Early Learning and Leadership Learning: Lessons from Practice, Theory, and Research

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MAKING GOOD ON THE PROMISE OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

Overview

- Quality early child education: what are the key problems of practice?

- Theories of action for responding

- Evidence for a theory of ECE Leadership

- The challenge to leaders: continuous improvement, disciplined learning

Two Powerful Levers for Educational Change: Early Learning and School Leadership

- Both with strong evidence bases in research
- Both systemically under-resourced
- Each demonstrates effects in its own right; but each is strengthened in conjunction with the other
- Neither is adequately in conversation with the other
- Each requires collective political action to realize its potential: social justice requires institutional change

A current theory of change for Improving Early Learning at scale

Chaudry, A. Morrissey, T. et al. (2017) *Cradle to KG: A New Plan to Combat Inequality.*

- 12-16 weeks federally funded family leave for all employed parents of newborns

- Expanded federal subsidies for ECE for families

- Universal access to public school starting at age 3

- Reinvent Head Start: birth-age 3

Another theory: Leading Vision, People, Systems

Public Schools for Public Good

Plato's commune v. Aristotle's Politics

Jefferson vs. Va.

Emma Hart Willard in NY, H. Mann in Mass.

J. Dewey: Ed/Democ/Ed

Kg, Head Start,

PK for all

(Early) Learning by Doing

Plato: Joint Inquiry

Rousseau: Ed by Man, Nature, Things

Dewey: social, active, curious, & creative child

Eliz. Peabody KG; Jane Addams HH; M. Montessori, Reggio Emilio

Cooperative Learning

Productive Struggle in Teams

Leading Org Change & Adult Learning

Plato: Joint Inquiry

Dewey: Participation as development

Lewin/Benne: Org Change & Action Research

Heifetz: Technical v. Adaptive Leadership

Elmore: Leading thru Learning

Internal Coherence Framework (Forman, Stosich, Bacala)

Improvement Science (Bryk & Gomez)

Leading Vision, People, Systems
Empirical Research Example 1

Bardige, B., Baker, M., Mardell, B. (2018) Children at the Center: Transforming Early Childhood Education in the Boston Public Schools

65% of 4,300 KG kids come from school PK (2018)

2008-09 study showed gains in vocabulary, preliteracy skills, early math: "largest found to date in evaluations of large-scale public PK programs."

Boston Public Schools Department of Early Childhood Core Principles

1. Schools must promote our democratic society and support children's and teachers' sense of citizenship though multiple connections to families and community.

2. Young children are curious, active learners who are capable of high-level thinking processes, empathy, and taking multiple perspectives.

3. Strong relationships are at the center of powerful learning experiences.

4. Early learning programs must support children's physical, intellectual, language, and social-emotional development, along with their curiosity, creativity, persistence at challenging tasks, and academic learning.

5. Flexible, hands-on curricula that align with prior and future experiences foster mastery of learning standards and achievement of twenty-first-century goals.[3]

6. Basic literacies, knowledge, and higher-level skills can be furthered through pretend play, projects, extended conversation, and thoughtful instruction.

7. Because young children learn and develop at different rates and exhibit a wide range of interests, strengths, and learning styles, teachers need the time, flexibility, information, and resources to tailor learning experiences and engage all children, including dual language learners and children with special needs, as full participants in the classroom community.

Leading Vision, People, Systems

8. The adult and child learning environment are connected and mirror one another through respectful processes of inquiry and differentiation.

9. Varied assessments provide data to inform instruction and drive change. Teachers and families participate along with administrators and specialists in interpreting findings, evaluating their implications, and shaping resultant decisions.

Chicago Public Schools
Empirical Research Example #2

". . . the worst school system in America."

--U.S. Secretary of Education William Bennett, 1987

(Preparing for Table Talk #2—What's New, and What More?)

