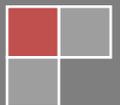


2015

Newark Fairmount Promise Neighborhood

Needs Assessment and Segmentation Analysis

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The **Newark Schools Research Collaborative**, in partnership with the **Urban League of Essex County**, the **United Way of Essex and West Hudson**, and the **Office of the University-Community Partnerships at Rutgers University-Newark**, conducted a needs assessment of Newark's Fairmount neighborhood during 2013-2014. This report presents a summary of the research findings. The project's goal of was to provide a sound basis for the establishment of a comprehensive set of programs and policies that to foster cradle-to-career success among youth living in Newark's Fairmount neighborhood; and to provide support for the preparation of a grant application for federal support for the Newark Fairmount Promise Neighborhood project.

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TurnAround for Children

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Background

In 2012, the *Rutgers University-Newark's Office of University-Community Partnerships*, the *United Way of Essex and West Hudson*, and the *Urban League of Essex County* were awarded a planning grant by the *United States Department of Education* to design a Promise Neighborhood project for the Fairmount area of Newark. The Promise Neighborhood program is a federal education initiative that is intended to narrow the achievement gap between children who live in low income communities and those who reside in economically better off neighborhoods. According to the *Department of Education*,

“the vision of the program is that all children and youth growing up in Promise Neighborhoods have access to great schools and strong systems of family and community support that will prepare them to attain an excellent education and successfully transition to college and a career.”

The federal Promise Neighborhood initiative seeks to accomplish this goal by promoting innovative interventions that support a web of neighborhood systems that include families, schools, the physical and social and economic environments, and service providers. The Promise Neighborhood initiative promotes “building a complete continuum of cradle-to-career solutions of both educational programs and family and community supports, with great schools at the center.” Promise Neighborhood initiatives seek to accomplish this by establishing and coordinating programs and policies to maximize support for families and individuals in ways that promote educational success.

The Newark Fairmount Promise Neighborhood (NFPN) project is a collaboration of community based organizations and leaders that are committed to supporting the children and families of Newark’s Fairmount neighborhood, which we here define as 43 blocks that are located a mile to the west of Newark’s downtown. Fairmount is very poor: nearly 2/3 of children live below the federal poverty line, and nearly 2/3 of children live in single female headed households. Most school children in the neighborhood attend either the *Thirteenth Avenue School* or *West Side High School*, although large numbers of them attend other Newark schools, including charter and magnet high schools. As a result of the *Newark One* initiative (see below), we expect Fairmount’s school children to become even more dispersed among the city’s schools in this and coming years.

The NFPN project is a collaboration of the *Rutgers University-Newark's Office of University-Community Partnerships*, the *United Way of Essex and West Hudson*, the *Urban League of Essex County*, which are managing partners of NFPN. The core of NFPN is the planning council, which is made up of leaders from community organizations, Fairmount residents, and service providers. The Planning Council provides input on the development of the program, including identifying potential programs and strategies, identifying funding opportunities, and providing

support for development efforts. The Planning Council is also designed to strengthen accountability and transparency.

The *Newark Schools Research Collaborative* (NSRC) was engaged by the NFPN to perform data collection and analysis for the program. With the assistance of the managing partners, NSRC was responsible for assembling information for this comprehensive needs assessment of the Fairmount Neighborhood, which was conducted as a part of the federal Promise Neighborhood planning grant.

About This Report

This report is the result of a yearlong effort by *Newark Schools Research Collaborative* staff (NSRC) to assemble existing information on the Fairmount neighborhood and to generate new information via a range of research activities. The goals of these efforts were five-fold, and related:

- To provide information that could be used to plan and implement effective programs and policies to support cradle-to-career educational development by Fairmount’s children.
- To provide local organizations and service providers with an understanding of the needs of Fairmount residents and of how their agency might provide services that integrate with other activities occurring under the NFPN umbrella.
- To give voice to the people of Fairmount.
- To provide information required by the federal government for successful application for a federal Promise Neighborhood implementation grant.
- To pilot data collection methods use during implementation phase of the project.

This report is a “thick description” of the Fairmount neighborhood, including of the academic performance of its students, the characteristics of its schools, the social and demographic and built environment, and a range of other factors that potentially influence children’s learning and academic performance. For purposes of presentation, the technical issues concerning data collection are presented in *Appendix A*.

Executive Summary

Newark's Fairmount neighborhood, as described in this report, is comprised of 43 blocks that are located a mile to the west of downtown's Military Park. Although we refer to Fairmount in this report as a "neighborhood," the residents of the area have more complex conceptions of the area, and few conceive of the district as a geographically distinct neighborhood. This is reflected in the fact that half of residents in our community survey had no name for the area at all, while those names that the residents did cite usually referred to a nearby major street or to *Georgia King Village* (the large apartment complex in the area). However, two respondents to the neighborhood survey had a more colorful name for the area: "Baghdad," which provides an indication of some resident perceptions about crime risk and safety in the area.

Approximately six thousand individuals live in Fairmount, and about a third of these are children under the age of 18. A large proportion of Fairmount residents are very poor. Nearly a third of households earn less than \$15,000 per year. And, 62% of children live in households with incomes that fall below the federal poverty level (\$23,050 for a family of four in 2012). Rates of unemployment in Fairmount are very high. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 22% of working age adults in Fairmount were unemployed in 2008-2012 (ACS 5 Year Estimates, 2012). According to the NFPN Neighborhood Survey, 31% of respondents worked for pay, while 39% reported that they were actively seeking employment. Two out of three children live in single, female-headed households.

Although the Fairmount neighborhood has numerous social and economic problems, the neighborhood also has many strengths. One strength is the great length of time that many residents have resided in Fairmount: the median length of time in the neighborhood is 10 years. A segment of the population appears to move in and out frequently, but the neighborhood is generally marked by stability of residence, although many people move frequently from apartment to apartment within Fairmount.

In part as a result of long residence in Fairmount, many residents report that they have a strong attachment to their community; and many report that neighbors generally get along with each other. However, only about half (45%) of respondents said in the community survey that they can trust their neighbors. Some residents speak with longing about a past when neighbors were closer to each other, crime rates were lower, and the economic situation was better. And, when the *Boys and Girls Club of Newark* provided a safe setting for children to go and engage in sports and other recreational activities.

In the sections below, we summarize some of the findings presented in this report.

Education

➤ Daycare

- Only 1/3 of children under the age of 3 were in daycare. The most popular source of daycare was "8th Street Daycare" (*United Community Daycare*, located

at 332 South 8th Street in Fairmount). Additional research is needed on the sources of daycare in Fairmount.

➤ *Preschool*

- Of children aged 3 and 4, just 19% were enrolled in free NPS preschool, although an additional 10% were enrolled in *Head Start*. A quarter of children were not in preschool at all, and another 30% of children appear to have been enrolled in private preschool, although the relationship of these to NPS is unclear since NPS has many community-based preschool providers. Since 3 and 4 year-old Fairmount children are entitled to free preschool under the *Abbott vs. Burke* decisions, additional research is needed to identify barriers to enrolling young children into publically funded preschool.

➤ *Kindergarten through 8th Grade*

- Just half of Fairmount K-8 children attended the local *Thirteenth Avenue School*. Another 30% of children attended other NPS schools, several a short distance outside of Fairmount. Fifteen percent of K-8 children attended a Newark charter school. Under the *One Newark* reforms, Fairmount children may be even more dispersed throughout Newark in the future.
- In 2012-2013, just 18% of *Thirteenth Avenue School* students were proficient in language arts and 15% in mathematics on the NJASK standardized tests. *Thirteenth Avenue's* NJASK proficiency rates are among the lowest in Newark. NJASK performance was somewhat better at other Fairmount area NPS schools, but academic performance was still far below New Jersey and national standards.

➤ *High School*

- About a third of high school children attended *West Side High School*; another 14% attended an NPS magnet high school, and 25% attended other NPS high schools. Just 14% of students attended a Newark charter school or parochial school.
- In 2012-2013, 70% of *West Side High School* students were proficient or better in language arts, and just 40% in mathematics. The adjusted cohort four year graduation rate was 64% (as compared to 87% for the State of New Jersey), which means that 36% of *West Side* 9th grade students fail to earn a high school degree in four years (most dropping out).
- In recent years, half of *West Side High School* students have enrolled in college. However, relatively few of these students (less than 10%) earned a college degree. Of those students who enter *West Side High School* as 9th graders, approximately a third of students drop out of high school, a third end their academic career with a high school degree, and a third go on to college. Only about 5% of high school freshmen earn a college degree.
- NPS closed *West Side High School* at the end of the 2013-2014 school year; and *Newark Early College* and *Newark Vocational High School* were “re-sited” on the *West Side* campus in the fall of 2014. Former *West Side* students had the option of staying at the *West Side* campus as students in *Newark Early College*. We don't know how this change may have altered the pattern of high school attendance in Fairmount.

Parental Engagement with Education and Schools

- *Parent/Guardian Involvement with Child's Education at Home*
 - 71% of parents and guardians of children under age 5 report that they sing or tell stories to their child every day.
 - 62% of parents and guardians report having 20 or more children's or young adult books in the home.
- *Parent/Guardian Views on their Child's School*
 - Fairmount parents and guardians generally have a good opinion of their child's school: 88% of parents and guardians agreed or strongly agreed with the statement *"my child's school is a good school."* This response is in stark contrast to the low academic proficiency of students who attend Fairmount area NPS schools.
 - 61% of parents and guardians reported that feel that their child's school is better or much better than others in Newark.
 - 98% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement *"I feel welcome at my child's school."*
- *Parent/Guardian School Engagement*
 - Nearly 60% of parents/guardians report attending every school performance or event.
 - Less than half of parents/guardians report attending every parent-teacher conference.
 - Less than a third of parents/guardians report attending every PTO meeting.
 - Nearly half of parents/guardians report that they never volunteer at their child's school.

Parent/Guardian Aspirations for Children Going to College

- Parents and guardians of middle and high school students understand the importance of their children attending college. Nearly 80% agree that *"a college degree is necessary to get ahead in today's world."*
- Parent/guardian educational aspirations for their middle and high school students are very high: 86% report that they expect that their child will earn a college degree or higher. And, a third of parents and guardians said they expected their child to earn a graduate or professional degree. Because just 5% of *West Side High School* 9th grade students actually earn a college degree, the disconnect between parental aspirations and post-high school performance among Fairmount children is substantial.
- Two-thirds of parents/guardians of middle and high school students report that they know the classes that their child should take to go to college. However, a third of parents/guardians said they did not know, or were unclear about what classes their child should take.
- Half of parents/guardians of middle and high school students report that they often talk to their child about applying to college after high school.
- Only 23% of parents/guardians of middle and high school students report that they often help their child select courses or programs at school.

Student Perceptions of Teachers and Peers at the Thirteenth Avenue School

- The results of the *Turnaround for Children* survey indicate that students generally feel that *Thirteenth Avenue School* teachers provide emotional and academic support, support student academic interaction, promote teaching that goes beyond memorization, and promote hard and thoughtful work.
- A minority of students seem to feel much less supported by teachers. The proportion of such students is greater with each increasing grade
- There is a general decline in reported feelings of peer academic support as students move to higher grades.

Teacher Assessments of Themselves and the Thirteenth Avenue School

- The *Turnaround for Children* teacher survey provides a mixed picture of teachers at the *Thirteenth Avenue School*.
 - The majority of teachers are confident that they can positively influence their students and keep their classrooms under control.
 - However, a minority of teachers appear to be “burned out” or overwhelmed by teaching.

The Household Technological Environment

- The NFPN community survey shows most children (74%) have access to the internet at home
 - Half of children have broadband internet access
- Half of children have a computer on which they do their homework
- Fairmount children are reported to spend a great deal of time in “recreational screen time” (on the computer, watching television, or playing electronic games for reasons other than school work).
 - A third of children spent more than 3 hours per night in recreational screen time,
 - About a third of children spent 2-3 hours in recreational screen time,
 - A third of children spent 1-2 hours in recreational screen time per night

The Built Environment

- Housing Stock
 - Fairmount’s housing stock is primarily comprised of multiple family units
 - Housing is a mix of ages
 - A third of housing units were built before World War II.
 - A third of housing units were built from the 1940s through 1970s
 - Nearly a third of housing units were built during a mini housing boom between 2000 and 2008.
 - 30% of Fairmount housing units are vacant
 - For many Fairmount residents, vacant and abandoned properties are a major source of concern
- Transportation
 - Half of households own an automobile
 - Fairmount residents have good access to New Jersey Transit busses

The Social Environment

- Neighborhood Mobility/Turnover
 - The median length of residence in Fairmount is 10 years for those parents and guardians who participated in the NFPN community survey
 - A third of respondents reported living in Fairmount for more than 20 years
 - A quarter of respondents had lived in Fairmount for less than 5 years
 - Nearly half of survey respondents had lived in their home less than 5 years
 - These results indicate considerable mobility within the Fairmount neighborhood
- Student Mobility in the Newark Public Schools
 - In 2010-2011, student mobility rates in the *Martin Luther King, Jr.* and *Thirteenth Avenue Schools* (which are now merged) were 43%.
 - The student mobility rate at *West Side High School* was 26%.
- Renters and Homeowners
 - The American Community Survey showed 79% of housing units were renter occupied during 2008-2012.
 - The NFPN survey found 89% of respondents were renters.
- Work, Unemployment, and Income
 - Employment
 - The American Community Survey showed 22% of working age adults were unemployed.
 - The NFPN community survey found
 - 28% of female respondents were working
 - 37% of female respondents were looking for a job
 - 38% of male respondents were working
 - 42% of male respondents were looking for a job
 - 17% of men indicated that they could not work due to a disability
 - Incomes and Poverty Rates
 - The American Community Survey (2008-2012) shows the median annual household income in Fairmount census tracts ranged from \$23,600 through \$31,971 (lower than the Newark median income of \$34,387).
 - Nearly a third of households earned less than \$15,000 per year.
 - Nearly 2/3 of children lived below the federal poverty line.
- Crime and Concerns About Safety
 - Crime in Fairmount
 - Murder:
 - Murders are relatively common in Fairmount with 6 murders in 2012, and a average of about 4 murders for year since 2009.
 - The murder rate in 2012 was 95 per 100,000 (vs 34 per 100,000 for all of Newark, and 4 per 100,000 for New Jersey).
 - Murders generally occurred between 11 pm and 3 am
 - Aggravated assault:
 - In 2012, the aggravated assault rate was 827 per 100,000 (twice the Newark rate and nearly 6 times the New Jersey rate)
 - Robbery

- In 2012, the robbery rate was twice the Newark rate and nearly 12 times the New Jersey rate
 - Other crimes
 - Rates of burglary, theft, and automobile theft were higher than the Newark and New Jersey rates.
 - Concerns About Safety
 - Most respondents (54%) strongly agreed that public safety is an important problem in Fairmount.
 - Walking in the neighborhood
 - 81% felt that their child was safe when walking to and from school.
 - 74% of respondents report feeling safe when walking alone during the day.
 - 80% did not feel safe walking alone at night.
 - Focus groups show crime and safety are major concerns of Fairmount residents.
- Fairmount Relations with the Police
 - Fairmount residents have mixed opinions about the police
 - 44% of respondents felt that the police were responsive to community concerns, but 53% disagreed (with 25% strongly disagreeing).
 - Residents are not confident that “police are effective in solving community problems.”
 - Many residents would like to see a greater and more effective police presence, but also one that can establish good relations with the community.
 - Fewer than half of respondents reported that they were highly likely to report a crime, but two thirds reported that they were likely or very likely to report a crime.
- Relationships Among Neighbors
 - An overarching theme from the interviews and focus groups was a desire by many residents to regain the sense of community that once existed in Fairmount.
 - Most community survey respondents (76%) reported feelings of strong attachment to their neighborhood.
 - About 2/3 of respondents reported that neighbors are willing to help each other.
 - Yet, less than half of respondents (43%) reported that they can trust their neighbors.

