

LAWRENCE PUBLIC SCHOOLS TURNAROUND: YEAR 1 RESULTS

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SCHOOL & DISTRICT TURNAROUND

- Both U.S. DOE and MA DESE have prioritized “turning around” chronically under-performing schools
 - School turnaround (Dee, 2012; Borman et al., 2003)
 - State takeovers (Wong & Shen, 2002)
 - Charter school practices in public school context (Fryer, 2014)
- Lawrence provides a unique opportunity to examine the early results of a state-led, district-wide turnaround effort
- Preview - after year 1:
 - On average, Lawrence students are doing better in math
 - Acceleration Academy students are doing better in in math and ELA
 - Math gains are fairly widespread across different schools

LAWRENCE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- Lawrence, MA is a mid-sized, economically struggling industrial city, 30 miles north of Boston
- Lawrence Public Schools
 - Enrollment: 13,000
 - 90% low-income
 - 70% ESL
- Leadership instability
- In 2010-2011 school year:
 - Bottom five MA districts for ELA and math MCAS proficiency
 - LEP and SPED children below average by 10 - 20 percentage points
 - 3/4 of LPS schools showed declines in achievement
 - Half graduate in four years



RECEIVERSHIP

November 2011	MA Board of Elem. and Sec. Ed. classifies LPS as Level 5 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Places LPS in state receivership
January 2012	Jeffrey Riley appointed as “Receiver” <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Authority of Superintendent and School Committee
Spring 2012	Riley recruits core team <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reviews LPS schools, systems, and practices
2012-13 School Year	First year of turnaround <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus of today’s talk
2013-14 School Year	Second year of turnaround <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Results available fall 2014

WHAT CHANGED IN YEAR 1?

**Higher
Expectations**

**Autonomy &
Accountability**

**Learning
Time**

**Data
Use**

**Human
Capital**

- **May 2012 Turnaround Plan goals:**
 - **Year 1: Double the number of schools with SGP > 50**
 - **Year 3: Move from the 22nd to top five MA Gateway district**
 - **ELA and math proficiency**
 - **Graduation**
 - **Year 5-7: Catch up with the State**

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- Flexibility for schools and tailored central office support
- Gave over management at three Level 4 schools
 - Unlocking Potential: 6th grade of Leonard Middle
 - Community Group: K-1 of Arlington Elementary
 - Spark Academy: 5th grade at South Lawrence East Middle
- Phoenix Foundation opened Phoenix Academy
 - Alternative high school for students at risk of dropping out

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- Expanded learning time
 - Outside operator-led schools added 90 minutes per day
 - Expanded after-school enrichment (e.g., theater, dance, sports)
- Acceleration Academies
 - 1,800 struggling students
 - Teachers selected for demonstrated teaching excellence
 - ELA or math instruction
 - Small groups of ten
 - Week-long vacation breaks
- MATCH math tutoring at two of lowest performing high schools

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- Achievement Network began working with nine LPS schools
- Administered formative assessments
- Provided training on use of student-level data to:
 - Improve instruction
 - Effectively target specialized programming

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- **School leaders**
 - 50% new LPS principals
 - 20% new assistant principals
- **Teachers**
 - 10% of teachers identified as low-performing
 - All of those were “evaluated out”

RESEARCH QUESTIONS & DATA

1) In year 1 of the receivership, did Lawrence students' math and ELA performance improve relative to similar students in other majority low-income districts?

- **Data:** MA Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education
 - All MA students from 2008 to 2013
 - Focus on 48 majority low-income districts
 - Outcomes: Math and ELA MCAS scores
 - Tested grades (3-8th and 10th)

