.5	99.4	99.1
	Renaissance Charters	98.9	98.6	98.4	99.5	98.6	98.8
Average Percent ELL Students	Empowerment Schools	9.1	9.2	8.9	8.5	9.0	9.1
	SPI 7 -10 Schools	7.2	6.9	7.6	6.8	6.7	7.2
	Renaissance Schools	10.3	9.6	10.4	12.0	6.8	5.8
	Promise Academies	19.3	13.7	11.9	9.0	7.8	8.5
	Renaissance Charters	5.9	7.2	8.9	16.0	5.9	3.5
Average Percent Special Ed. Students	Empowerment Schools	15.3	15.9	16.6	17.3	17.4	17.6
	SPI 7 -10 Schools	15.9	16.5	17.2	17.5	17.5	17.9
	Renaissance Schools	13.6	14.3	15.6	16.2	16.8	17.4
	Promise Academies	15.6	16.4	18.6	13.3	21.2	20.7
	Renaissance Charters	11.8	12.4	12.9	19.5	13.0	14.5
Average Percent Free Lunch Students	Empowerment Schools	76.6	78.4	79.2	78.4	82.5	84.8
	SPI 7 -10 Schools	82.4	83.9	84.7	83.9	91.5	88.8
	Renaissance Schools	85.5	86.3	87.2	86.3	92.2	94.3
	Promise Academies	85.3	84.7	86.2	84.6	92.9	92.1
	Renaissance Charters	85.8	88.0	87.7	87.7	91.5	96.2
Average Percent of Student Transfers	Empowerment Schools	15.6	15.7	15.4	15.2	14.3	14.0
	SPI 7 -10 Schools	17.0	17.4	17.2	15.9	15.6	14.7
	Renaissance Schools	17.8	19.0	17.5	17.1	17.1	9.4
	Promise Academies	14.6	17.0	15.3	19.6	13.6	13.3
	Renaissance Charters	19.8	20.9	19.3	14.2	20.2	6.0
Average Student : Teacher Ratio	Empowerment Schools	16.1	16.2	15.6	14.7	12.8	12.1
	SPI 7 -10 Schools	15.6	15.9	15.3	14.8	13.1	12.4
	Renaissance Schools	16.3	16.5	15.2	13.9	12.0	12.3

	Promise Academies	16.5	16.0	14.9	14.6	10.5	9.6
	Renaissance Charters	16.2	17.0	15.5	13.0	13.3	14.5
Average Teacher Experience (In Current School)	Empowerment Schools	9.7	9.8	9.7	9.4	8.5	8.7
	SPI 7 -10 Schools	8.9	9.1	9.3	8.9	8.2	8.5
	Renaissance Schools	7.5	7.6	8.3	8.2	7.1	2.3
	Promise Academies	8.6	8.1	9.4	7.5	7.5	3.7
	Renaissance Charters	6.5	7.3	7.4	9.0	6.7	1.1
Average Percent Proficient or Above: Math PSSA	Empowerment Schools	30.6	32.5	36.3	39.6	44.5	45.6
	SPI 7 -10 Schools	31.3	32.8	35.4	36.2	37.6	40.6
	Renaissance Schools	22.2	20.2	25.2	24.6	26.6	38.7
	Promise Academies	17.3	15.8	18.0	28.8	21.5	31.0
	Renaissance Charters	26.4	24.0	31.4	19.6	30.9	45.3
Average Percent Below Basic: Math PSSA	Empowerment Schools	47.8	44.9	42.6	38.5	35.9	33.6
	SPI 7 -10 Schools	46.5	43.3	42.8	40.6	39.9	37.4
	Renaissance Schools	55.5	55.7	53.8	50.5	50.6	39.0
	Promise Academies	62.4	62.8	63.7	44.0	57.3	47.2
	Renaissance Charters	49.7	49.7	45.3	58.2	45.0	31.9
Average Percent Proficient or Above: Reading PSSA	Empowerment Schools	26.8	29.7	33.2	36.4	40.5	40.4
	SPI 7 -10 Schools	25.4	27.9	31.8	31.8	32.6	34.4
	Renaissance Schools	18.2	17.3	21.3	19.2	22.1	29.1
	Promise Academies	16.0	15.9	17.9	21.2	19.6	25.9
	Renaissance Charters	20.1	18.5	24.1	16.9	24.2	31.9
Average Percent Below Basic: Reading PSSA	Empowerment Schools	49.0	47.1	43.2	40.2	37.3	36.4
	SPI 7 -10 Schools	51.2	49.0	44.4	44.8	44.1	41.8
	Renaissance Schools	60.6	61.4	56.9	57.9	54.6	44.8
	Promise Academies	63.5	63.2	62.4	54.5	57.7	46.6
	Renaissance Charters	58.2	59.8	52.1	62.0	52.0	43.2

Appendix D: Qualitative Methodology

Selection of Case Study Schools

Our study design calls for selection of four first-cohort Renaissance Schools for in-depth study—two district-managed Promise Academies and two charter-managed Renaissance Schools. The goal was to select four schools that reflected variation in terms of model, geographic location, and early indicators of success in areas of academic performance, school climate, and SAC functionality. The following describes our process and rationale for selection of four case study schools, including two charter-managed schools to which we have not yet gained access.

First, we eliminated the two high schools from the selection pool because there were only two schools in the cohort that served high school grades, and both were Promise Academies. We expect that turnaround interventions look different at the high school level than they do in the lower grades and may require different conditions for success. Selecting case study schools that served similar grades (K through 8) would allow for reasonable comparisons between case study schools and result in deeper learning about turnaround in elementary and middle school grades.