Health and the Health Environment

- *Infant Mortality*: In 2000-2006, the infant mortality rate for the 07107 zip code, which includes the Fairmount area, was 12.8 deaths per 1000 live births, which is twice the U.S. infant mortality rate of 6.1 deaths per live birth.
- *Birth Outcomes (Preterm Delivery and Small for Gestational Age)*: In 1999-2003, rates of adverse birth outcomes were high among Newark’s black mothers: 18% for preterm delivery and 16% for small-for-gestational-age (SGA) deliveries. We expect the Fairmount rates to be at least this high. Because preterm and SGA deliveries are associated with school problems and behavioral and cognitive issues, interventions are

needed to prevent preterm and SGA deliveries and to mitigate their effects via early, targeted interventions.

- *Adolescent Sexual Behavior and Teenage Pregnancy*: Many Fairmount residents are concerned about high rates of teenage pregnancy and early initiation of sexual activities.
- *Prenatal Care*: Community survey respondents report that the great majority (80%) of mothers received prenatal care “throughout the entire pregnancy.” However, we regard the question that was used in the survey as inadequate to assess the extent and quality of prenatal care. Data for Greater Newark show just half of pregnant mothers receive “adequate” prenatal care (New Jersey Department of Health, 2013). Future research using birth certificate data for Fairmount would provide much better indication the extent of Fairmount prenatal care.
- *Children’s Access to Care*: NFPN community survey respondents reported that ¾ of children usually received care in a doctor’s office. Just 15% of respondents said that their child usually received care at the emergency room. Nearly ¾ of children were reported to have a health care professional who knew them well.
- *Alcohol and Drug Use*: Many Fairmount residents are concerned about drug sales in the neighborhood. The extent of drug and alcohol use among Fairmount teenagers is unclear.
- *Asthma*: Asthma appears to be an important problem in Fairmount, but we have no precise information on the prevalence or treatment of the chronic health problem.
- *Access to Healthful Food*:
 - Fairmount is not a “food desert”: a supermarket is located in one corner of the area, and all local bodegas have the ingredients to at least make a salad (lettuce, onions, and tomatoes). However, residents report that the quality of the produce at these markets is often poor.
 - Residents purchase food at broad range of venues. The *Pathmark* on Bergen Street, which is located within Fairmount, is the most frequent source of food for nearly half of residents. However, other residents purchase food from stores as far away as Kearny, South Orange, and Hillside.
 - The community survey suggests that many Fairmount residents make major food purchases just a few times per month.
 - Fairmount residents identify poor diets and a lack of good quality, affordable food as an important issue.
- *Children’s Physical Activity*
 - Fairmount has few parks and playgrounds. A single playground is located at the corner of 9th Street and 12th Avenue, and a tiny park is wedged between two major thoroughfares (Central Avenue and West Market Street). When children play outside, they generally do so in the front yard or on the sidewalks, and often in the street.
 - The *Boys and Girls Club of Newark* (161 Littleton Avenue) was once an important venue for children to safety play, but the facility was closed in 2008. A recurrent theme in all our work with the community was the desire to see the Boys and Girls club reopened.
 - Parents/guardians report that 2/3 of children are physically active for an hour or more per day
 - Parents/guardians also say that more than half of children are physically active for a least an hour on each day of the week.

Introduction to the Fairmount Neighborhood

Newark's Fairmount neighborhood is located a mile to the west of downtown's Military Park. The area is comprised of 43 blocks, and is a half a mile wide (10 blocks) from east to west, and six tenths of a mile (4 blocks) from north to south (see **Map 1**). The eastern boundary of Fairmount is Bergen Street, which is a major thoroughfare on which is located the *Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences* campus, a *Pathmark* supermarket, an *International House of Pancakes*, a *RiteAid*, and *Georgia King Village*, a large private apartment building that provides significant amounts of Section 8 housing to Fairmount residents. To the west, Fairmount is bounded by Fairmount cemetery and the *West Side High School* campus. Fairmount is bounded on the north by Central Avenue, which is characterized by many small businesses, including a *PNC Bank*, a gas station, a hair salon, and an auto repair shop. Also located on Central Avenue are the offices of the *Urban League of Essex County* (a NFPN partner), and the grounds of the former *Dr. Martin Luther King School* (now a charter school operated by *North Star Academy*). To the south is South Orange Avenue, which is a third major road that has several street corner churches, a mosque, and small businesses, including check cashing shops, fast food restaurants, and barber shops. Opposite the southwest corner of the Fairmount neighborhood is the campus of *West Side High School*, once the area's comprehensive public high school, and now the location of *Newark Early College* and *Newark Vocational High School*. In the center of the neighborhood is the *Thirteenth Avenue School*, the neighborhood K-8 public school. A block away is the *John F. Kennedy School*, a district wide K-8 school for special needs children.

NSRC conducted a systematic community inventory of Fairmount and assessed land usage (see **Map 2**). We found that the community is predominantly residential with commercial streets on the borders (as described above). The inventory showed that there were 24 religious institutions in 43 blocks, 1 supermarket, 1 university campus, 1 cemetery, 3 schools, 1 public park, and 1 playground.

Although we refer to Fairmount in this report as a "neighborhood," the residents of the area of have more complex conceptions of the area, and few conceive of the district as a geographically distinct neighborhood. This is reflected by the fact that half of residents in our community survey had no name for the area at all, while those names that the residents cited usually referred to a nearby major street or to *Georgia King Village* (the large apartment complex). However, two respondents to the neighborhood survey had a colorful name for the area: "Baghdad," which provides an indication of some resident perceptions about crime risk and safety in the area.

Map 1. The Newark Fairmont Promise Neighborhood



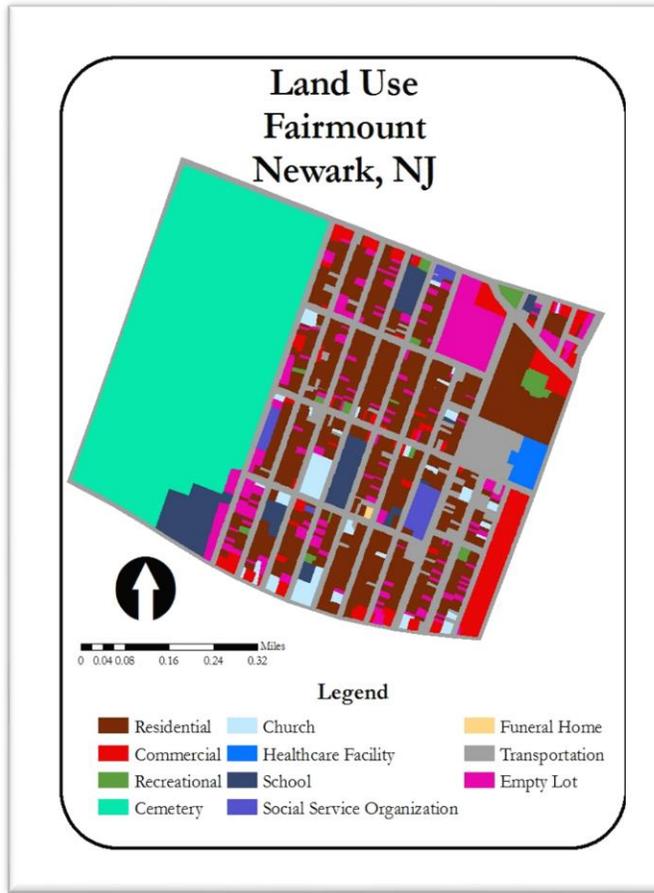
© OpenStreetMap contributors

According to the U.S. Census, the neighborhood’s population was just over six thousand persons (6,291 persons) in 2010 and these people resided in 2,289 households; half of households (49%) had children. The population was predominantly non-Hispanic black (78%) with a significant Hispanic population (18%); 2% of the population was non-Hispanic white.

Table 1 shows the numbers and percentages of children who were enumerated in Fairmount’s 43 blocks. The Census Bureau identified 2129 children under age 18. The percent of the population under age 5 was 9%, as was the percent of children aged 5 to 9, and 10 to 14; 15 through 17 year olds were 6% of children.

Figure 1 shows the distribution of ages in the 43 blocks. The figure shows approximately equal numbers of males and females up until the ages of 18 and 19, when a considerable number of males “disappear.” At these ages, the number of males was 38% lower than that of females: 53 males were “missing.” At all subsequent age groups, there were many fewer males than females. A portion of this difference may be due to men who were just missed by the census, another part were likely due to men in prison or jail, others who were in the armed services, and a fourth group were men who died (especially in the older ages). At the younger ages, the “missing” men are a dramatic symptom of the lack of economic opportunities in Fairmount for young adults—men and women.

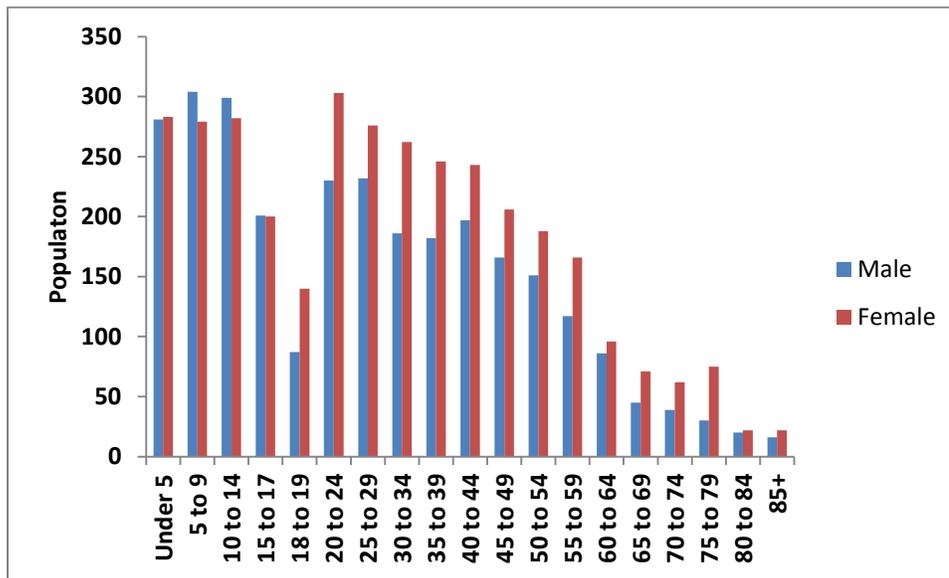
Map 2. Land use in the Fairmount



**Table 1. Numbers and percent of children in Fairmount by age group:
2010 U.S. Census**

All Children		N	%
			2129
	Under 5	564	9.0
	5 to 9	583	9.3
	10 to 14	581	9.2
	15 to 17	401	6.4

Figure 1. The population distribution of Fairmount: 2010 U.S. Census



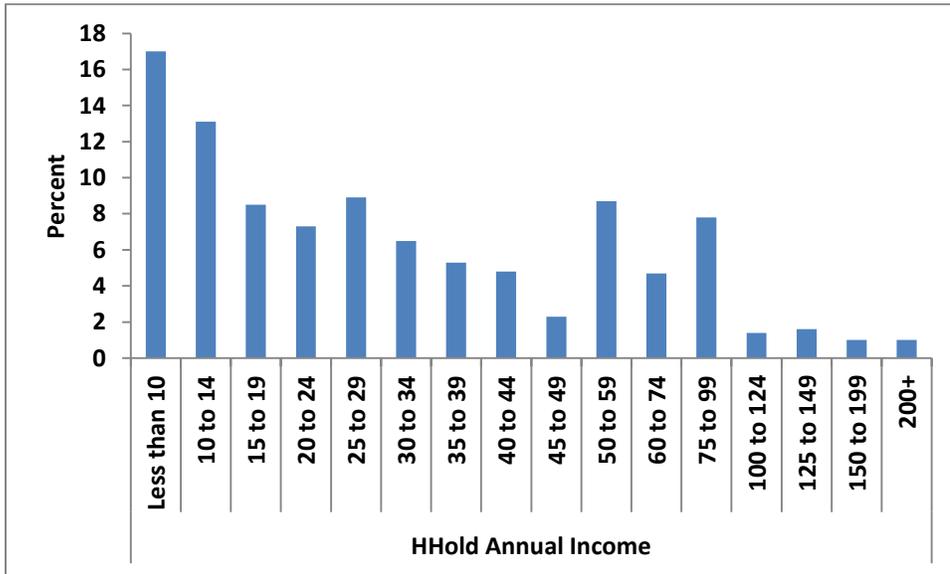
Many Fairmount residents are very poor. The U.S. Census American Community Survey (ACS) five year summary for 2008-2012 provides detailed information on Fairmount.¹ For those years, median household incomes ranged from \$23,600 to \$31,971 per year, depending on the census tract. **Figure 2** shows the distribution of household incomes. Nearly a third of households (30%) earned less than \$15,000 per year. At the other end of the distribution, 4% of households reported annual incomes in excess of \$100,000 per year. Twenty-one percent of households had incomes in the \$50,000 to \$99,999 range. **Figure 2** shows that although many households in Fairmount have very low incomes, there are some who are doing much better: the neighborhood is more economically diverse than some might imagine. Nevertheless, the great majority of households have incomes that fall far below the national median income of \$51,000 for 2012.

The ACS provides poverty data at the census tract level.² The percent of children living below the poverty line varied from 52% (in tract 17) to 74% (tract 14). Overall, 62% of children in the four census tracts lived in households with incomes below the federal poverty line.

¹ Five census block groups are in Fairmount: three fall completely within Fairmount (tract 13, block group 1; tract 14, block groups 1 and 2), while two overlap (tract 17, block group 2; tract 15, block group 1). For this report, we report values when necessary that include neighboring areas because these are very similar to the Fairmount area.

² Two census tracts (tract 15 and 17) overlap areas outside of Fairmount, while tracts 14 and 13 fall completely within the area.

