

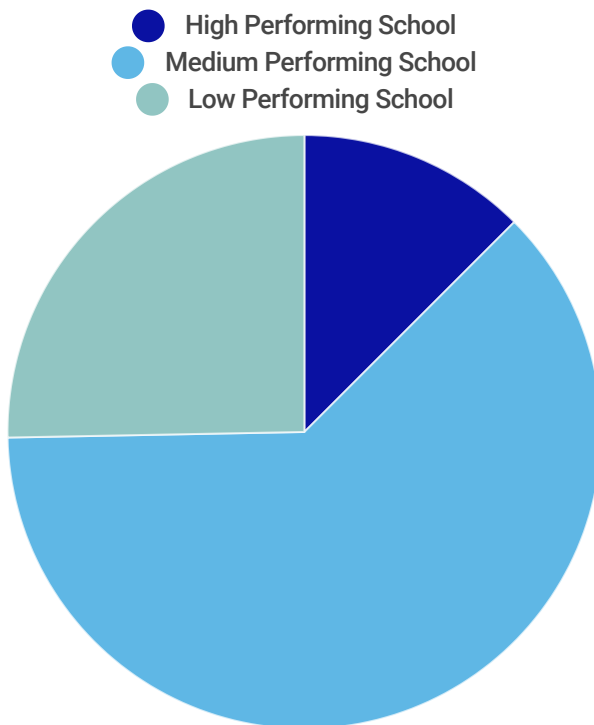
Are Families Applying to Kindergarten Outside Their Zone Seeking Higher Performing Schools?

Kindergarteners attending public school in New York City must apply through the Department of Education's (DOE) centralized kindergarten choice process to secure a spot at their preferred school. Families can list up to 12 elementary schools, including schools located outside their local catchment zone. While enrollment is largely based on these geographic zones (students who live within a school's zone receive priority for admission), students can also apply to and attend out-of-zone schools. One factor likely to affect students' kindergarten choice is elementary school performance.

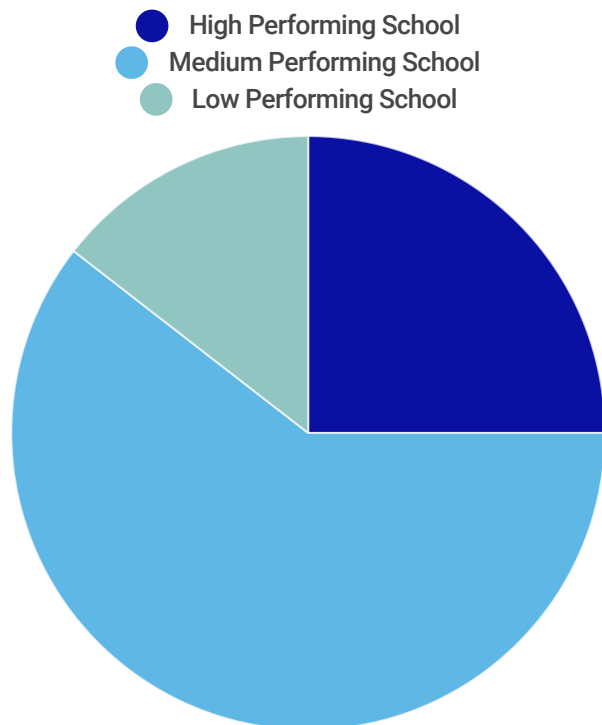
Using English Language Arts (ELA) and Math test scores from the 2015-2016 school year, IBO grouped schools by performance level—high, medium, and low. (For details on how IBO classified the schools see table below.) Using student-level kindergarten choice data from the 2016-2017 school year, IBO compared performance levels at students' first choice schools with performance at their zoned schools. In that year, just over one-third of students applied to out-of-zone schools as their first choice. This analysis is part of IBO's recently released [report](#) on the kindergarten choice process.

Students Who Applied Out-of-Zone Are More Likely to Be Zoned For Low & Medium Performing Schools

Performance of Zoned Schools Among Students With *Out-of-Zone* First Choice



Performance of Zoned Schools Among Students With *Zoned* First Choice



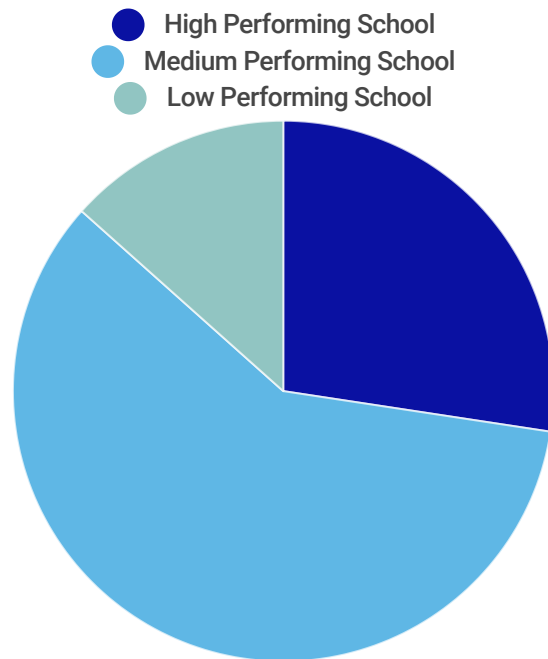
Of students choosing to apply out-of-zone, 25.3 percent were zoned for low performing schools, compared with just 14.5 percent for those who chose to remain in zone.

Conversely, only 12.5 percent of students opting to apply out-of-zone were zoned for high performing schools, whereas 25.0 percent of students whose first choice was to remain in zone were zoned for a high performing school.

Performance Level of Schools Sought by Students Choosing Out-of-Zone Mirrors That of Those Who Stay In Zone

Of the schools to which out-of-zone students applied 27.4 percent were high performing, 59.2 percent were medium, and 13.4 percent were low. In short, IBO found students who applied to an out-of-zone school as their first choice sought the distribution of school performance that in-zone applicants already had.

Performance of Schools Applied to By Out-of-Zone Students



How IBO Classified School Performance:

School Performance Type		
Low	Medium	High
161 Schools	437 Schools	150 schools
ELA or Math in bottom 16 percent of schools' average scores	Both ELA and Math in middle 68 percent of schools' average scores	ELA or Math in top 16 percent of schools' average scores

SOURCE: Department of Education

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