Second, we established a rubric of school characteristics displayed in Table 1D. We then used these quantitative and qualitative indicators to rank each school.

Table 1D. Indicators Used in Case Study School Selection

Indicator	Description / Rationale
Quantitative Measures	
Student PSSA Performance • **% Proficient or Above** • **% Below Basic**	Performance was assessed on the basis of increases in the percentages of students scoring proficient or above on PSSAs between 2009-10 and 2010-11, and reductions in the percentages of students scoring "below basic" on the PSSAs.
Qualitative Measures	
Leadership • **Principal leadership**	Leadership was assessed on the basis of evidence that the principal was committed to the mission and model of the Renaissance Schools Initiative, that the principal had a functioning leadership team, and that school staff expressed confidence in the principal.
Staffing • **Support for teachers** • **Collegiality among teachers**	Strong school staffing was assessed on the basis of evidence of teacher satisfaction and the presence of a coherent system for supporting and evaluating teachers.
School Climate • **Behavioral policies & School culture**	School climate was assessed by the degree to which the school had a coherent behavioral system, a safe and orderly environment, and evidence of high expectations.
SACs • **Chair commitment** • **Member continuity** • **Clarity of purpose** • **Relationship with school**	SACs were assessed by evidence that they had a committed chair, a core of consistent members, clear sense of purpose, an actionable agenda, and a working relationship with the principal.

Third, we considered several other factors that influenced our final selection of schools:

- We considered the geographic location of the schools, aiming to select schools from different neighborhoods across the city.
- We considered primary ethic/racial composition, to be certain that case study schools included schools that were both primarily Black and Latino.
- We considered school size and opted against one Promise Academy because its small size might make it an anomaly.
- In the case of the charter-managed schools, we also took into account the provider, aiming to select schools operated by different providers.
- We asked District leaders for input on which schools would be interesting case studies and reflect variation in approach and level of success.

Finally, taking into account all inputs described above, our research team finalized our selection of two Promise Academies and two charter-managed schools.

These four schools have enough in common with one another and with other District schools that our findings can have meaning beyond the unique setting of each school. The schools also exhibit variation in their implementation of the Renaissance Schools Initiative. Together, our in-depth research in the four schools has the potential to offer lessons about what works and what does not work in turnaround initiatives at urban elementary and middle schools.

With the help of the District's Promise Academy office, we received approval from leadership at the two selected Promise Academies and began fieldwork in November 2011. As of this writing, we have not received approval from the charter managers that run the two Renaissance Charter schools we selected for case study, nor from the two other charter managers who were contacted after the first two declined.

Data Collection

This report is part of a multi-year study of the Renaissance School's Initiative, which began in March 2010. While the findings in this report are based primarily on data collected in the most recent phase of research (Round 4), our analysis was informed by all rounds of data collection. Table 2D details the qualitative data collected in Round 4, and gives a brief overview of the first three rounds of the study.

Table 2D. Qualitative Data Collection

Study Phase	Dates of Data Collection	Data Sources
Round 4 *Year Two Start Up; Leadership and Instruction at Case Study Schools*	Oct 2011 – Jan 2012	*Central Office Research* • Interviews with 6 District officials • Interview with 2 PFT officials • Observation of a District-organized meeting for principals and SAC chairs/members • Observation of a SAC Working Group meeting

		Case Study Research At each school: • Interview with principal • Interview with teacher leader • Two teacher focus groups (new and returning) • Three classroom observations • One grade group meeting observation and/or PD session • SAC meeting observation • Survey completed by SAC chairs *Documents & Media Coverage* • District documents (e.g., *Promise Academy Way*, *SAC Handbook*) • Case study school materials (e.g., grade group meeting agendas, SAC meeting agendas) • Materials produced by community groups (e.g. Our City-Our Schools SAC Platform) • News stories: *Philadelphia Inquirer*, *Philadelphia Daily News, Philadelphia Public School Notebook*, *Philadelphia Tribune*, *Education Week*, and *WHYY News Radio*
Round 3 *Review of Year One Implementation*	June-July 2011	23 Interviews with principals and SAC chairs Document review
Round 2 *Early Implementation*	Sept 2010-Jan 2011	76 Interviews 25 Teacher Focus Groups 56 Observations Document review
Round 1 *Initiative Start Up*	March-Aug 2010	33 Interviews 15 Observations Document review

Data Analysis

We utilized a series of standard analytic techniques to examine our data.

- Used framework developed in previous rounds to code all observation notes and interview transcripts.
- Used coded data and a shared template to write analytic memos for the two case study schools.
- Analyzed school memos for commonalities and variations across the two schools.
- Used District transcripts, documents, and news coverage to write analytic memos on changes in the District's central office.
- Performed a multi-year analysis for each case study school: read analytic memos from all four rounds of research for each school; identified changes over time and factors affecting changes.

Future Research

Our research design calls for two additional rounds of qualitative research at the District's central office, in the two case study Promise Academies, and in two charter-managed Renaissance schools:

- Round 5: School Climate and SACs at case study schools (March-May 2012)
- Round 6: Looking Back on Two Years of the Initiative (July-October 2012)

A final report in December 2012 will integrate findings from all six rounds of qualitative data collection with an analysis of quantitative school outcomes in both years of the Renaissance Schools Initiative. We believe this continued research will shed light on District policies and school-level practices that have the potential to bring about positive change in struggling schools in Philadelphia and nationally.