

PICCS Profiler

Key Findings from the Evaluation of the
*Partnership for Innovation in
Compensation for Charter Schools*



PICCS Students Demonstrate Progress on State Tests

Recent findings from the evaluation of PICCS paint a picture of progress in English/Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics for students from participating charter schools. The independent evaluation conducted by **Measurement Incorporated (MI)**, found that during the three-year

period after PICCS was introduced in the schools (2007-08 through 2009-10), the average scale scores¹ of students on the ELA and mathematics tests were higher than those obtained during the two-year period before PICCS implementation (2005-06 and 2006-07).

- The pre-post gains were evident for all grades individually, and for grades 3-8 combined.
- Student performance in mathematics saw the greatest improvement, with an **18-point gain** for grades 3-8 combined; the comparable change in ELA was **6 points**.²

Exhibits 1 and 2 display the pre-post results.

To be fair, all schools in the state saw scale score increases over the five-year period. However, the gains made by PICCS students surpassed the statewide test results, especially in mathematics. Moreover, PICCS outcomes exceeded those achieved by other charter schools in New York City (see **Exhibits 3 and 4**).

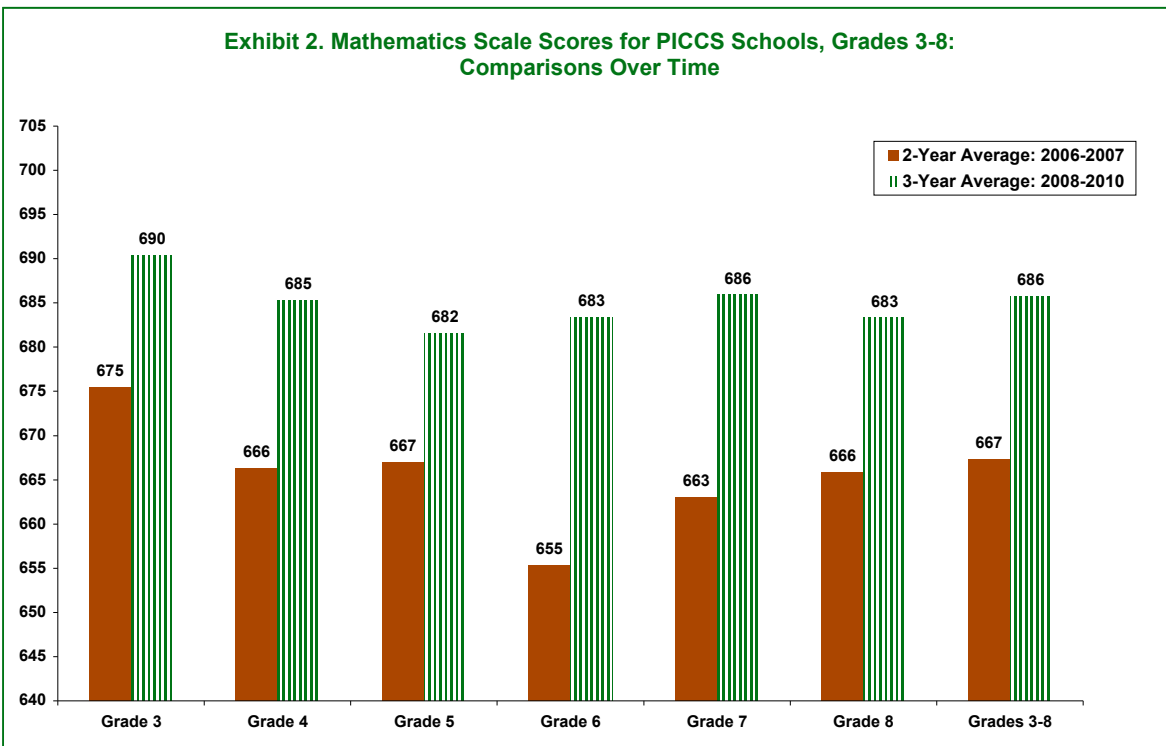
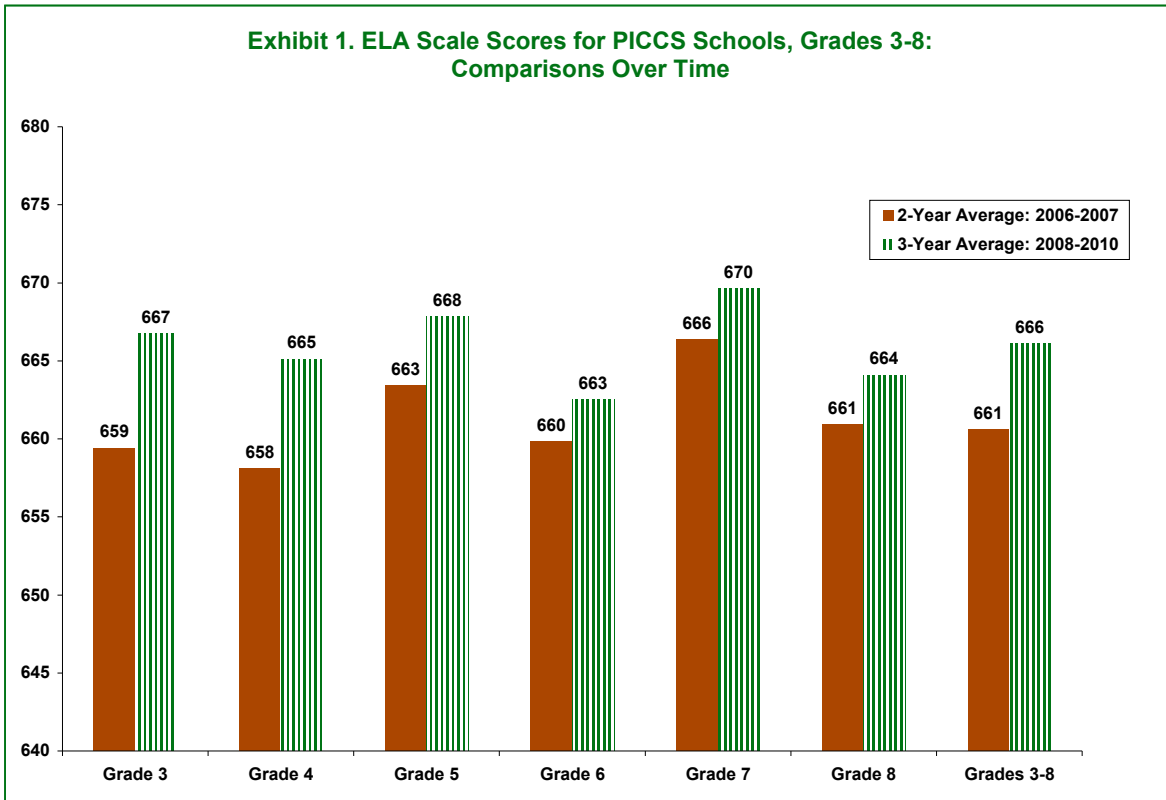
- In ELA, PICCS students averaged a **9-point gain** from 2006 to 2010³, moving from a scale score of 658 to 667. This compares with an 8-point gain both for students, statewide, and for those in all New York City charter schools.