MAKING **GOOD** ON THE PROMISE OF **PUBLIC EDUCATION**

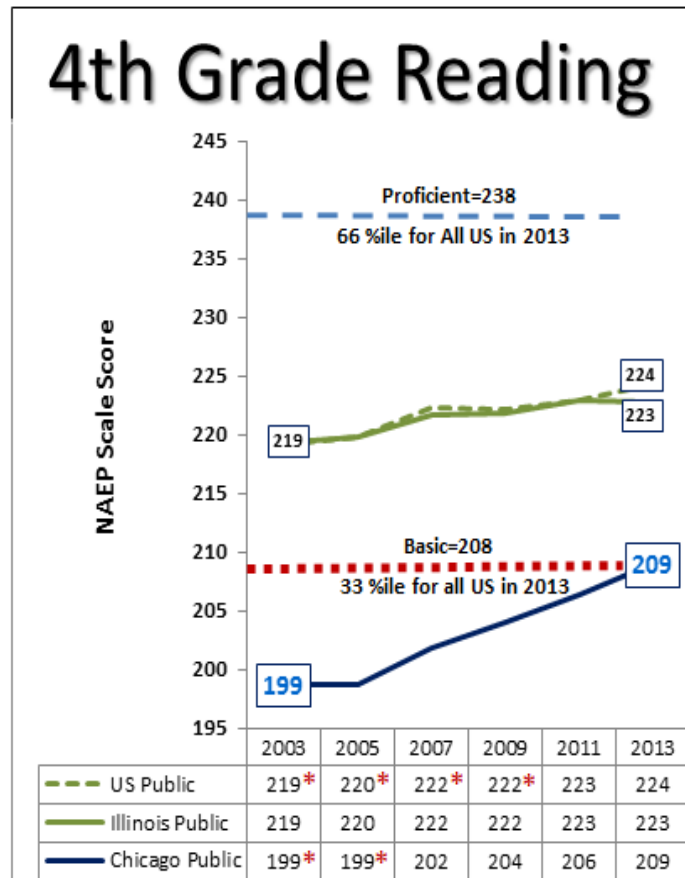# Chicago Schools Lead Country in Academic Growth, Study Finds
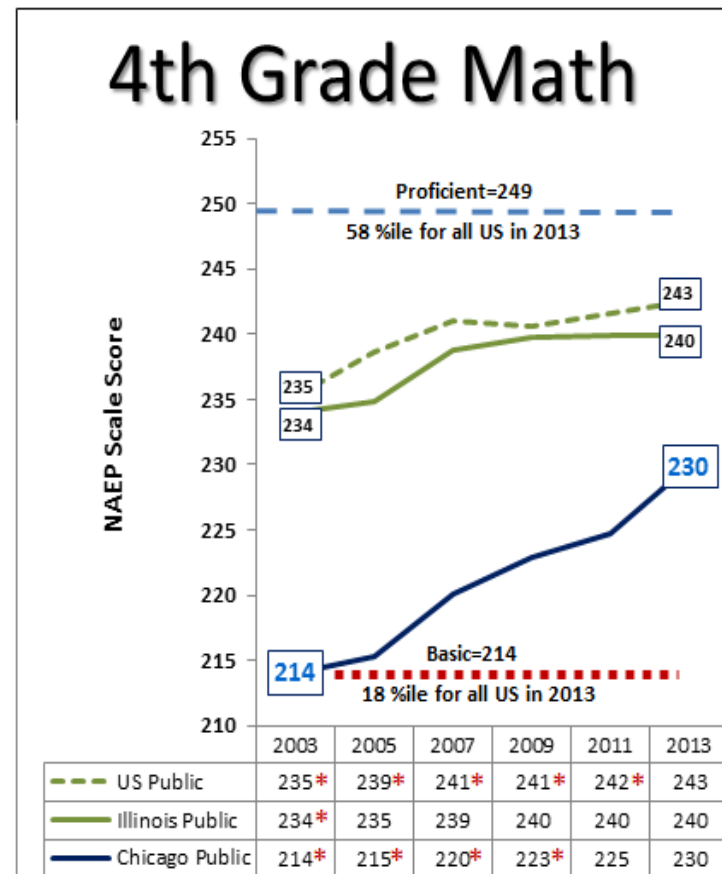
By Sarah D. Sparks Nov. 9, 2017

Exactly 30 years after then-Secretary of Education William J. Bennett labeled Chicago Public Schools the worst in the nation, new research shows that Windy City schools now lead the country in academic growth.

A new study by Stanford University researchers Sean Reardon and Rebecca Hinze-Pifer tracked reading and math test score growth among public school students from 2009 to 2014. Across racial groups, the researchers found that Chicago students learned significantly faster from grades 3 to 8 than did students in nearly all other U.S. districts—gaining about six years' worth of learning in five years.