**Figure 2. Distribution of Fairmount household incomes:
2009-2012 American Community Survey**



**Table 2. The percent of children in different household types:
2009-2012 American Community Survey**

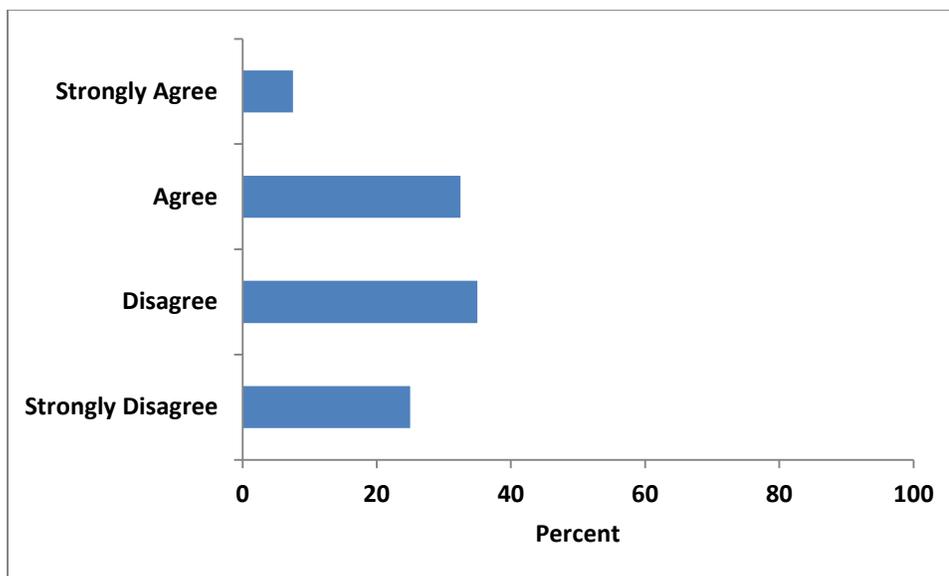
Tract	Total (N)	Married	Single		Other
			Mother	Father	
13	628	12.3	79.5	3.8	4.5
14	849	29.2	62.1	5.3	3.4
15	725	7.4	67.6	6.8	18.2
17	712	14.7	56.5	4.8	24.0
TOTAL	2,914	16.6	65.8	5.2	12.4

Fairmount children live in a range of household arrangements. **Table 2** shows the ACS number and percent of children living with married parents, in single parent households, and in “other” arrangements. Two out of three children (66%) lived in single, female-headed households. Another 17% lived with married parents, while 5% lived in single, male-headed households. An additional 12% lived in “other” households, which may include a blood relative such as a grandmother or aunt, or a non-relative such as a foster parent. **Table 2** shows the number of this “other” category varies by census tract, with tracts 15 and 17 having the largest percentage of this “other” category. Tracts 15 and 17 extend over the NFPN boundaries, so it may be, although not likely, that most of these “other” households existed outside of Fairmount.

In summary, the Fairmount neighborhood is 43 blocks with major commercial thoroughfares bounding the area on three sides. The six thousand or so Fairmount residents are mostly black (78%), but a significant Hispanic population also lives in the neighborhood. The Fairmount neighborhood has a very large poor population, although some economic diversity exists.

Nearly 2/3 of children live in households with incomes below the federal poverty level (\$23,050 for a family of four in 2012). And, nearly a third of households have incomes below \$15,000/year. Two out of every three children live in single, female-headed households.

Figure 3. Responses to statement, “Fairmount is a good place to raise children”



In the NFPN community survey, we asked residents to respond to the statement that “Fairmount is a good place to raise children,” 40% of respondents agreed (**Figure 3**). However, most (60%) disagreed with the statement, with 25% strongly disagreeing with the statement. These responses demonstrate a range of opinion concerning the suitability of Fairmount as a place to raise children. In the coming sections of this report, we describe in some detail the characteristics of Fairmount, which may provide some insight into whether Fairmount is indeed “a good place to raise children.”

The Fairmount School Landscape

Newark’s Schools

The City of Newark has a complex mix of traditional public schools, public charter schools, parochial schools, county schools and private schools. The Newark Public School system (NPS) is comprised of 71 schools with a total enrollment of 35,000 students in 2013-2014. Of these students, 51% were black, 40% were Hispanic, and 8% were white; small numbers of Asians, Native Americans and Pacific Islanders made up the remaining percentage. Special needs students comprised a little less than 10% of the district enrollment (NPS, 2013). A substantial

proportion (80%) of children in the district qualified for free lunch while 5% qualified for reduced price lunch.

Newark also has a significant charter school presence with 21 public charter schools, including PK-8 schools and high schools. In 2013-14, charter schools had a total student population of 10,600 students. Of those students who were enrolled in Newark charter schools, 81% were black, 16% were Hispanic, and 2% white. As with students in NPS, a large proportion of these students qualify for free school lunch (81%), and 12% qualify for reduced price lunch.

Educational Reform at the Newark Public Schools

Numerous academic reforms have transformed the Newark school landscape over the years; these have been of both internal and external origin. In 1990, as the result of the 1990 *Abbott v. Burke* decision on New Jersey school funding, NPS was designated an “Abbott District,” which mandated state financial support for the district to ensure a “thorough” education for Newark’s students. As a result, levels of funding for Newark’s public school students increased substantially. Five years later, in response to continuing chronically low student academic performance, the State of New Jersey took over control of the Newark Public Schools, which continues to this day.

In the decades since the state takeover, multiple and ongoing efforts have been made at educational reform. Certainly the most famous of these has been the \$100 million challenge grant from the founder of Facebook, Mark Zuckerberg, which led to new teacher contracts, the implementation of teacher merit pay, and an extended school day. Another important reform was the now defunct *Newark Global Village Zone*, which was a comprehensive system of academic and social supports for children in the Zone, including interventions much like those being implemented in many Promise Neighborhoods throughout the United States.

In 2011, Cami Anderson was hired as Superintendent of the Newark Public Schools by the State of New Jersey. Under her leadership, several major reforms have been implemented—not without controversy. Three of the most recent efforts (the closing of neighborhood schools, the creation of “Renew Schools,” and finally the *One Newark* initiative) have significantly affected students and families living in Fairmount, and will continue to do so in the future.

School Closings and Renew Schools

In the winter of 2012, Superintendent Anderson announced the closing of seven low performing K-8 schools, including the *Martin Luther King School*, which was one of Fairmount’s two neighborhood public schools. The next September (2013), students from MLK were moved into the *Thirteenth Avenue School*, which was specified as a “Renew School” by the district. A *Renew School*, by district definition, is a previously existing school that undergoes a process of “renewal” that requires teachers and staff to reapply for their school positions, the lengthening

of the school day (“expanded learning time”), the provision of additional professional development for teachers, and other academic supports.³

One Newark

One Newark is a community-wide agenda to ensure all students are in excellent schools and thriving communities and are on the path to excel in college and 21st century careers. Out of 100 schools in Newark, only about 20 are good. One Newark’s commitment is to ensure our children have 100 excellent schools. –*One Newark website*

According to the *One Newark* website, this suite of reforms is designed to ensure a quality education through a focus on Excellence, Equity and Efficiency (*One Newark* website, 2014).

One Newark Enrolls is at the core of *One Newark*. *One Newark Enrolls* is a single application process that covers most of Newark’s charter schools and all of NPS’s magnet and neighborhood schools. *One Newark Enrolls* was implemented this school year (2014-2015). Under the new system, parents who want their child to switch schools in the coming year must apply for admission to a different school by selecting and ranking up to eight different schools, including both charter and NPS schools. Students and schools are then matched. To deal with the increased need for transportation, NPS has created a system of 30 school busses and eight “transportation” hubs to move children throughout the city (NJ.com, 2014).

A second important component of *One Newark* is the provision of comparable information to parents on academic performance across schools. *One Newark* calls for a common evaluation system of both charter and district schools. The intent is to provide information that can be used by administrators for academic improvement and by Newark families to make informed decisions about where they want their children to attend school.

Table 3. Description of *One Newark* terms

Reform term	Description
<i>Renew Schools</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School remains open • Staff and administration must reapply • Extended school day • Increased professional development and community supports
<i>Redesign Schools</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff remains largely the same • Principal leads families and community in improvement process
<i>Re-siting</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moves schools to new sites to ensure adequate facilities
<i>Accelerate Progress</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools remain open • Continued work on improving student outcomes
<i>Charter Launches</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transforms district schools into charter schools

³ <http://www.nps.k12.nj.us/cms/lib7/NJ01001467/Centricity/Domain/1318/ONE-NEWARK-LETTER.pdf>

Repurposing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes use of buildings
One Newark Enrolls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families apply to up to 8 participating schools among district and charter schools • Students are matched with school

A third *One Newark* component is the closing of several neighborhood schools, and the launching of several new charter schools. Also, *One Newark* “re-sites” several schools, moving them from one location to another (**Table 3** provides a glossary of *One Newark* terms).

Lastly, *One Newark* has specific plans for the West Ward, within which Fairmount is located. *One Newark* proposes to “accelerate progress” at the *Thirteenth Avenue School*. And, *West Side High School* has been closed and its campus is now is the site of two high schools:

- *Newark Vocational High School* (grades 9-12), which is now relocated to the *West Side High School* campus, and
- *Newark Early College High School* (grades 7-12). West Side students who did not participate in *One Newark* were enrolled in *Newark Early College*. Middle school aged students from the former *Louise A. Spencer School*, a mile from the Fairmount neighborhood, were also enrolled in *Newark Early College*.

The *One Newark* plan continues to be strongly criticized by many in Newark, including a majority of the Newark Public Schools’ school board.

Where Did Fairmont Children Go to School During 2013-2014?

Why It Matters

The core goal of the Promise Neighborhood initiative is to improve the learning and academic performance of children who live in disadvantaged neighborhoods. To design appropriate policies and programs, accurate information is needed on Fairmount’s children and where they go to school.⁴

About the Data

The data presented in this section come from the NFPN community survey, which was administered to 81 Fairmount residents (for methods, see *Appendix A*). To participate in the survey, residents needed to be from a household that was selected by random sample, to respond to the request to participate in the survey, and to report being the parent or guardian of a child under age 18.⁵ In the survey, residents were asked to identify where each of up to nine of their children went to school. A special focus group on childcare centers was also convened that was comprised of four directors of Fairmount Neighborhood childcare centers.

⁴ *One Newark* has made substantial changes in the Fairmont “school landscape,” which will mean important adjustments in the mix of high schools attended by Fairmount students both in 2014-2014 and in future years. Therefore, the information presented here provides a snapshot of the past, and only provides hints about what school attendance will look like under the new system.

⁵ We did not ask whether children lived within the Fairmount neighborhood, so some unknown proportion of sample children may live with another caregiver and go to school outside of Fairmount.

The Ages of the Children

Eighty-one Fairmount residents took the community survey and they listed a total of 179 children under the age 18 (about 8% of all children in Fairmount). **Table 4** shows the breakdown of children by age category. More than a quarter of the children were of preschool age, and half of children were age 8 or younger. Just 1 in 5 children were of high school age.

Table 4. Distribution of ages of respondents' children

Ages (yrs)	School Level	N	%
0 to 2	Daycare	23	12.8
3 to 4	Preschool	28	15.6
5 to 10	Elementary school	69	38.5
11 to 13	Middle school	23	12.8
14 to 17	High School	36	20.1

Where Did Young Children Receive Daycare—if at all?

Fairmount has numerous childcare centers in the area, as well as in-home childcare options. *Programs for Parents* is the nonprofit organization that administers Essex County's *Childcare Resource & Referral Service* (CCR&R) and childcare payment subsidies for low-income families. In 2013, *Programs for Parents* provided financial assistance for the childcare of more than 20,000 Essex County children (Programs for Parents, 2013). While the exact number of Fairmount area parents utilizing childcare subsidies is unknown, the *Program for Parents* program is a popular program for many working parents.⁶ **Appendix C** provides a list of 27 Fairmount area childcare centers that serve over 2,000 children in total.⁷

Table 5 shows the sources of daycare for children under age 3 as identified by parents/guardians who participated in the community survey. The table shows nearly 2/3 of very young children (61%) were not in daycare. The most popular source of daycare was “8th Street Daycare” (which refers to *United Community Daycare*, located at 332 South 8th Street in Fairmount). Other sources identified were *Prep School of Babies and Children* in nearby Irvington, *Page Academy Daycare* and *New Hope Day Care*, both in Fairmount. Many parents expressed great concern about the safety and quality of daycare providers. One father stated that he pulled his child from daycare because the street on which it was located was unsafe.

Table 5. Sources of daycare among children under age 3

	N	%

⁶ In future surveys, a specific question should be asked about use of the *Program for Parents*.

⁷ A comprehensive list of in-home childcare providers was unavailable by *Programs for Parents* CCR&R protocol to protect the confidentiality of in-home providers.

Not in daycare	14	60.9
“8th Street Daycare”	3	13.0
Other daycare	6	26.1
TOTAL	23	100.0

Are Fairmount Children Enrolled in Free Preschool?

Table 6 shows sources of preschool for children aged 3 and 4. Because they are residents of an “Abbott District,” Newark children this age are entitled to free preschool. However, a quarter of Fairmount children this age were not enrolled in preschool or daycare. Another 30% of children this age appear to have been enrolled in private daycare, which very likely was funded by NPS (NPS contracts with numerous community-based preschool providers). Three children were in *Head Start*.⁸ Just five children (19%) were enrolled in NPS provided preschool classes.⁹ In summary, **Table 6** suggests that many Fairmount children who were eligible for free public preschool education were not taking advantage of this opportunity.

Table 6. Sources of preschool for children aged 3 to 4 years

Type / Preschool Status	School Name / School Status	N	%
Home	Not in preschool	7	25.9
NPS	Thirteenth Avenue School	2	7.4
	Kennedy School	2	7.4
	Marion P. Thomas	1	3.7
Newark Private Daycare	8 th Street Daycare	2	7.4
	Page Academy Daycare	2	7.4
	Unspecified Daycare	3	11.1
	Asian Jones Daycare	1	3.7
Non-Newark Public School	Outside Newark	1	3.7
Newark Charter School	University Heights Charter School	1	3.7
Head Start	<i>First Steps Preschool</i>	1	3.7
	<i>Newark Preschool Council</i>	1	3.7
	<i>Unidentified</i>	1	3.7
Newark Private Preschool	<i>Unspecified preschool</i>	1	3.7
Non-Newark Preschool		1	3.7
TOTAL		27	100.0

⁸ In future surveys, a specific question should be asked about *Head Start* enrollments.

⁹ Some of non-enrolled children may not have been age 3 by October 1, and, therefore, would not have been ineligible for NPS preschool.

The NFPN community survey asked parents or guardians of children under 5 about childcare that was provided by other people. Almost 2/3 of respondents (62%) indicated that someone other than themselves took care of their child at least 10 hours per week.

Needs of Child Care Centers

The benefits of preschool are only reaped if these programs are of high-quality (Heckman et al., 2010). The Fairmount childcare center directors suggest that there are multiple barriers to implementing a high-quality preschool program. In particular, childcare center directors felt the programs were underfunded and therefore lacked resources. The directors reported a need for additional training and professional development for childcare staff. While directors report low turnover rates and dedicated staff, they also identify a need for higher levels of professionalism. As one director described:

“I work with some young women who are learning social skills as well and I’d like them to be more trusting on a professional level. They react without processing; they get too comfortable with parents and children. They need to exercise more professionalism and teamwork.”

This sentiment was echoed by parents in our community focus groups, who reported difficulties in communicating with childcare staff, and the need for improved ‘soft skills’ by childcare staff.

Childcare directors also described a need for additional educational resources for parents. Childcare directors suggested a need for family workshops to reinforce classroom pedagogies, but also workshops on issues such as time management, financial literacy, and the provision of school choice assistance for children who are transitioning from preschool to kindergarten. Multiple directors reported that incentives such as complimentary food and prizes had been beneficial in recruiting parents to attend center-based workshops.

Lastly, all four directors reported that there were insufficient funds to provide high-quality playgrounds for children.