About PICCS

The Partnership for Innovation in Compensation for Charter Schools (PICCS) is a Teacher Incentive Fund program that seeks fundamental reform in teaching and learning by combining performance-based incentives with research-based tools to help teachers customize instruction and improve student outcomes. PICCS is led by the Center for Educational Innovation – Public Education Association. Ten New York City Charter Schools participate in the PICCS project:

- Bronx Charter School for Children
- Family Life Academy
- Hebrew Language Academy*
- Hellenic Classical Charter School
- Manhattan Charter School
- Merrick Academy
- Renaissance Charter School
- South Bronx Charter School for International Culture and the Arts
- John V. Lindsay Wildcat Academy Charter School
- Williamsburg Charter High School

*First Year of Program Participation

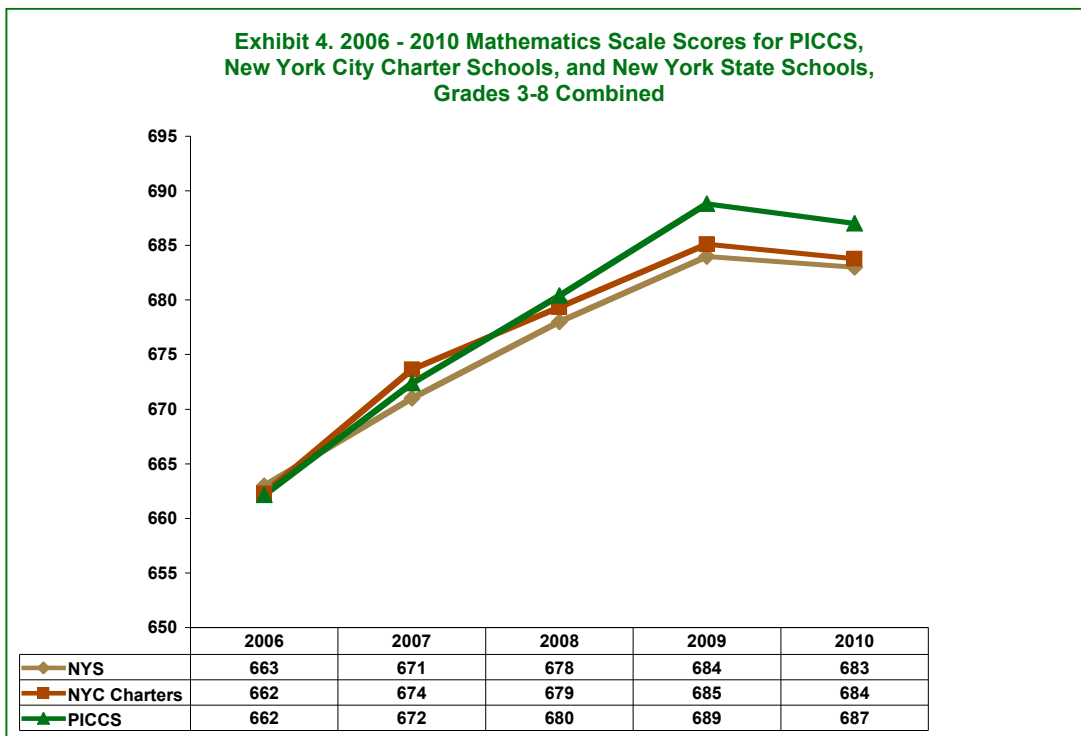
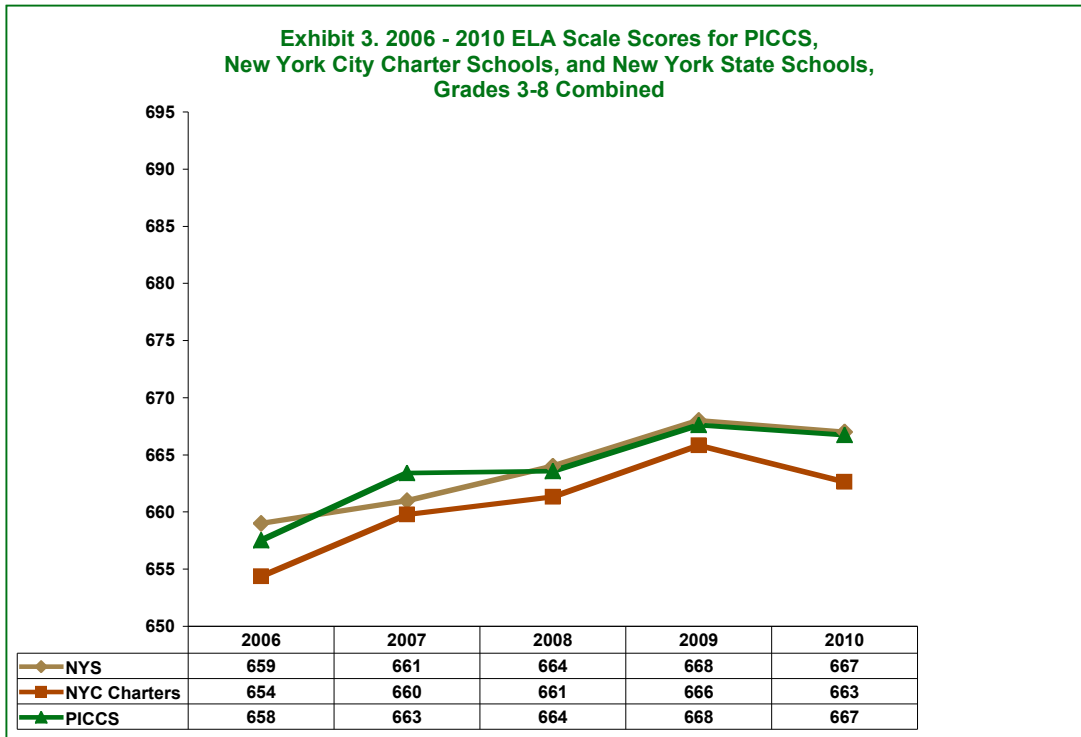


Note: The 2-year average covers the 2005-06 and 2006-07 school years; the 3-year average covers the 2007-08 through 2009-10 school years.