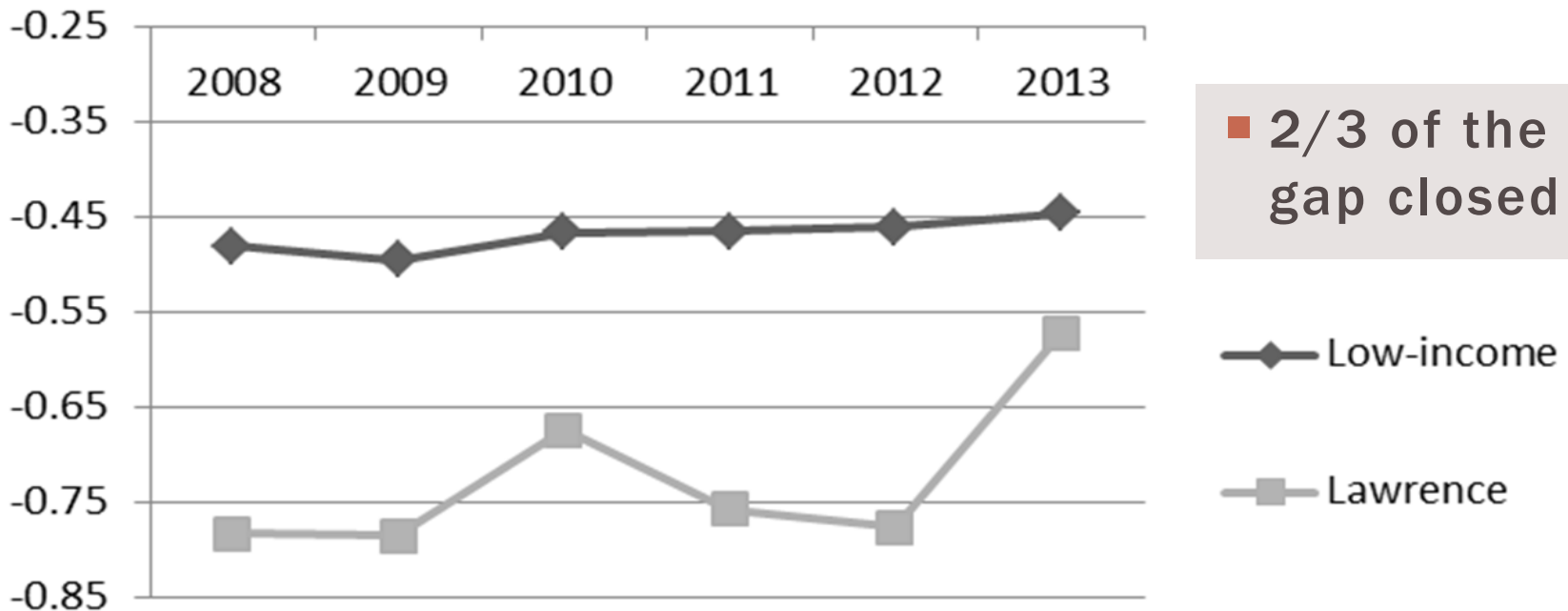
2) Did participants in Lawrence's Acceleration Academies improve more than their non-participating peers?

- **Data:** DESE & Lawrence Public Schools
 - 2013 participants in ELA (n=877) & math (n=764) Academies