Where Are Fairmount’s School Children Enrolled?

Table 7 shows the K-8 schools that were attended by Fairmount children who were identified in the community survey. Half (50%) of Fairmount children attended the *Thirteenth Avenue School*, which is located in the heart of the Fairmount neighborhood; another 4% of children attended the *John F. Kennedy School*, which is also located within Fairmount, and is a district-wide school for special needs children. Significant numbers of children (11%) attended other NPS schools that were located just outside the bounds of the neighborhood (about a quarter of a mile): the *Camden Elementary School*, the *Sussex Avenue School*, and the *Newton Street School*. In total, 75 of 93 children (81%) attended NPS K-8 schools; and 15% of children attended a Newark charter school. Three children (3%) attended schools outside of Newark.

Table 7. K-8 schools attended by respondents' children

Type	School	N	%
NPS	Thirteenth Avenue School	47	50.5
	Camden Elementary	7	7.5
	Sussex Avenue School	7	7.5
	Kennedy School	4	4.3
	Newton Street School	4	4.3
	Alexander Annex	1	1.1
	Alexander Street School	1	1.1
	Eagle Academy	1	1.1
	Harriet Tubman School	1	1.1
	McKinley School	1	1.1
	Thurgood Marshall School	1	1.1
Charter	Marion P. Thomas Charter School	3	3.2
	Gray Charter School	2	2.2
	Northstar Academy	2	2.2
	RISE Academy	2	2.2
	Greater Newark Charter School	1	1.1
	University Heights Charter School	1	1.1
	Lady Liberty Academy	1	1.1
	Roseville Community Charter School	1	1.1
	Spark Academy	1	1.1
Non-Newark Public School	Roosevelt School (Kearny)	1	1.1
	Baldwin Street School	1	1.1
	NYC Public School	1	1.1
TOTAL		93	100.0

Table 8 shows the high schools that were attended by the survey children. A third of students (32%) attended *West Side High School*, the local high school that is located just opposite the Fairmount neighborhood's southwest corner; 1 student each attended *Malcolm X. Shabazz* and *Central High Schools*, other NPS comprehensive high schools. And, another 4 attended NPS specialty high schools (*Bard Early College High School*, *Fast Track Academy*, *Newark Leadership Academy*, and *Newark Vocational High School*). Four students (14%) attended NPS magnet high schools (*University* and *Arts High Schools*). In total, 3 out of 4 students attended an NPS high school.

Another quarter of students attended high schools other than those administered by NPS: 11% attended a Newark charter high school, 1 student (4%) attended *Saint Benedict's Preparatory School*, and 2 students (8%) attended high school outside of Newark.

Table 8. High schools that were attended by survey respondents' children

Type	School Name	N	%
NPS	West Side High School	9	32.0
	University High School	3	10.7
	Shabazz High School	2	7.1
	Arts High School	1	3.6
	Central High School	1	3.6
	Bard Early College High School	1	3.6
	Fast Track Success Academy	1	3.6
	Newark Leadership Academy	1	3.6
	Newark Vocational High School	1	3.6
	Newark Charter Schools	Newark Collegiate	1
Robert Treat Academy		1	3.6
Vision Academy		1	3.6
Newark Parochial School	Saint Benedicts Preparatory School	1	3.6
Non-Newark Public School	Caldwell High School	1	3.6
	Bloomfield High School	1	3.6
TOTAL		28	100.0

What It Means

The NFPN community survey shows relatively few parents and guardians (61%) make use of daycare for very young children. And, just 74% of Fairmount 3 and 4-year-olds attended the publically funded preschool that are mandated under the *Abbott vs. Burke* decisions. Most preschool is “outsourced” by NPS to approved preschool providers—unlike in some districts such as the *Elizabeth Public Schools*.

When done well, childcare centers prepare young children for academic success. Unfortunately, Fairmount parents and guardians have serious concerns about the safety and quality day care that is locally available, which may explain their lack of use some parents.

In 2014, the state of New Jersey implemented the *Grow NJ Kids* initiative, a new quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) for childcare centers, that is funded by a 4-year, \$44 million federal grant from the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge (Advocates for Children of New Jersey, 2014). While most of the initial participants are state-funded preschools and *Head Start* centers, all childcare programs are eligible for participation. The QRIS assists childcare directors in targeting improvements, and provides support for staff training and professional development as well as some grants for facility improvements (Advocates for Children of New

Jersey, 2014). *Grow NJ Kids* could be a valuable resource to childcare providers in the Fairmount Neighborhood. While the exact number of Fairmount Neighborhood childcare centers participating in *Grow NJ Kids* is currently unknown, steps need to be taken to encourage area childcare providers to participate.

Another important finding is that although most Fairmount school-aged children attended *West Side High School* and the *Thirteenth Avenue School*, a very large proportion of students attended other NPS schools. Relatively few attended Newark's charter schools. With the implementation of *One Newark Enrolls*, the number of children enrolled outside of the Fairmount neighborhood will very likely expand. In the coming years, NFPN will need to understand who stays at *West Side High School* and who leaves and why, and what the effect of *One Newark Enrolls* has on the academic experience at these two neighborhood schools. Organizing NFPN school-based interventions will be more complex because Fairmount children will be spread across the city's many schools. We suspect that this will be a bigger issue for middle and high school aged children.

The Schools in the Fairmount Area

Why It Matters

With the implementation of *One Newark Enrolls*, substantial changes will occur in the distribution of Fairmount students throughout the city and in the composition of *West Side High School* and the *Thirteenth Avenue School*. However, the data presented in this section provide a sense of the state of academic achievement among Fairmount's students.

About the Data

New Jersey requires nearly all high school juniors to take the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) to graduate from high school. Students who fail to score proficient or better on the initial HSPA examination may take the test in the fall and spring of their senior year to attempt to pass the exam. New Jersey also requires 3rd through 8th graders to take the New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJASK) in the spring of each year. The data presented in this section come from the New Jersey Department of Education (DOE) database as published on the DOE website.

Fairmount Area Schools

The four schools in the Fairmount neighborhood are *West Side High School*, *John F. Kennedy*, *Thirteenth Avenue*, and *North Star Academy Charter School*. *North Star* is located on the former campus of the *Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. School*, which closed its doors at the end of the 2011-2012 school year. MLK students were consolidated into the *Thirteenth Avenue School*. Other schools in the vicinity of Fairmount are the *Camden Elementary*, *Sussex Avenue*, *Newton Street*, and the *Marion P. Thomas Charter School*.

Table 9 provides the demographics for each of these eight schools. The table shows that with the exception of the *Sussex Avenue School*, these public schools were largely attended by black

students. **Table 9** also shows very high rates of economic disadvantage (free or reduced price school lunch). Rates of students with disabilities vary greatly among the schools.

Table 9. Selected characteristics of the eight Fairmont area schools

School	Enrollment	Grades	Black	Hispanic	White	Economically Disadvantaged	Students with Disability	Limited English Proficiency
<i>West Side High School</i>	810	9-12	94%	6%	0%	88%	28%	0%
<i>Thirteenth Avenue/Dr. MLK Renew School</i>	915	PK-8	83%	16%	NA	91%	26%	2%
<i>Camden Elementary School</i>	545	PK-8	80%	19%	1%	91%	42%	6%
<i>Newton Street School</i>	427	PK-8	83%	16%	0%	87%	18%	1%
<i>Sussex Avenue School</i>	462	PK-8	51%	48%	0%	89%	4%	13%
<i>North Star Academy Charter Schools*</i>	2,222	K-12	84%	8%	4%	83%	8%	0%
<i>Marion P. Thomas Charter School</i>	687	PK-8	96%	5%	NA	93%	8%	0%
<i>John F. Kennedy School</i>	161	Ungraded	67%	29%	3%	89%	100%	1%

*Data is for all North Star students: data not available for individual campuses

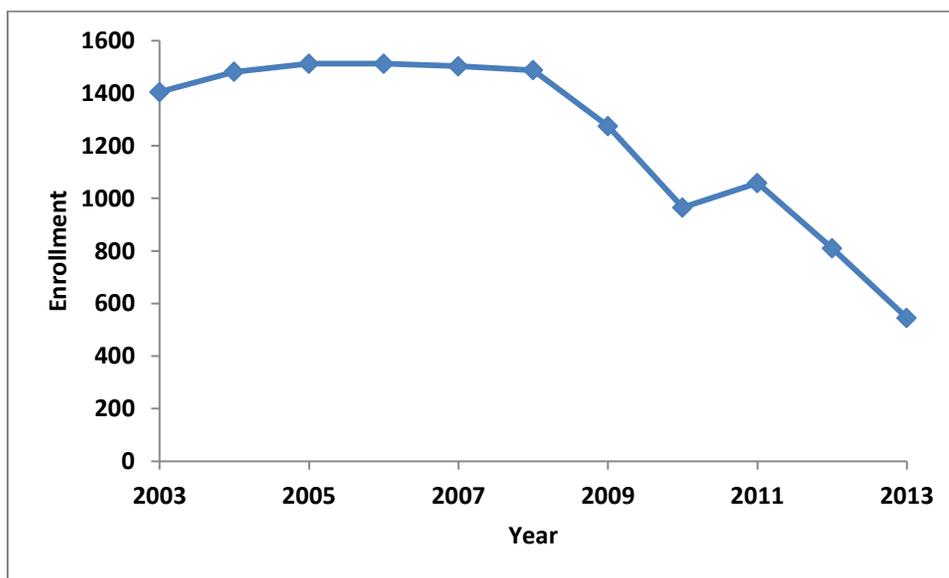
Source: NJ School Performance Report, 2012-2013, State of New Jersey.

Local NPS Schools

West Side High School

For decades, *West Side High School* was Fairmount’s local high school. Its campus is located on South Orange Avenue—just across 12th Street from the Fairmount neighborhood. In recent years, *West Side* enrollments have declined substantially, due in part to competition from charter schools and Newark’s magnet high schools (**Figure 4**). In 2012-13, the total student population was just 545 students. Although *West Side* has a growing Hispanic student population, the school was still more than 90% black in 2012-13, with the remainder being Hispanic students.

Figure 4. Enrollments at West Side High School, 2002-2003 through 2012-2013



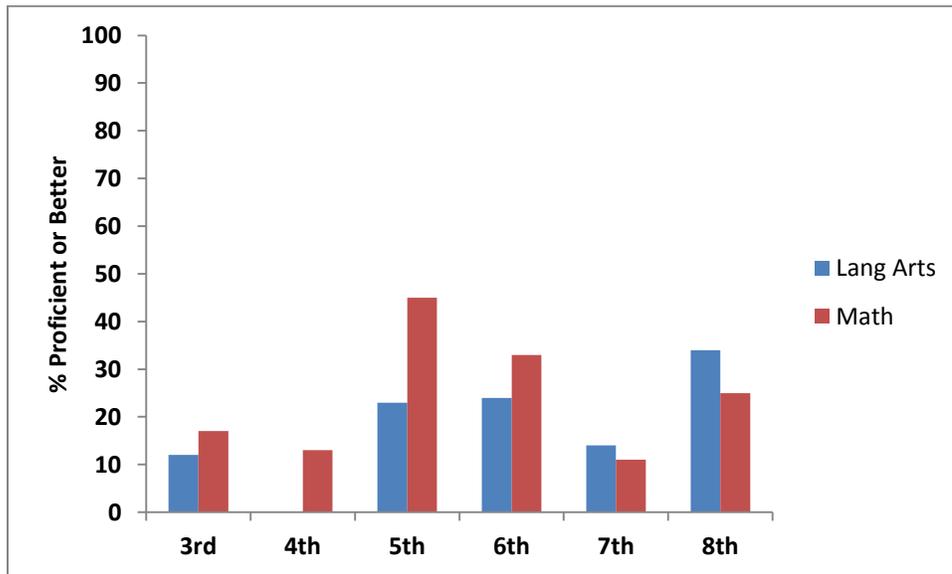
The New Jersey Department of Education reports that in 2012-2013, *West Side High School* outperformed just 4% of New Jersey schools in academic achievement. Seventy-one percent of its students were proficient or better on the language arts portion of the HSPA examination, and just 40% were proficient or better in math. Of 12th grade students in the 2012-2013 school year, 39% took the SAT exam, as compared to the statewide average of 75%. Of those taking the SAT, just 2% scored a 1550 or above, as compared to the state average of 43.9%. The adjusted cohort four year graduation rate for the school was 65% (as compared to 87% for the state).

West Side High School has been affected by the district's reform efforts in several ways. In 2013, it became a "Renew School," meaning it went through important changes, including extending the school day and requiring school leaders and staff to reapply for their jobs. In the 2014-2015 school year, it became a "re-site" school (a part of the *One Newark* plan). The campus is now home to the *Newark Early College* for grades 7 through 12 and an accompanying "acceleration academy," and *Newark Vocational High School*. Former *West Side* students were able to continue at *Newark Early College*, or to participate in the *One Newark Enrolls* universal enrollment plan. The *West Side High School* of the past is closed.

[Thirteenth Avenue/Dr. Martin Luther King School](#)

The *Thirteenth Avenue School* is Fairmount's neighborhood PK-8 school. In 2012-2013, the local *Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. School* was closed and its student body merged into the *Thirteenth Avenue School*. At that time, the *Thirteenth Avenue* became a Renew School, undergoing a number of significant changes, including a new principal, a new mix of faculty, and an extended learning day.

Figure 5. Language arts and mathematics performance at the Thirteenth Avenue/MLK School (2012-13): the percent proficient or better



New Jersey Department of Education data from the 2012-2013 shows the *Thirteenth Avenue School/MLK School* outperformed just 2% of K-8 schools statewide in academic achievement, and is in the category of New Jersey’s lowest performing schools. Just 18% of students achieved NJASK Language Arts Proficiency or better, and 15% met NJASK Math Proficiency or better (**Figure 5**). The *Thirteenth Avenue’s* NJASK proficiency rates are the lowest of NPS schools in the Fairmount area, and among the lowest in Newark.

[John F. Kennedy School](#)

The *John F. Kennedy School* is a district-wide, ungraded school with a focus on special education. The school operates with a specialized curriculum and draws its students from across the district. Because of this special focus and curriculum, students do not participate on the general statewide assessments. Instead, they participate in the Alternate Proficiency Assessment, a portfolio-based assessment that is created from student work throughout the year.