# Since 2007 Chicago Has Accounted for Almost All Statewide NAEP Gains

4th Grade Reading

Proficient=238
66 %ile for All US in 2013

Basic=208
33 %ile for all US in 2013

219 · 224 · 223 · 199 · 209

	2003	2005	2007	2009	2011	2013
– – – US Public	219*	220*	222*	222*	223	224
—— Illinois Public	219	220	222	222	223	223
—— Chicago Public	199*	199*	202	204	206	209

* Statistically different than 2013 scale score [p=<0.05]

4th Grade Math

Proficient=249
58 %ile for all US in 2013

Basic=214
18 %ile for all US in 2013

235 · 234 · 243 · 240 · 214 · 230

	2003	2005	2007	2009	2011	2013
– – – US Public	235*	239*	241*	241*	242*	243
—— Illinois Public	234*	235	239	240	240	240
—— Chicago Public	214*	215*	220*	223*	225	230

* Statistically different than 2013 scale score [p=<0.05]

4th Grade <u>Reading</u> Grew in All Chicago Sub-Groups, But Flat or Declining in the Rest of Illinois

Percent of Non-ELL Fourth Graders Scoring At or Above State of Illinois ISAT/PARCC Medians for **READING/ELA**: 2006 to 2017
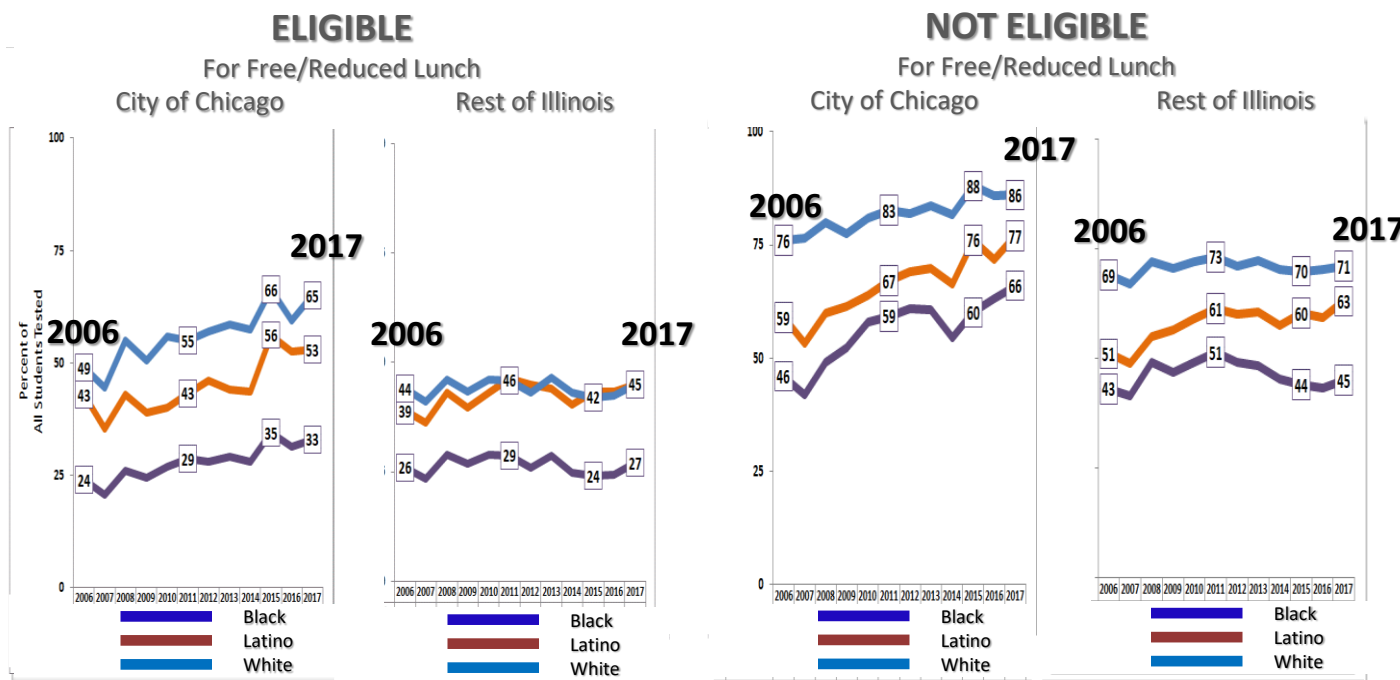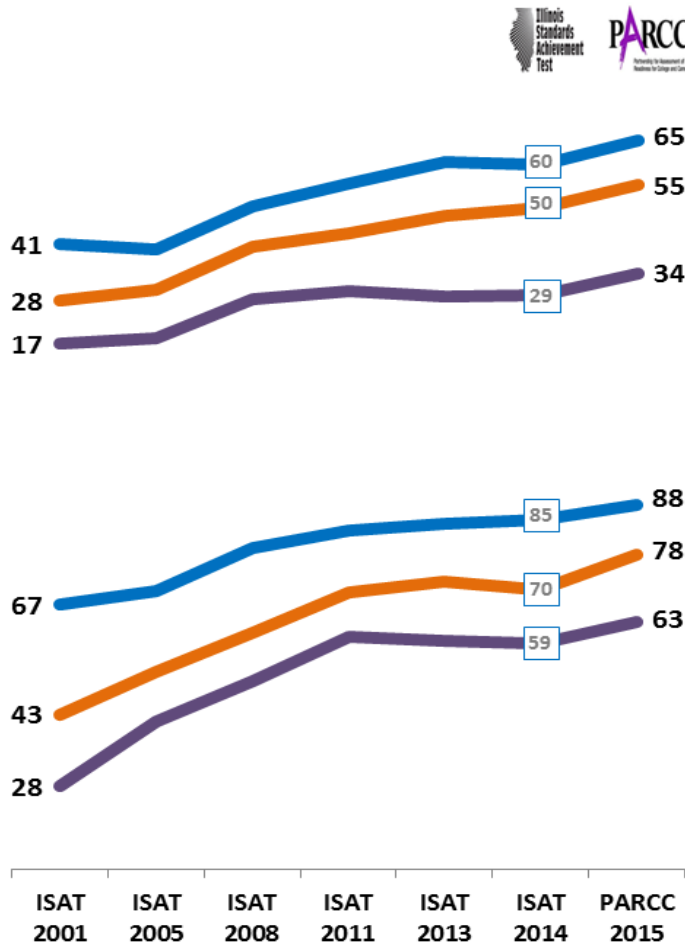
3ʳᵈ Grade Reading
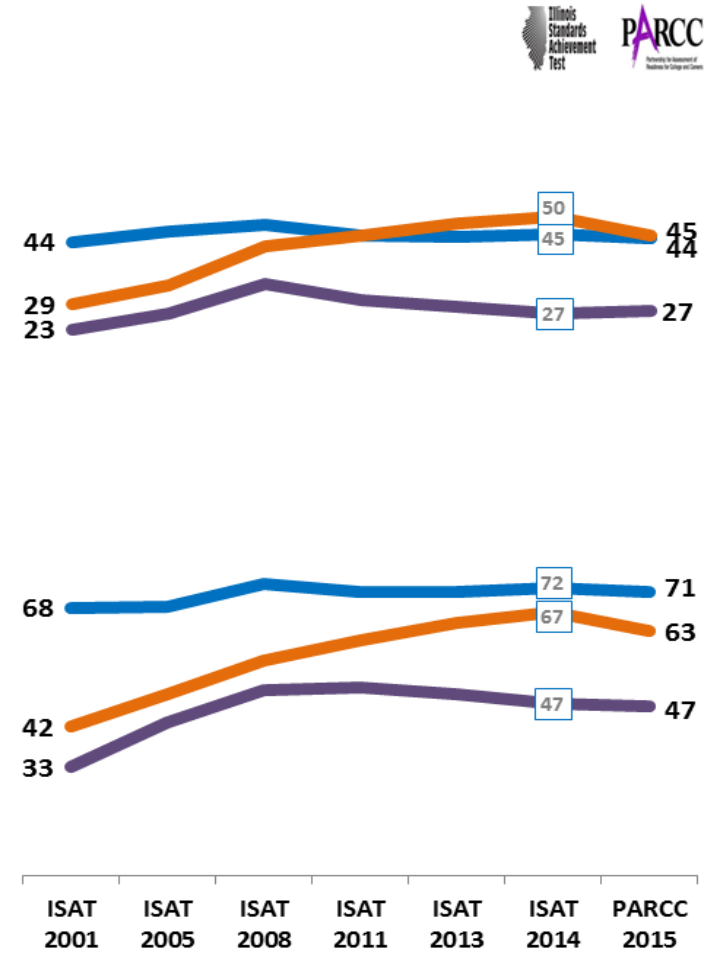## Percent Scoring At or Above Statewide Medians

City of Chicago

Rest of Illinois

Low Income

Not Low Income

ISAT 2001 · ISAT 2005 · ISAT 2008 · ISAT 2011 · ISAT 2013 · ISAT 2014 · PARCC 2015

Black — **Latino** — **White**

What we know

- A strong principal or center leader can dramatically improve P-3 school culture, climate, and student outcomes in a short period of time

- We know <u>how</u> leaders do this (vision, people, systems—Leithwood, 2004, Elmore 2004)

- We know that <u>teacher</u> learning systems in P-3 are essential to transforming <u>student</u> learning outcomes

- We know that many teacher leaders are able to <u>learn</u> how to become such a principal (made, not born)

How do leaders improve early learning outcomes?