FINDINGS: MATH

Predicted Math MCAS Scores

Lawrence vs. Majority Low-income Districts

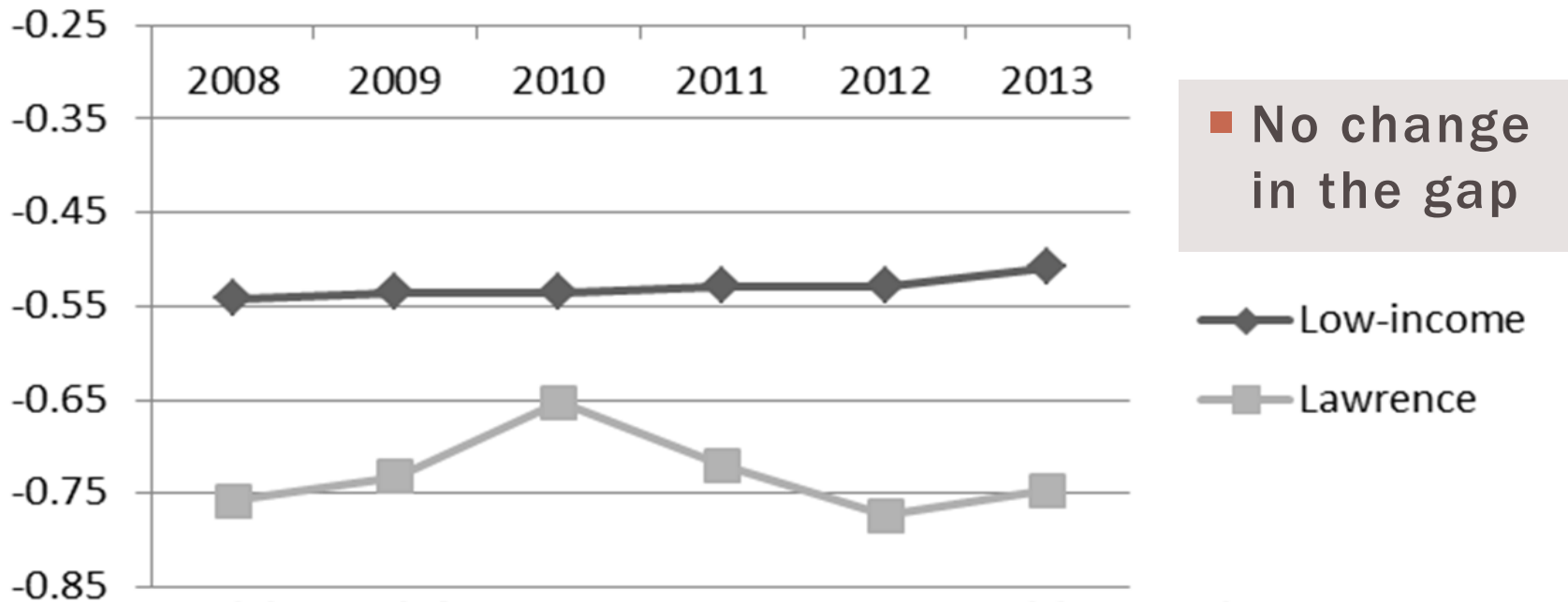


Model controls for year, yearXLP interactions and demographics
All differences are significant at the 1% level

FINDINGS: ELA

Predicted ELA MCAS Scores

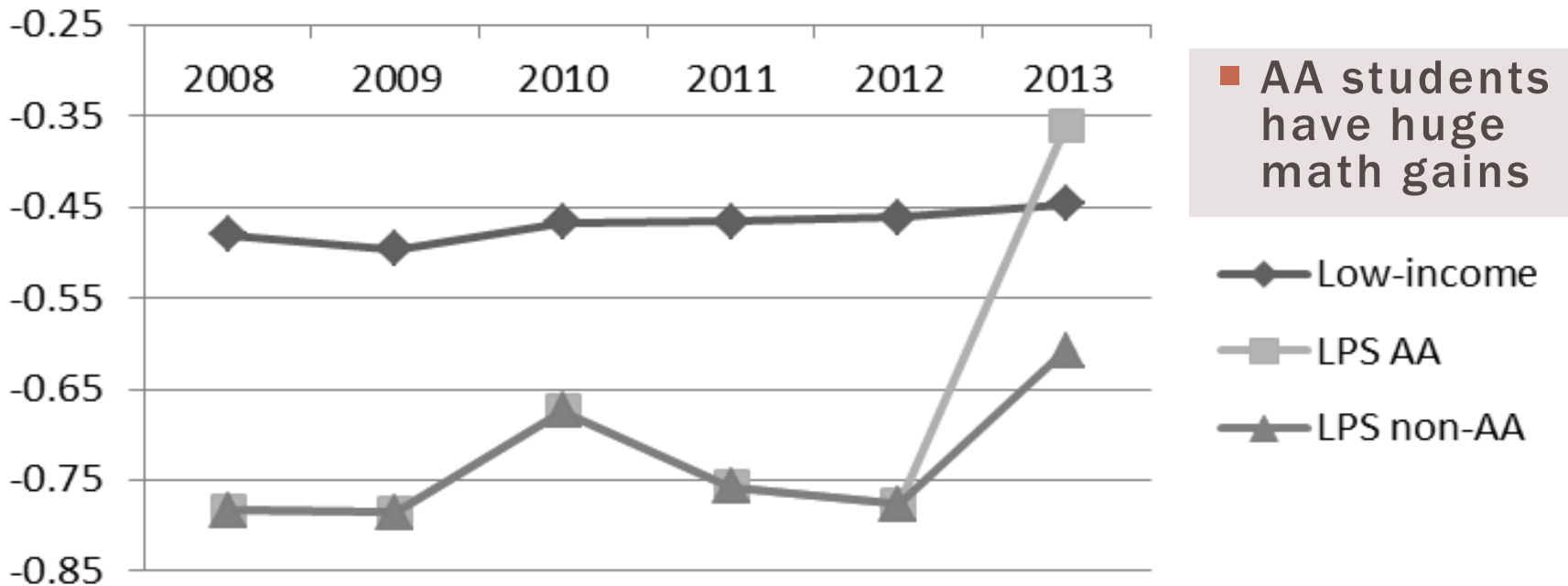
Lawrence vs. Majority Low-income Districts