[Camden Street Elementary School](#)

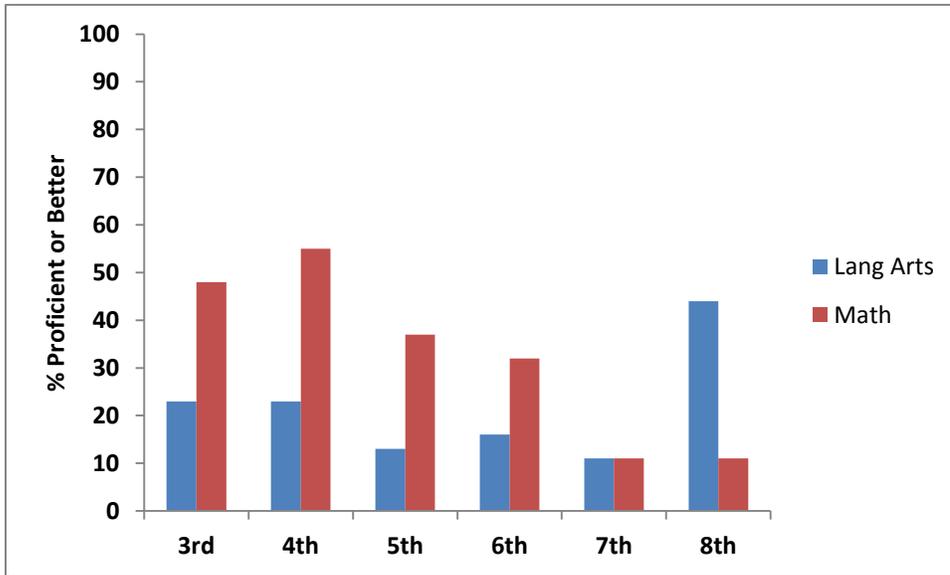
The *Camden Elementary School* is located just a quarter mile south of the Fairmount neighborhood and is a K-8 school. Nearly half of *Camden Elementary’s* students (42%) have disabilities. The *Camden Elementary School*,

is a unique school, made up of two components, 1) General Education, (Pre-Kindergarten – eighth) and 2) Special Needs, consisting of four classifications, (Learning Disabled, Inclusion, cognitive Mild, and Autism). There is no distinction between the two. The Administration, Staff and Parents believe All Children will Learn. Opportunities for integrating classified students into a least restrictive environment are accomplished

through inclusion and mainstreaming. – *Camden Street Elementary School Report Card Narrative*

New Jersey Department of Education data show 30% of *Camden Elementary* students were proficient or better in language arts and 31% in mathematics (**Figure 6**). *Camden Elementary* became a Renew School in 2012-2013.

Figure 6. Language arts and mathematics performance at the Camden Elementary School (2012-13): the percent proficient or better



[Sussex Avenue School](#)

The *Sussex Avenue School* is located just a quarter mile southeast of the Fairmount neighborhood and is a K-8 neighborhood school. At the end of the 2011-2012 school year, the *Burnet Street School* was closed and its students enrolled in the *Sussex Avenue School* to the 2012-13 school year. At the same time, the *Sussex Avenue School* was specified as a Renew School.

The *Sussex Avenue School* was once part of the *Newark Global Village Zone*, which was inaugurated in 2010 and closed in 2012. The goal of the *Newark Global Village Zone* was, like the Promise Neighborhood initiative, to improve the learning and academic performance of children through comprehensive and integrated interventions. Global Village Zone interventions included extended learning time.

Figure 7. Language arts and mathematics performance at the Sussex Avenue School (2012-13): the percent proficient or better

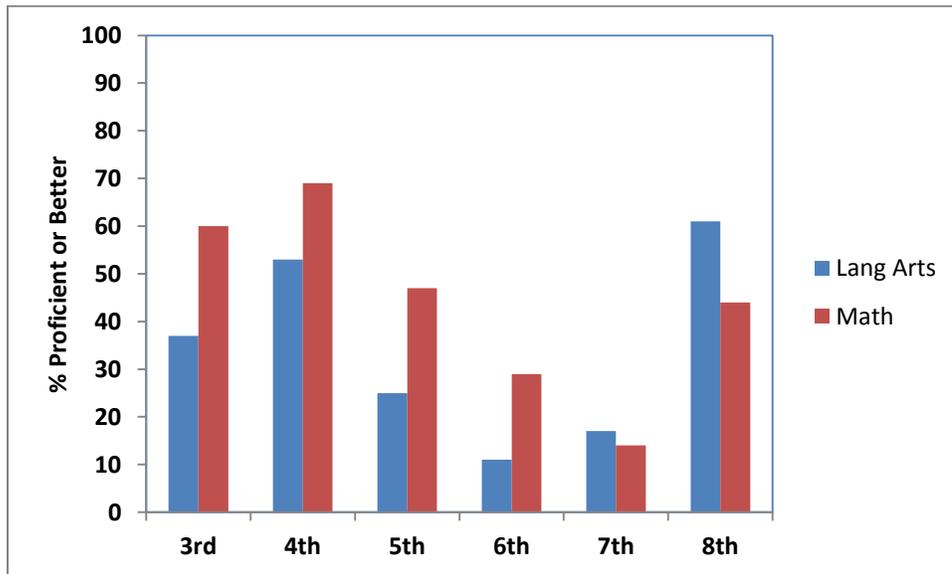
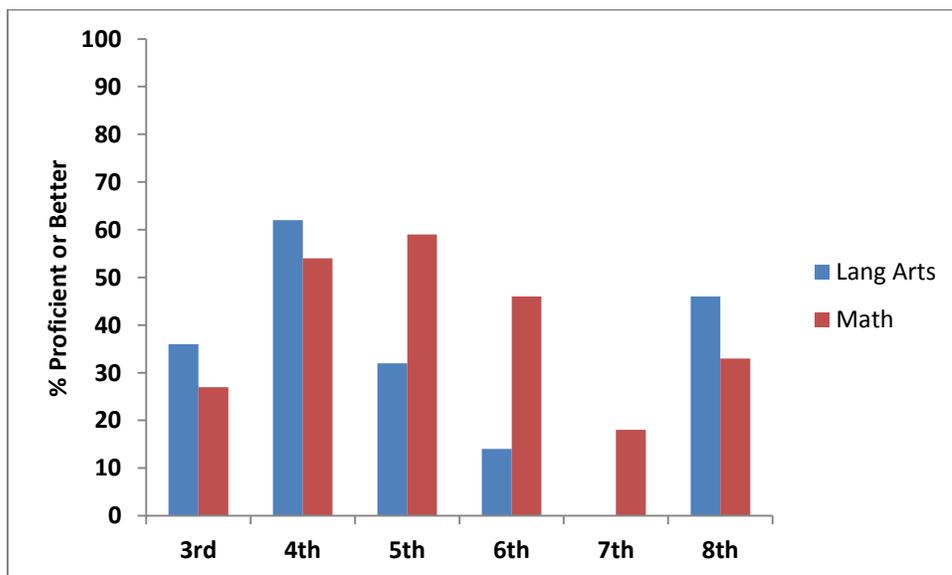


Figure 8. Language arts and mathematics performance at the Newton Street School (2012-13): the percent proficient or better



Unlike other schools in the Fairmount area, the *Sussex Avenue School* has a substantial Hispanic population (48%) with the remainder being black students. Thirteen percent of students have limited English proficiency. Like the other Fairmount area schools, levels of poverty are high with 89% meeting the definition of “economically disadvantaged” (free or reduced school lunch).

New Jersey Department of Education data for 2012-13 show just 25% of students were proficient or better in language arts, and 34% in mathematics (**Figure 7**). This result places the school in the bottom 6th percentile of New Jersey Schools.

[Newton Street School](#)

The *Newton Street School* is located a quarter mile north of the Fairmount neighborhood and is a K-8 neighborhood school. Like the *Thirteenth Avenue*, *Sussex Avenue*, and *Camden Elementary Schools*, the *Newton Street School* was designated a Renew School in 2012. The *Newton Street School* was also once part of the *Newark Global Village Zone*. The students of *Newton Street School* are predominantly black (83%). Data from the New Jersey Department of Education show just 19% of students were proficient in language arts on the NJASK, and 35% in mathematics in 2012-2013 (**Figure 8**). Data on 7th grade math scores were not available for 2012-2013.

[Local Charter Schools](#)

[North Star Academy Charter Schools](#)

North Star Charter Academy has the largest charter school enrollment in Newark (2,685 in 2012-13). In the 2013-2014 school year, *North Star* had three separate schools that were housed in the former *Dr. Martin Luther King* public school building, which is located in the north of the Fairmount neighborhood. One of these is *Fairmount Elementary School*, while the others are temporarily using the facility.

New Jersey Department of Education achievement data for *North Star Academy Charter Schools* is not broken out by individual school, but instead is given for *North Star* as a whole. **Figure 9** shows *North Star's* 3rd through 8th grade 2012-2013 students did very well on the NJASK examinations with the exception of 5th grade language arts. Depending on the grade level, proficiency rates varied from 69% to 100%.

North Star is participating in *One Newark Enrolls*, the universal enrollment program for the city, and it is available as an option for families that are participating in this program. *One Newark Enrolls*, which employs a lottery based matching approach, gives no neighborhood preference for schools, although siblings are given preference when being matched.

Figure 9. Language arts and mathematics performance at North Star Academies (2012-13): the percent proficient or better

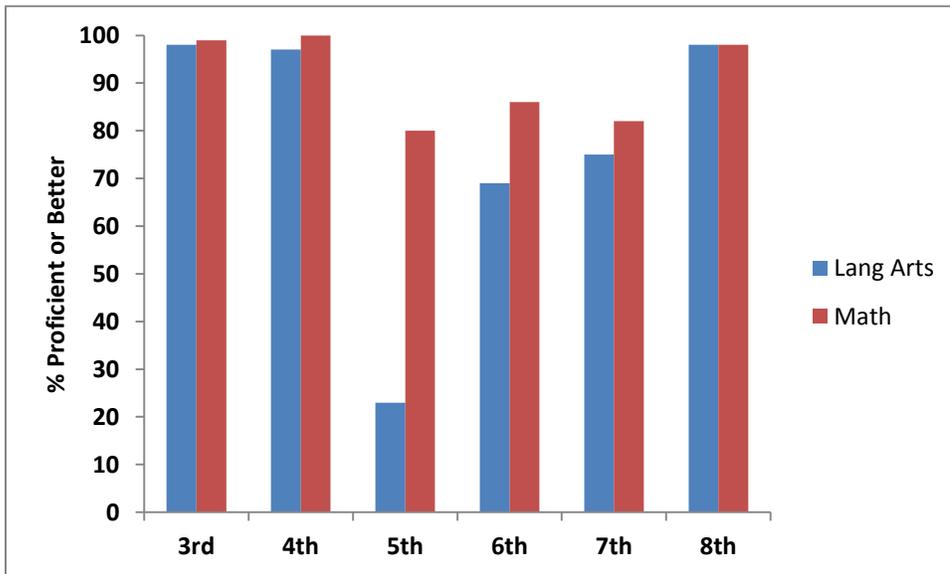
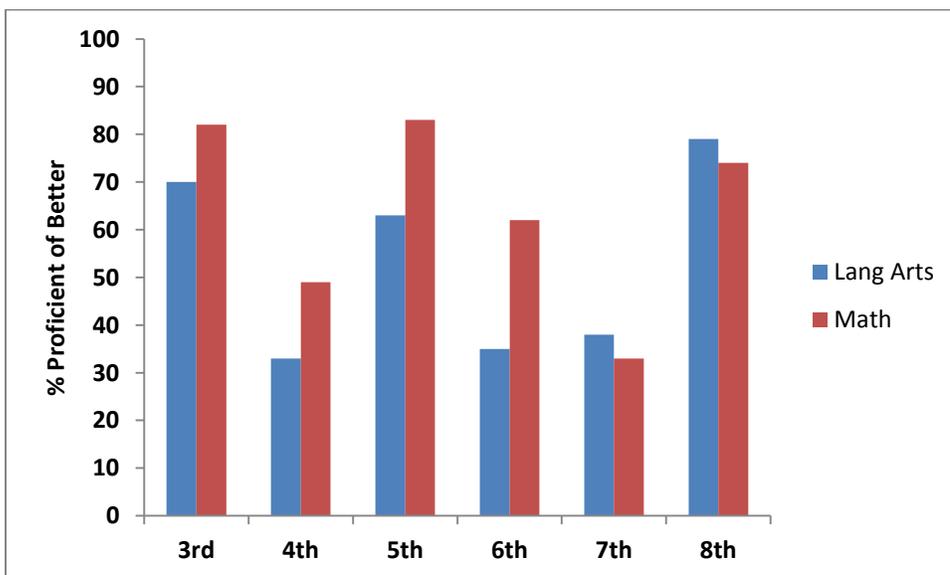


Figure 10. Language arts and mathematics performance at the Marion P. Thomas Charter School (2012-13): the percent proficient or better



Marion P. Thomas Charter School

Marion P. Thomas was recently approved for consolidation with *Visions Academy Charter High School*, creating a pre-kindergarten through 12th grade school. In addition, the school also participated in the *One Newark* universal enrollment plan.

The data from the 2012-2013 NJ School Performance Report show *Marion P. Thomas* outperforms 32% of schools statewide in academic achievement. About half (52%) of students were proficient or better in language arts as assessed by NJASK, and 69% scored proficient or better in mathematics (**Figure 10**).

What it Means

The academic performance of schools that Fairmont students attend varies greatly from NPS schools, such as *Thirteenth Avenue*, where fewer than 1 in 5 students are proficient or better in language arts and mathematics to *North Star Academy*, a public charter school where the great majority of students score proficient or better. We caution that these aggregate NJASK scores provide little direct evidence of the quality of education at these schools because students at the different schools will vary in many different ways, including parental educational aspirations, exposure to severe poverty, student mobility, etc. However, these data do show that the great majority of Fairmount children are performing well below state standards in language arts and mathematics; and substantial, sustained and effective interventions are needed to ensure that Fairmount children perform well academically and have a future in a high skill, 21st Century economy.

Student Mobility at Fairmount Area Schools

Why It Matters

For students, high mobility can be an important issue. When students move from one school to another, they must not only make social adjustments, getting to know new teachers and fellow students, but they must also make academic adjustments since the material being taught may not perfectly match what was being taught elsewhere. Additionally, high student mobility creates problems for school teachers and administrators when trying to establish and maintain a school culture, and to sustain and extend academic interventions.

About the Data

Information on student mobility comes from the New Jersey Department of Education website.

Table 10. Student mobility at Fairmont area schools

School Name	%
West Side High School	25.9
Thirteenth Avenue School	43.3
MLK School	35.7
Camden Elementary School	36.8
Sussex Avenue School	35.0
Kennedy School	25.8
Newton Street School	33.9

Student Mobility in Fairmount Area NPS Schools

Rates of student mobility in the Fairmount area NPS schools are very high. **Table 10** presents student mobility figures for 2010-2011, the most recent year for which we have data. The reader will note that students from the *Martin Luther King, Jr.* and the *Thirteenth Avenue Schools* are now combined on the *Thirteenth Avenue* campus. The mobility rates were very high for both MLK (43%) and *Thirteenth Avenue* (43%). The mobility rate for West Side High School was much lower, but still a high 26%.

What It Means

High residential mobility is also factor that adversely affects teaching and learning. Frequent moves can lead to disjointed educational experiences on the part of the student, and teachers must spend time integrating new students into their classroom, including assessing their academic condition, and in many cases helping students to catch up. Additionally, high student mobility can adversely influence school-based reforms because the interventions are “diluted” as students move into and out of schools. It is difficult to see how to enact significant changes in school “culture” when a large proportion of students enter and exist during the school year.

Chronic Absenteeism at Fairmount Area Schools

Why It Matters

One of the strongest predictors of students’ academic progress is quite simply the amount of time that they spend in the classroom. Absenteeism is associated with poorer academic performance, greater risk of falling behind in school, and reduced likelihood of graduating from high school (Balfanz and Byrnes, 2012). In short: showing up at school matters.

About the data

In 2013, the State of New Jersey Department of Education reported on chronic absenteeism, which the State defines as greater than 18 days absent in a school year (more than 10% of school days). These data are available from the Department of Education website.