- **Leadership challenge**: <u>organizing</u> a school or center to support <u>adult</u> and student learning at scale . . .

- Starting with organizing for P-3 learning

- Effective teacher teams as "organizational capacity" for teacher learning

Improving Outcomes via Adult Learning and Organizational Change

If the formal authority of my role requires that I hold you accountable for some action or outcome, then I have an equal and complementary responsibility to assure that you have the capacity to do what I am asking you to do. . . . My authority to require you to do something you might not otherwise do depends on my capacity to create the opportunity for you to learn how to do it, and to educate me on the process of learning how to do it, so that I become better at enabling you to do it the next time. (Elmore, 2004)

(Continuous) Improvement (Science)

- **Bryk, Gomez, et al (2015)** *Learning to Improve: How America's Schools Can Get Better at Getting Better.* Harvard Ed Press.

- Carnegie Foundation for Quality in Continuous Improvement (UIC, 2018)

- Carnegie Summit on Improvement Science

- iLead: Partnerships b/t IHEs and Districts

A Short Bookshelf of Resources for Leadership In P-3 Education (First, the Science)

- **Allen, L. & Kelly, B.** eds. (2015) *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation*. Committee on the Science of Children Birth to Age 8—Board on Children, Youth, and Families. Institute of Medicine and National Research Council. Washington, DC: National Academies Press. ([www.nap.edu)](www.nap.edu)

- **Ericsson, A.** (2016) *Peak: Secrets from the New Science of Expertise.* Houghton Mifflin.

- **Shonkoff, J. P. & Phillips, D. A.** eds. (2010) *From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development.* Board on Children, Youth, and Families, National Research Council and Institute of Medicine. Washington, DC: National Academies Press.

- Wright, B.L. & Counsell, S.L. (2018). The Brilliance of Black Boys: Cultivating School Success in the Early Grades . New York: Teachers College Press.

Bookshelf: Policy and Practice

- **Chaudry, A. Morrissey, T. et al. (2017)** *Cradle to KG: A New Plan to Combat Inequality.* Russell Sage Fnd.

- **Bardige, B., Baker, M. & Mardell, B.** (2018). Children at the Center: Transforming Early Childhood Education in the Boston Public Schools. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Ed Press.

- **Kauerz, K & Coffman, J. (2013)** *Framework for Planning, Implementing, and Evaluating PreK-3rd Grade Approaches*. Seattle, WA: College of Education, UW.

- **Ritchie, S., & Gutmann, L. (2014)** *First School: Transforming Prek-3rd Grade for African American, Latino, and Low-Income Children*. New York: Teachers College Press.

- Sullivan-Dudzic, L., Gearns, D.K., & Leavell, K. (2010). Making a Difference: 10 Essential Steps to Building a PreK-3 System . Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin

Bookshelf: Organization and Leadership as Foundations for Learning

- **Bryk, A. S., Sebring, P. B., Allensworth**, E., **Luppescu, S., & Easton, J. Q**. (2010). *Organizing Schools for Improvement: Lessons from Chicago.* Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.

- **Bryk, A., Gomez, L**. et al. (2015). *Learning to improve: How America's schools can get better at getting better*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

- **Takanishi, R.** (2016). *First Things First! Creating the New American Primary School* . New York: Teachers College Press.

- ***Leading PreK-3 Learning Communities:*** *Competencies for Effective Principal Practice* (2014) Alexandria, VA: National Association of Elementary School Principals.

Four Sources for Leadership Learning

- **Bryk, Gomez, et al (2015)** *Learning to Improve* (again). Harvard.
- **Donaldson, G**. (2008) *How Leaders Learn: Cultivating Capacities for School Improvement*
- **Forman, Stosich, Bocala** (2017) *The Internal Coherence Framework.*
- **Wiliam, D.** (2016) *Leading for Teacher Learning*

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