Model controls for year, yearXLP interactions and demographics
All differences are significant at the 1% level

ACCELERATION ACADEMIES: MATH

Predicted Math MCAS Scores By Math Acceleration Academy Participation



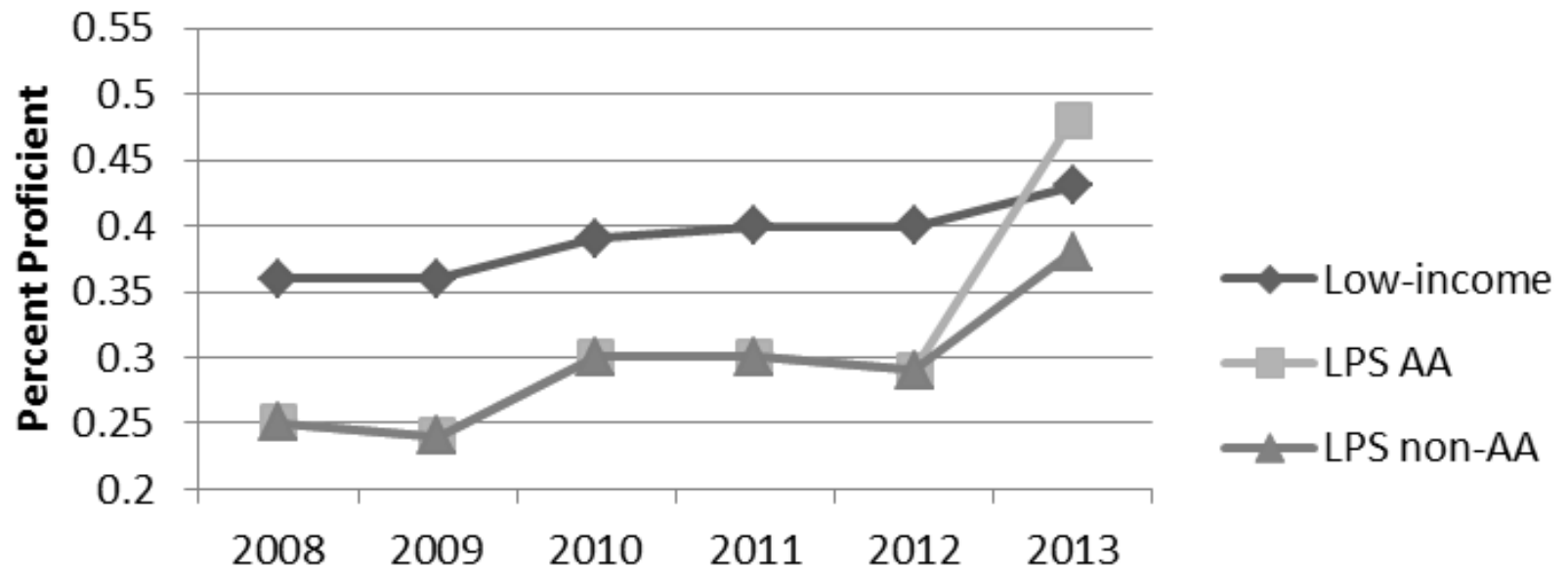
AA students have huge math gains

- Low-income
- LPS AA
- LPS non-AA

Model controls for year, yearX LPS interactions and demographics
All differences are significant at the 1% level

AA MODEL PROFICIENCY (MATH)