Absenteeism at Fairmount NPS Schools

Table 11 shows rates of chronic absenteeism at Fairmount area schools. Almost a third of students at the *Thirteenth Avenue School* were chronically absent. The other NPS K-8 schools that are frequently attended by Fairmount children had lower chronic absenteeism rates in the low 20s.

Table 11. Chronic absenteeism among Fairmont area NPS K-8 schools

School Name	%
Thirteenth Avenue School	32.1
Camden Elementary School	22.6
Sussex Avenue School	21.7
Kennedy School	NA
Newton Street School	24.7

What It Means

Rates of chronic absenteeism in Fairmount area NPS schools are very high. A major predictor of academic success is simply showing up. School absenteeism can be due to a broad range of causes (Kearney, 2008). Research is needed to understand the causes of high absenteeism at Fairmount area schools, and programs are needed to greatly reduce student absences.

Going on to College from West Side High School

Why It Matters

For an increasing number of high school graduates, attending college and completing a post-secondary degree is required for future career success. About two-thirds of jobs require some type of post-secondary training, certificate, or degree (Kanter et al., 2011). In fact, 15 of the 30 fastest growing jobs in the United States require students to obtain at least a Bachelor's degree (Kanter et al., 2011). A clear and consistent relationship exists between educational attainment and income rates (NCES, 2013). Research demonstrates that greater educational attainment correlates with lower unemployment rates and higher income. In 2013, individuals who lacked a high school diploma had an 11.0% unemployment rate and a median weekly income of \$472, while those with a high school degree but no college had a 7.5% unemployment rate and a median weekly income of \$651 per week (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014). Among those who attended college, those who had some college but no degree had an unemployment rate of 7.0% and a median income of \$727 per week, those with an associate degree had a 5.4% unemployment rate and a median weekly income of \$777, and those with a bachelor's degree had an unemployment rate of 4.0% and a median weekly income of \$1,108 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013).

About the Data

In the spring of 2012, a list of NPS graduates from 2004 through 2011 was submitted by the Newark Public Schools to the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC). The NSC then matched these individuals with students who had enrolled at institutions of higher education throughout the U.S. for the period June 2004 through April 2012. The NSC collects basic enrollment and degree information on students who attend participating United States post-secondary institutions (NSC website, 2014). NPS graciously provided these data to NSRC for an examination of college going by NPS high school graduates, which resulted in a comprehensive report (Backstrand et al, 2014). The results presented here focus on *West Side High School*. NSRC does not have information on college going among Newark's charter high school graduates.

Going to College at West Side

Figure 11 shows the percent of *West Side High School* graduates who enrolled in college, and compares this with the percent who graduated from NPS's other comprehensive high schools and its magnet high schools. The magnet high schools have academic criteria for admissions, and not surprisingly have higher rates of enrollment in college. **Figure 11** suggests a decline in rates of college going over the years. However, this apparent drop is an artifact of Newark

students' often taking some years off before they enroll in college. NSRC analyses suggest that recent NPS graduates are enrolling in college at essentially the same rates as before—and perhaps are even attending college at higher rates than in the past (Backstrand et al, 2014). Overall, the data suggest that about half of *West Side* graduates go to college and this rate is more or less the same as seen at other Newark comprehensive high schools.

Figure 11. The percent of West Side High School and other NPS graduates who enrolled in college

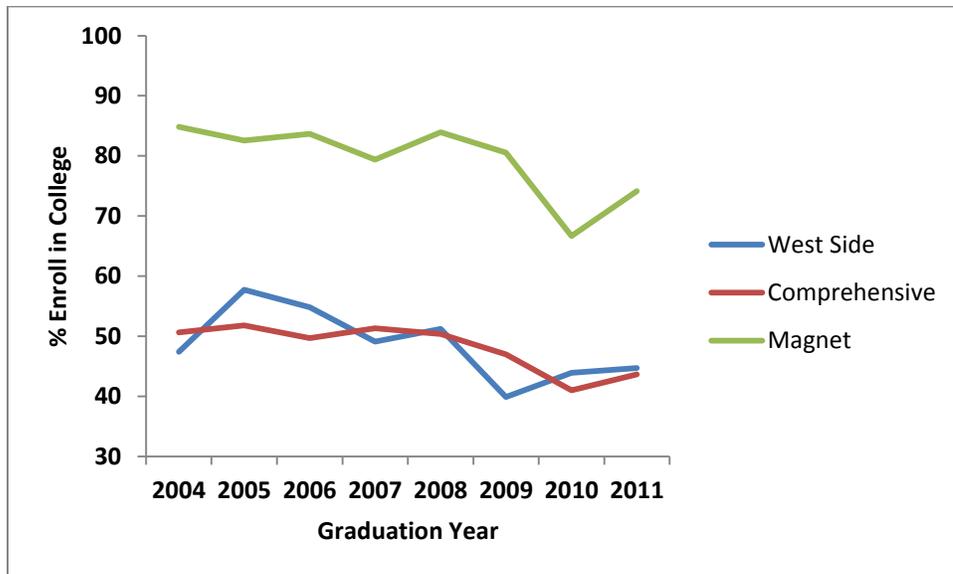


Figure 12. The percent of West Side High School and other NPS graduates who enrolled in college: 2-yr and 4-yr Colleges

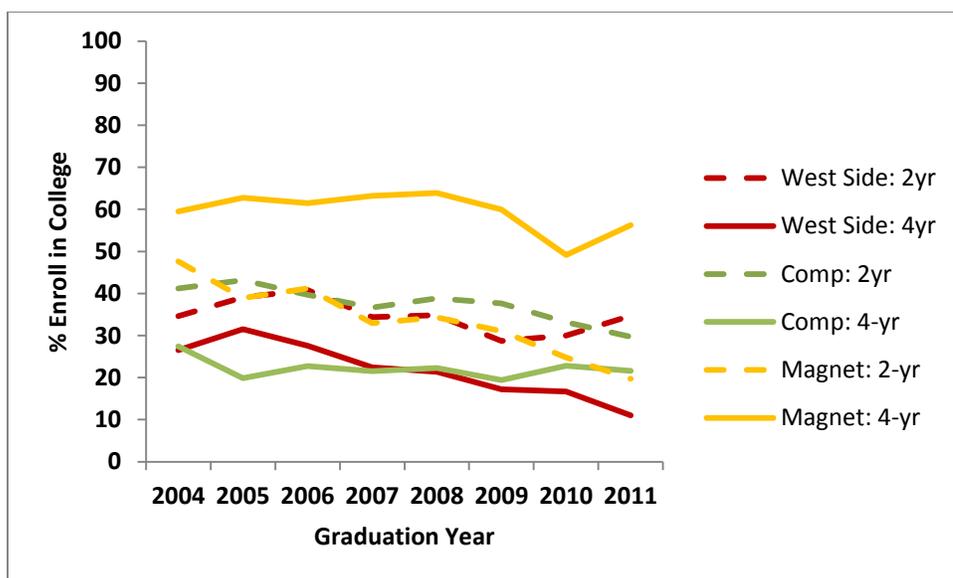
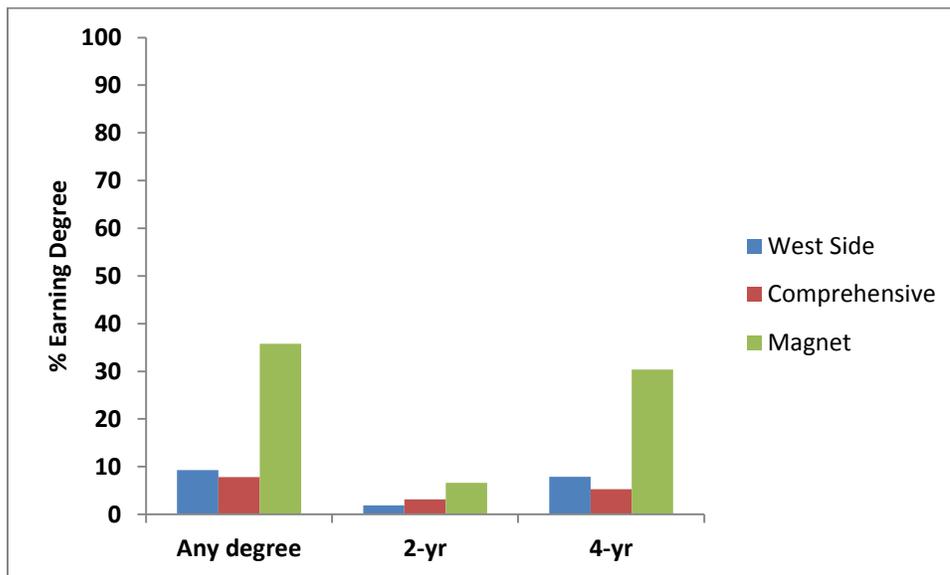


Figure 12 provides additional detail, showing rates at which *West Side* graduates attend 2-yr vs. 4-yr colleges. Rates of attending a 4-year college are far lower at *West Side* and the other comprehensive high schools than at the NPS magnet high schools. Over time, about a third of *West Side High School* graduates attend a 4-year college, while around 40% will attend a 2-year institution. *West Side High School* graduates attend 2-yr and 4-yr colleges in much the same way as graduates of other NPS comprehensive high schools.

Although a sizeable number of *West Side High School* graduates go to college, relatively few earn a college degree. **Figure 13** shows the percent of 2004 and 2005 high school graduates who earned a college degree. Although these students are “ancient history,” having graduated nearly 10 years ago, the figure provides the best indication of the percentage of recent *West Side High School* graduates who will earn a college degree. This is because it takes some *West Side* graduates, and other NPS graduates, a few years to enroll in college, and students often take 5 or more years to earn a college degree—even when attending a 2-year college (Backstrand et al, 2014). **Figure 13** shows *West Side’s* 2004 and 2005 graduation classes were somewhat better at earning college degrees than students from other NPS comprehensive high schools. Nevertheless, relatively few *West Side* graduates earn college degrees: less than 10% of graduates. And, very few graduates earned a 2-year degree: *West Side* graduates were 4 times as likely to earn a 4-year degree as to earn a 2-year degree. Our research suggests that students who enroll in community college are very unlikely to earn a 2-year degree, and these institutions are the ones that the weakest students attend.

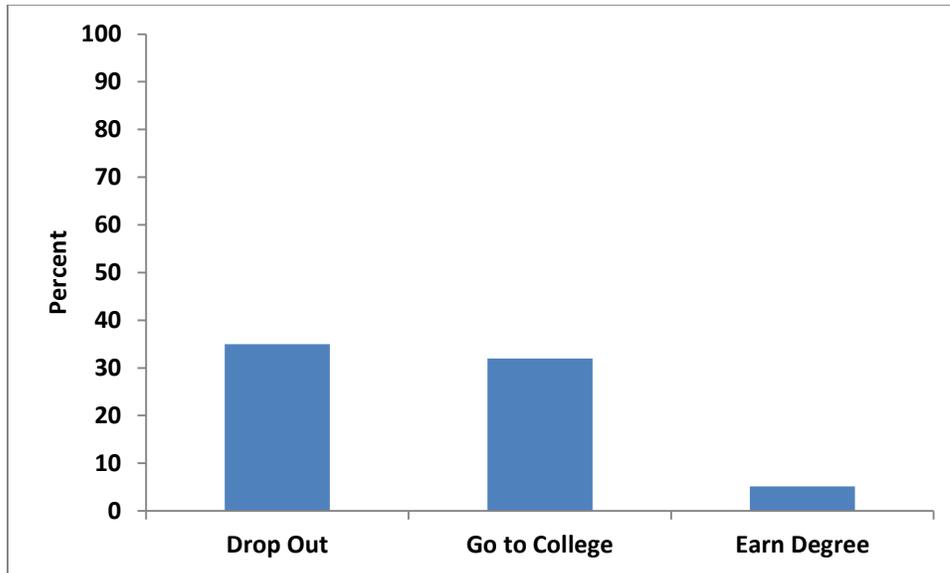
Figure 13. The percent of West Side High School and NPS graduates who earned a college degree: 2004 and 2005 graduation cohorts



Figures 11 through 13 show what happens to *West Side High School* graduates. However, only 65 percent of *West Side* 2008 9th graders graduated within 5 years. To gain a better perspective of education “success” at *West Side High School*, **Figure 14** presents going to college and

earning a degree as a percentage of entering 9th grade students. The figure shows 35% of 9th graders “drop out” (do not earn a high school degree within 5 years), another 32% enroll in college, and just 5% earn a college degree.

Figure 14. Academic outcomes of West Side High School 9th grade students



What It Means

In today’s high skill economy, a college degree is almost a requirement for economic success. However, children who attend *West Side High School* are very unlikely to earn a college degree—even when they attend college. This problem is not *West Side High School’s* alone: *West Side* is no worse or better than other NPS comprehensive high schools, or than comprehensive high schools in comparable cities. However, half of *West Side* students do attend college and the evidence suggests that even some college is economically beneficial. Nevertheless, interventions are needed to increase the rates at which NPS graduates go to college, and to ensure a college degree once they are in college. Also, pathways to well-paying jobs with futures in the evolving global economy need to be created because many students will not go onto college, and even those students who will attend college are unlikely to earn a degree.

Today, it is fashionable for high schools to emphasize a “college for all” philosophy. In particular, high schools often emphasize a “college orientation,” ensuring that students and their parents understand what is required to enroll in college, etc. However, students must also have the academic tools to be successful in college. NSRC research shows the strongest predictors of attending college and earning a degree among NPS graduates are HSPA language arts and mathematics scores (Backstrand et al, 2014). In other words, NPS graduates perform well in college if they do well on the HSPA examination. Performing well on the HSPA

examination is dependent on a strong academic foundation that is created early in school and sustained in the following years.

The data from the *Thirteenth Avenue School* and other NPS neighborhood schools show that most 3rd grade students do not have a strong academic foundation. Just 12% of *Thirteenth Avenue School* 3rd grade students achieved NJASK Language Arts Proficiency or better, and just 17% met NJASK Math Proficiency or above. Although middle school children do somewhat better on the NJASK, these students as a group are far behind other New Jersey students. Success in earning a college degree is predicated on strong academic skills, which the great majority of Fairmount children are not acquiring.

Parental/Guardian Views on Education

Why It Matters

Parental attitudes and behaviors are important determinants of educational outcomes (Steinberg, 2001). Parents who are generally supportive of their children and maintain positive relationships with them tend to have children who perform better academically (Murray, 2009). Parental aspirations for education are another aspect of parental support that is associated with greater academic achievement (Gordon and Cui, 2012). Parental active involvement in school-specific activities, such as homework, is also predictive of higher academic performance.