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- In mathematics, PICCS students registered a **25-point gain**, while the corresponding gain for students across the state was 20 points—a statistically important difference. Students in

New York City charter schools improved their mathematics scores by 22 points from 2006 to 2010. So here, also, PICCS students out-paced their classmates.

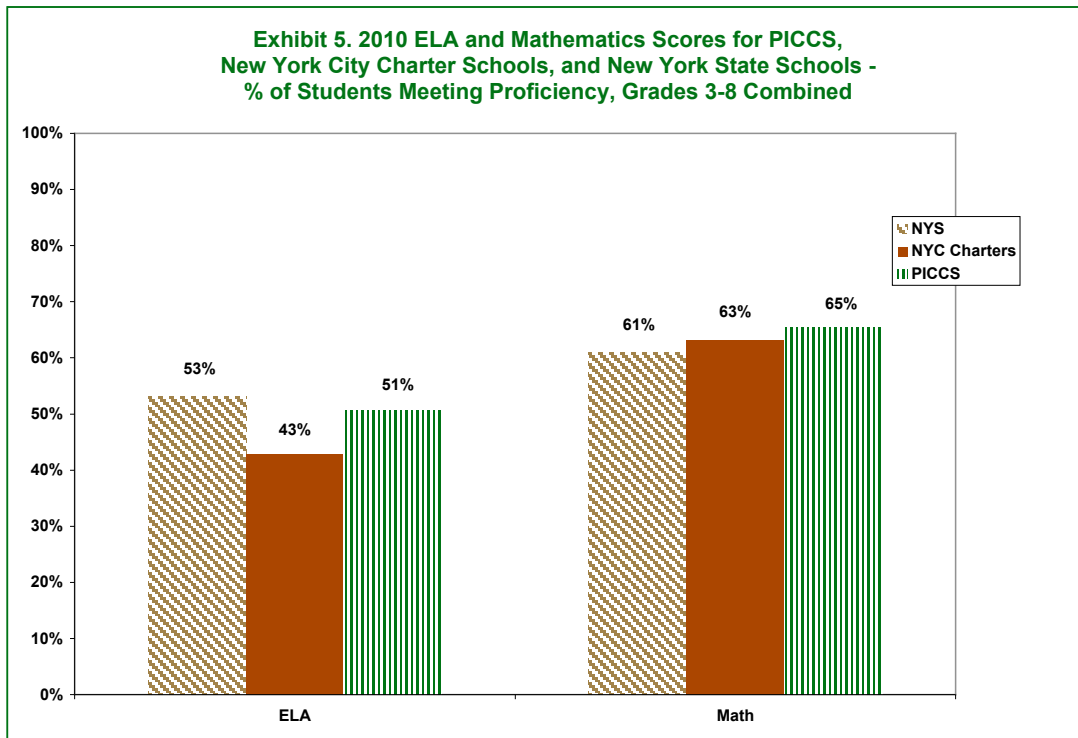


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But what do these scale scores mean? How do they correspond to the state's proficiency standards? To answer this question some background information is in order. In 2010, the state raised the scoring targets or "cut scores" for determining proficiency levels on the state tests to better align them with college-ready performance and with national standards. As a result of this change, far fewer students scored proficient or better on the 2010 ELA and mathematics exams than in previous years. For example, 51% of PICCS students in grades 3-8 met or exceeded the 2010 ELA standards, compared with 82% who did so in 2009. And 65% met/exceeded the new mathematics standards compared with 94% who met or exceeded the standards in 2009.

Despite this decline—due solely to the change in cut scores—the 2010 performance of PICCS students in ELA and mathematics compared favorably with that of other students in the state, who also experienced a sharp decline in proficiency levels from recent years. In fact, as **Exhibit 5** reveals, in three cases PICCS students outperformed their statewide and New York City charter school classmates.

All told, these findings are promising for the future. PICCS students have made important achievement gains over time, and in all likelihood this progress will continue as the program's core components are expanded and integrated in the participating charter schools.



¹We are reporting changes in *scale scores* from 2006 to 2010 because the state significantly changed its proficiency standards in 2010. This change—a raising of the bar—makes year-to-year comparisons using proficiency levels misleading. Scale scores avoid this problem by providing a more consistent—apples to apples—measure of student test performance over time.

²The gains reported here may be different from what is presented in the Exhibits due to statistical rounding.

³ The years identified in the Profiler text and charts (e.g., 2008, 2009, 2010) refer to the end of the school year. Thus, 2008 refers to the 2007-08 school year.

For further information about this Profiler or about the PICCS evaluation, please contact Thomas Kelsh at (800) 330-1420.