Predicted Math MCAS Proficiency By Math Acceleration Academy Participation

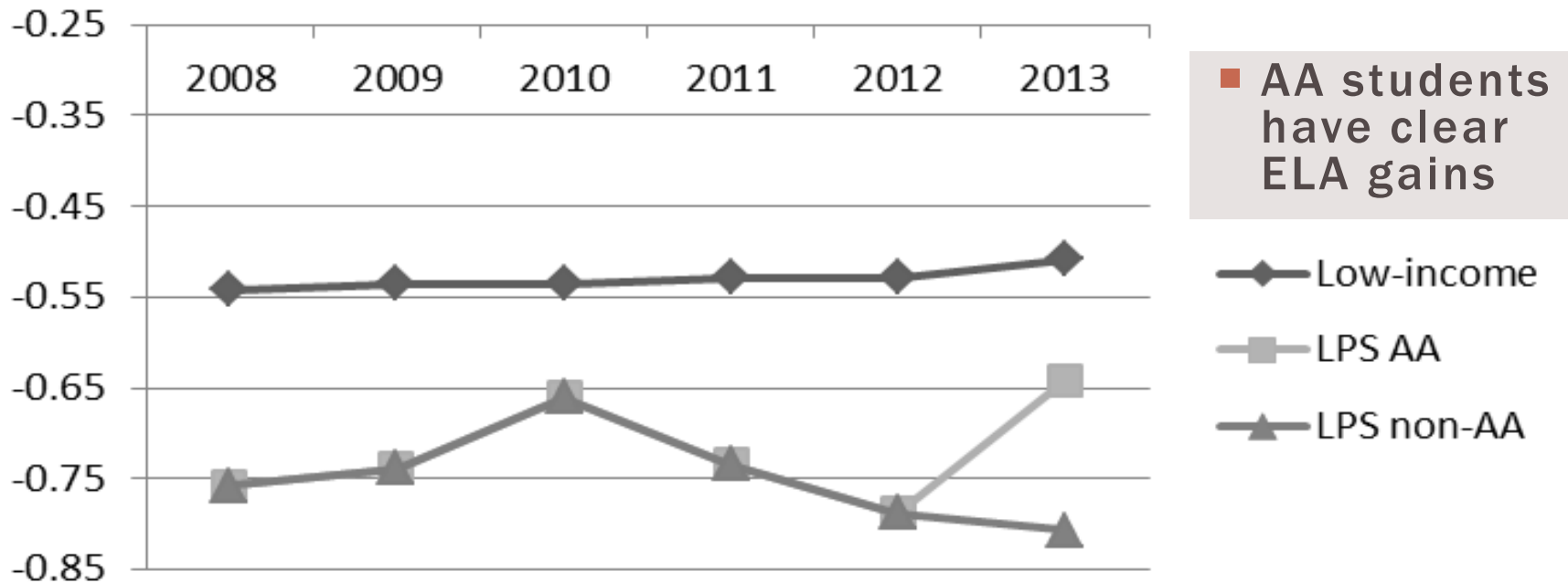


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ACCELERATION ACADEMIES: ELA

Predicted ELA MCAS Scores

By ELA Acceleration Academy Participation



PUTTING THE RESULTS IN CONTEXT

- Compared to evaluations of other MA education initiatives:

	Boston charter middle and high schools	KIPP Lynn middle school	General effect, LPS turnaround	Effect of Acceleration Academies	Total effect, turnaround + Acc. Acad.
Authors	Abdulkadiroglu et al. (2011)	Angrist et al. (2010)			
Math	0.40 sd	0.35 sd	0.20 sd	0.20 sd	0.40 sd
ELA	0.20 sd	0.15 sd	0.00 sd	0.15 sd	0.15 sd

- LPS turnaround + Acceleration Academies have impacts comparable to high-performing charter schools
- Acceleration Academies seem quite effective, particularly given that they involve only 1 week (30 hours) of instruction.

LPS YEAR 1: KEY FINDINGS

- All LPS turnaround students vs. other low-income MA districts
 - Math: gap narrowed by about two-thirds
 - ELA: no significant overall change
- Acceleration Academy students vs. other low-income MA districts
 - Math: gap closed
 - ELA: gap narrowed by about half
- Observed gains in math are fairly widespread among different Lawrence schools.
 - Not driven by small number of highly successful schools
 - May suggest school-level interventions were chosen appropriately for each particular school.

NEXT STEPS

- Our results focus on year 1 of turnaround but 2013-14 school year saw additional changes, including
 - Doubling of Acceleration Academy participation
 - School year expanded by 200+ hours for 1st-8th graders
 - ANet works with majority of schools on data use
 - Changes to teacher compensation system
- Next steps:
 - 2013-14 Acceleration Academy participants
 - One-on-one MATCH tutoring participants
 - School-level policy tracking
 - 2013-14 MCAS results (September 2014?)
- Upcoming Rappaport Institute policy brief

THANK YOU

Lawrence Public Schools

Jeff Riley, Michael Kennealy, Seth Racine, Julie Albino,
Kristyn Rice, David Clement, Mary Lou Bergeron

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Rappaport Institute – Steve Poftak, Polly O'Brien

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