About the Data

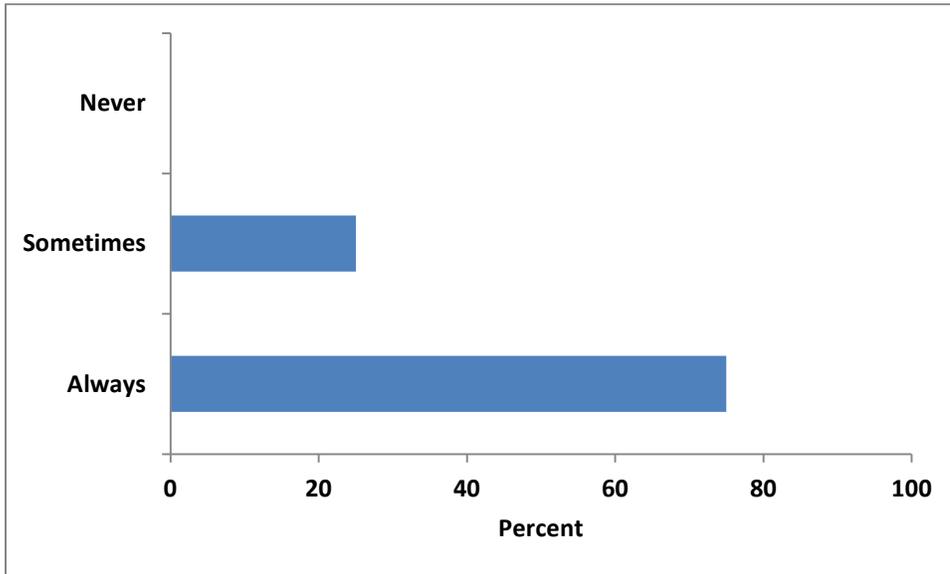
Data presented in this section were collected via the NFPN community survey. The questions are focused on specific ages of children. We also conducted focus groups with parents and guardians that touched on parental views on education.

Fairmount Parents/Guardians and Education

Parent/Guardian Involvement with the Child's Education at Home

In the NFPN community survey, parents and guardians were asked several questions to assess their verbal interactions with children under age 5. Parents or guardians were asked whether they talked to their child while doing housework (**Figure 15**). Of those with children under age 5, 75% said they always talked to the child during housework, while 25% said they sometimes talked. No one reported that they did not talk to the child during housework.

Figure 15. Percent of parents or guardians who speak to child during housework (respondent has child under age 6)(N=24)



The respondents were also asked about how frequently in a typical week that they sang songs or told stories to children under 5 years of age (**Figure 16**). Nearly three quarters of respondents (71%) reported that they sang or told stories to their child every day. When asked about reading books to their child, 71% said they read every day, and just one person (4%) reported not reading books during the week.

Figure 16. Frequency per week at which parent or guardian reads books, tells stories, or sing songs to their child.

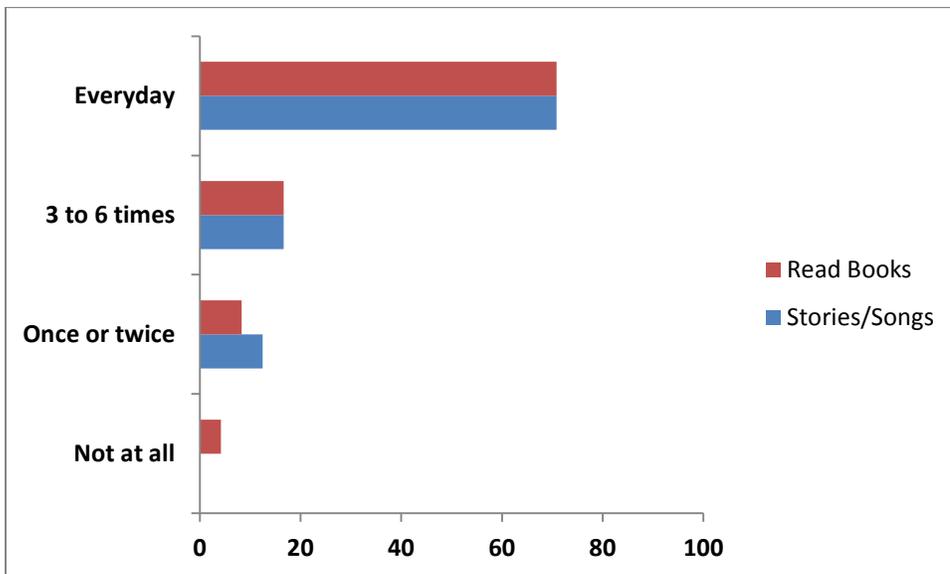
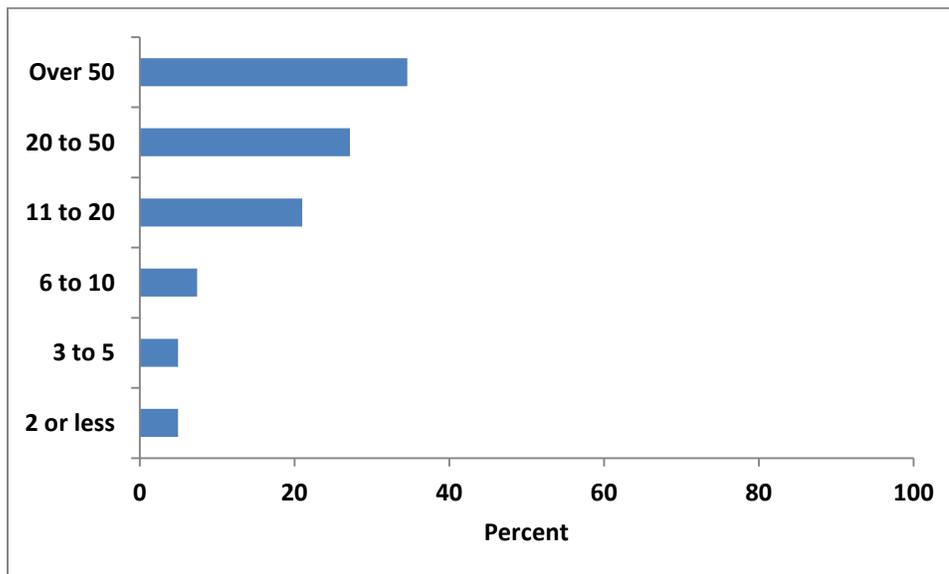


Figure 17. “About how many children's/young adult books do you have in your home now including library books?”



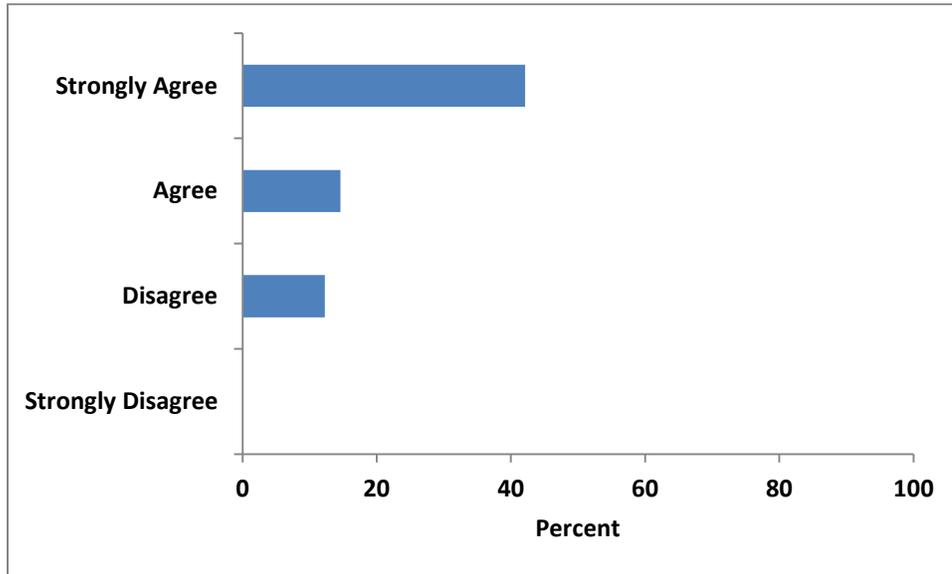
Parents and guardians were also asked “about how many children's/young adult books do you have in your home now including library books?” (Figure 17). Most respondents reported a significant number of books in the house. A third of respondents (35%) reported over 50 books at home, another 27% reported 20 to 50 books, and 21% reported 11 to 20 books.

Parental/Guardian Views on their Child’s School

The NFPN community survey asked several questions about children in kindergarten through age 18. When asked to respond to the question “My child's school is a good school,” 42% strongly agreed and another 46% agreed (Figure 18). Only 12% disagreed, and none strongly disagreed. For the subset of 21 respondents with a child in the *Thirteenth Avenue School*, the responses were essentially the same with 86% of respondents either agreeing or strongly agreeing that their child’s school is a good school.¹⁰ These results show parents and guardians generally approve of their children’s school, despite low student scores on standardized tests. This may explain the great unhappiness that occurs when local schools are closed or “renewed.”

¹⁰ In future surveys, it would be useful to collect ratings of the specific schools that are attended by the respondent’s children.

Figure 18. Parent/guardian response to the statement “my child’s school is a good school.”



Parents/guardians were also asked about how their child’s school compared to others in Newark, in New Jersey, and in the United States (**Figure 19**). Very few respondents (3%) indicated that their school was any worse than others in Newark. Many respondents felt that their child’s school was better: 18% thought that their school was *much better* and 33% said it was *better*. In other words, half of parents/guardians felt that their school was better than the norm in Newark. When New Jersey was used as the reference, more than half of parents/guardians (63%) indicated that their child’s school was equal or better to the New Jersey norm; most of the others checked *don’t know*. Using the United States as the reference, a large proportion of respondents indicated that they did not know (35%). However, most of the remaining respondents (89%) felt that their school was *about the same* or *better*.

Figure 19. Perceptions of how child’s school compares with others in Newark, New Jersey, and the United States (N=57).

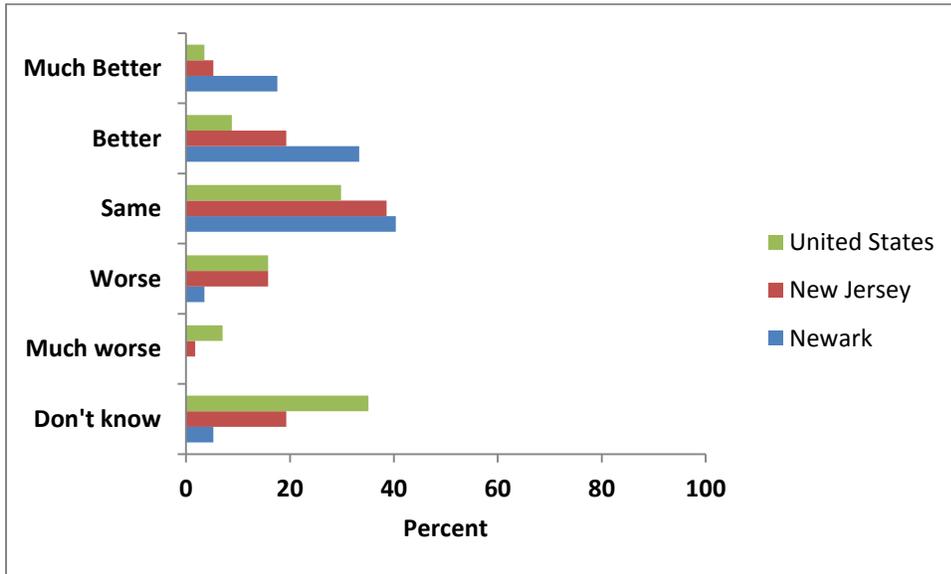
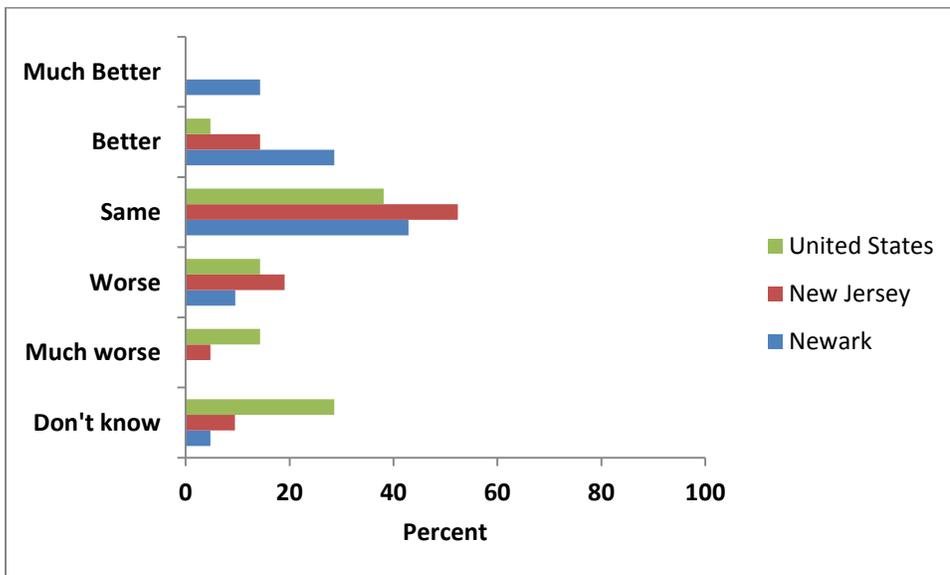


Figure 20 presents parent/guardian responses to the same questions for those with a child at the *Thirteenth Avenue School*. Again, the results show most respondents felt that their child’s school was the same or better than others in Newark and in New Jersey.

Figure 20. Perceptions of how child’s school compares with others in Newark, New Jersey, and the United States. Parents with a child at the Thirteenth Avenue School (N=21).



On the community survey, parents and guardians with school-aged children were asked to respond to the statement, “I feel welcome at my child’s school.” Nearly all (98%) *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that they felt welcome. A single respondent indicated *don’t know*. Nearly half (47%) *strongly agreed* that they felt welcome. Respondents with a child at the *Thirteenth Avenue School* provided essentially the same picture: they feel welcome at the school.

Parental/Guardian School Engagement

Parents and guardians were asked a number of questions about involvement with their children’s schools. **Figure 21** shows the responses to the questions, “In the last year, how often did you attend a parent/teacher conference?”, “In the last year, how often did you attend Parent Teacher Association meetings?”, “In the last year, how often did you attend school performances or events?” The figure shows parents and guardians were most likely to attend school performances and other events (nearly 60% on every occasion). Respondents were less likely to attend PTO/PTA meetings. Nearly half of respondents reported attending parent/teacher conferences on every occasion.

Figure 21. Parent or guardian attendance at school events (N=57)

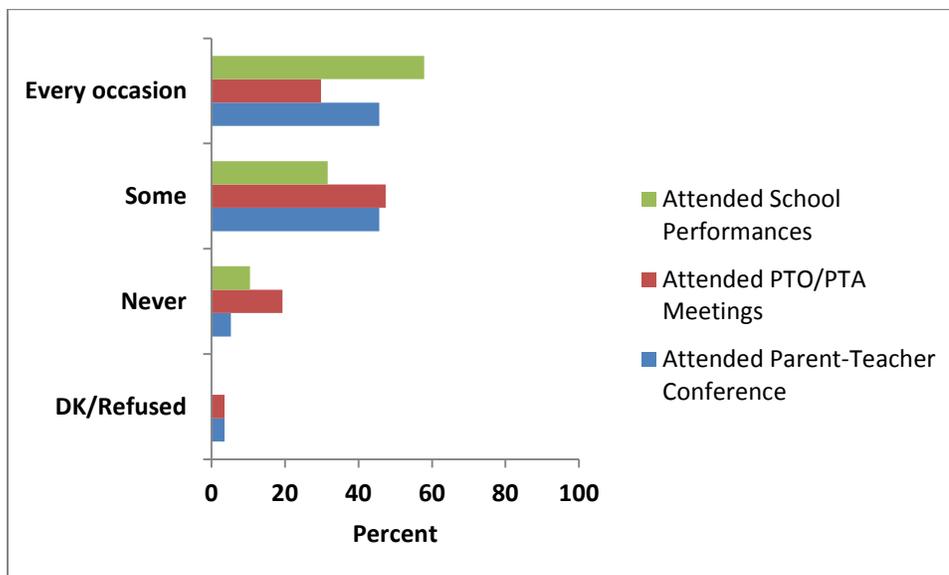
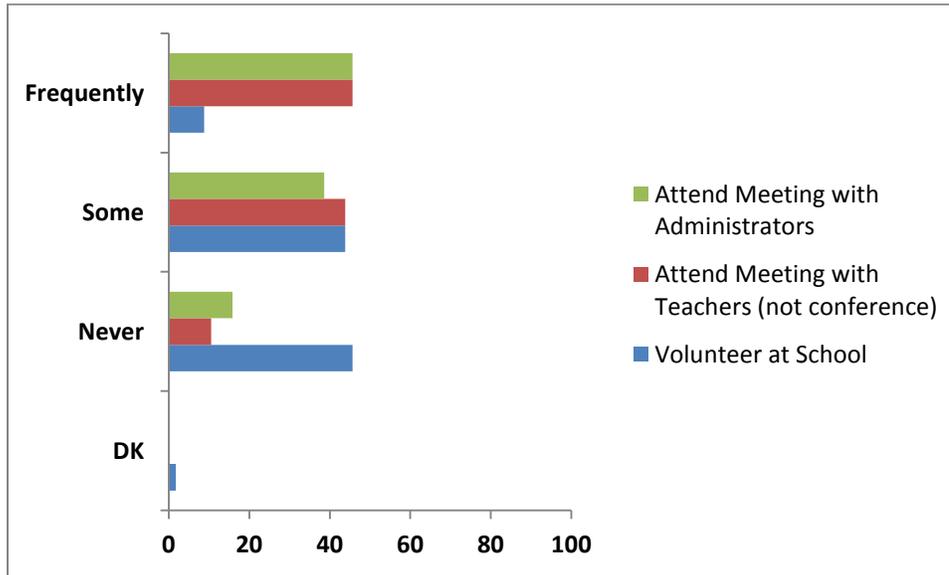


Figure 22 shows how often respondents indicated that they attended their child’s school for meetings and to volunteer. The survey questions were: “In the last year, how often did you attend meetings with school administrators to discuss your child?”, “In the last year, how often did you attend: Meeting with teachers to discuss your child (outside of regular parent teacher conferences)?”, “In the last year, how often did you attend: volunteering?” **Figure 22** shows 45% of parents or guardians reported “frequent” meetings with administrators and teachers (outside of conferences) about their child. In contrast, 45% of respondents indicated that they never volunteered at the school.

Figure 22. In the last year, how often did you ... (N=57)



Parental/Guardian Knowledge About Charter Schools

Educational reform in Newark has been marked by rapid growth in the number charter schools and in charter school enrollments. Our surveys were conducted before the *One Newark* rollout, and show an awareness of charter schools, but also confusion about charter schools and school choice.

The community survey asked parents/guardians, “Do you feel like you have a choice about where your child attends school?” Half of parents and guardians reported *yes* (52%); a surprising 30% did not answer the question. We also asked parents/guardians “whether they have ever applied to a charter school lottery for your child?” About a quarter responded *yes* (23%), nearly half (46%) replied *no*; 30% did not reply. When asked if they had heard of the term “Renew School,” only 14% of parents and guardians indicated that they had heard of them. When asked to provide a brief description of a Renew School, 10 of the 11 positive respondents had only vague ideas; the one respondent said a Renew School “is where they redesign the school, the way it is run, and the curriculum. They have different teachers.” In general, parents/guardians had little to no understanding of the meaning of Renew Schools.

Despite the existence of charter schools in Newark for several years, many residents remain confused about the nature of charter schools: 16% of respondents said they believed that charter schools charged tuition. Another 31% said they were unsure; 28% did not answer the question. In other words, just a quarter of respondents correctly indicated that charter schools did not charge tuition. Just over a third of respondents (37%) agreed that “anyone” can apply to a charter school; over half did not respond to the question or indicated “don’t know.” Less than a quarter of parents or guardians (23%) reported having participated in a charter school lottery.

In response to the question “if your child could attend any school in Newark, which school would you choose?,” nearly half of respondents (44%) failed to provide an answer or indicated that they did not know; 37% named an NPS School and 19% identified a charter school. Among those identifying an NPS schools (N=30), 43% identified a magnet high school (*Arts, University, Science*). Of those identifying a charter school (N=15), nearly half identified *North Star Academy* (47%).

The focus groups with neighborhood parents and caregivers suggested that very few participants have attempted to navigate either the charter school “system,” or the new *One Newark* universal enrollment plan. Most parents and guardians seemed unsure about how the charter schools worked, and had a wide range of opinions about what schools their children were able to attend, or what was necessary to take advantage of these options.

Parent/Guardian Aspirations and Expectation for Children’s Post-High School Education

The community survey asked parents several questions about their aspirations and expectations for their children going to college. **Figure 23** shows responses to the question, “how far in school do you want your child to go?,” which was asked for a specific child (the one with the nearest coming birthday). The figure shows parents and guardians have high aspirations for their children. Half of the parents reported that they wanted their child to earn a college degree, another 18% hoped for a master’s degree or equivalent, and nearly a third (30%) wanted their child to go on to earn an advanced degree such as a Ph.D., MD, or JD. **Figure 23** shows respondents had somewhat lower expectations of their children’s ultimate academic achievement, but 86% still expected that their child would earn a college degree or higher. When one considers that very few West Side High School 9th graders (around 5%) have earned college degrees in the past, the gap between parent/guardian expectations and reality is striking.

Figure 23. Parental aspirations and expectations for child highest level of education (N=79).

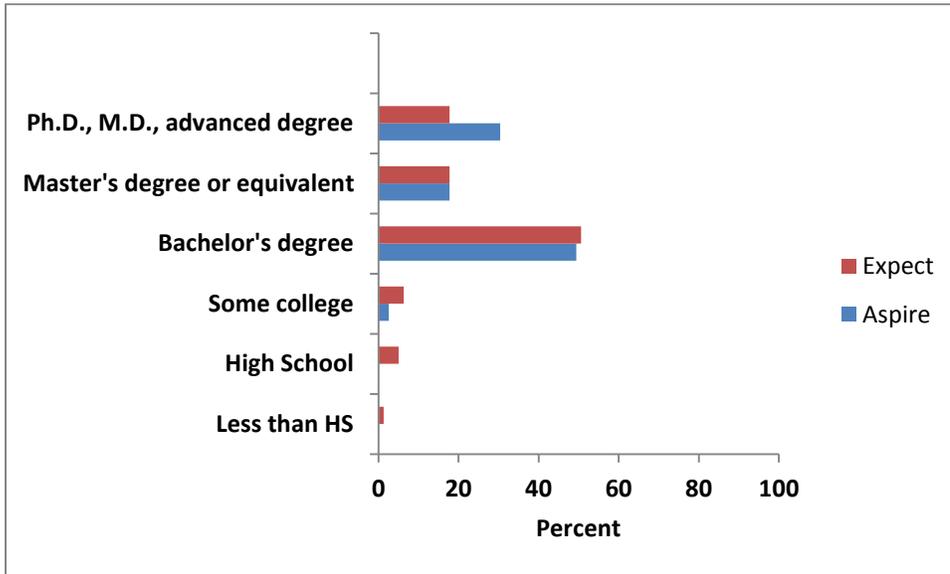
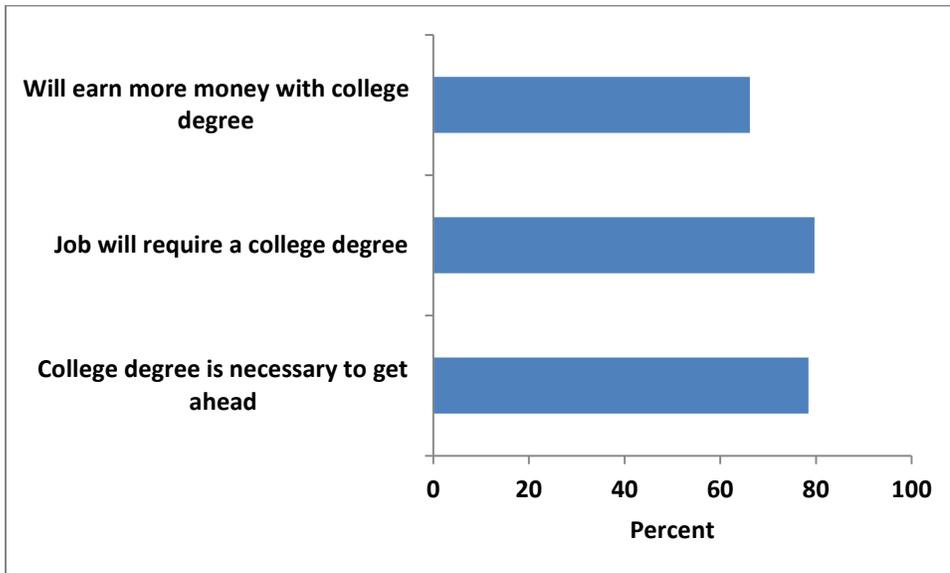
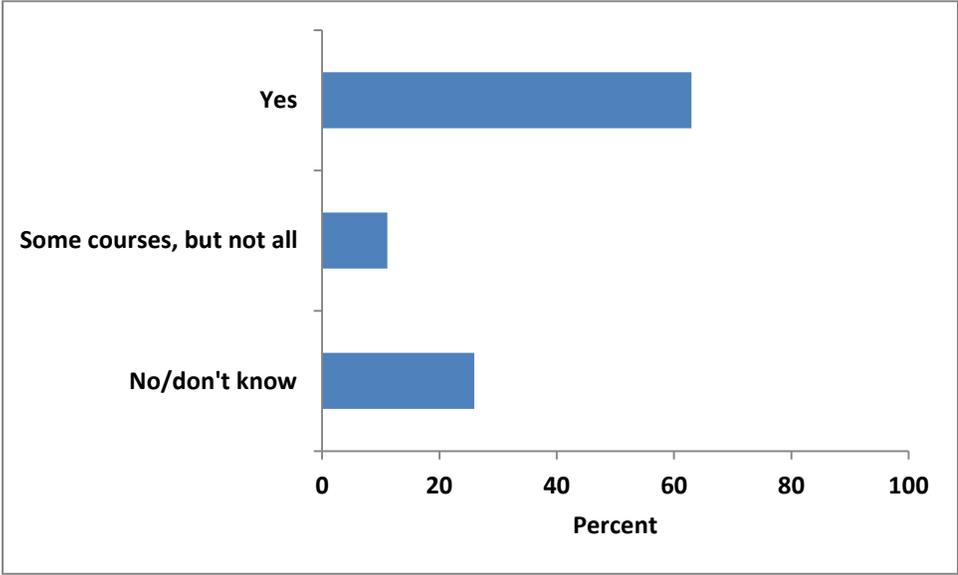


Figure 24. Reasons why respondent expects child to go college (N=81)



Parents were asked “*why you expect your child to continue his or her education after high school?*,” and were presented with list of potential reasons. **Figure 24** shows Fairmount parents appreciate the link between a college degree and future economic security with nearly 80% agreeing that “*a college degree is necessary to get ahead in today’s world.*”

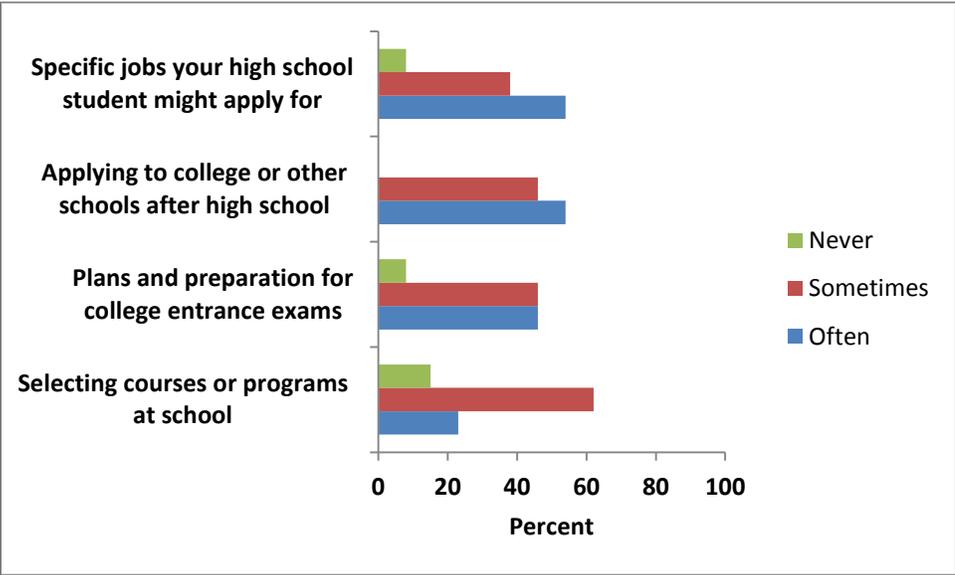
Figure 25. “Do you feel like you know what classes your child should take...to go to college?”



The community survey asked the parents and guardians of middle school and high school aged students “do you feel like you know what classes your child should take in middle and high school in order to be able to go to college?” (Figure 25). Most respondents (63%) reported that felt like they knew what courses were required, but the remaining 37% felt like they did not know or only knew some of the courses.

Respondents were also asked “how often you and/or your spouse/partner provided advice or information...to your high school student.” (Figure 26). The great majority of respondents reported that they sometimes or often provided advice on college and career.

Figure 26. Parent/guardian provision of “advice or information” to high school student



What It Means

Early and frequent verbal interaction with young children is associated with better future academic performance. The academic literature shows a substantial vocabulary gap exists by 18 months between advantaged and disadvantage children (Fernald, Marchman & Weisleder, 2013). This disparity is associated with differences in cognitive development, and with long-term effects on academic achievement. The survey results presented here show most parents sang songs or told stories daily to their young children, and reported that they always talked to them while doing housework. However, the questions posed in the survey are relatively crude measures of parent-child interaction, and we suspect that at least some children are in need of much greater verbal stimulation.

The NFPN community survey also asked parents about the numbers of children’s and young adult books in the house: a third of parents reported over 50 books in the home. The large numbers of books suggest that access to appropriate reading material is not a problem for most households.

The community survey also asked about parent and guardian global views about their child’s school. Parent’s expectations towards schools, and their willingness to be active in ensuring that those expectations be met are important for successful education to occur. We found that parents in general were very positive about their child’s school. Nearly half of respondents strongly agreed with the statement, “my child’s school is a good school.” More than half indicated that their school was better than others in Newark. These responses are in stark contrast to the low academic performance of the *Thirteenth Avenue School* and other NPS schools attended by Fairmount children. This apparent paradox raises at least two important issues. First, this result likely explains the considerable unhappiness that ensues when local schools such as the *Martin Luther King, Jr. School* and *West Side High School* are closed.

Second, NFPN needs to fully understand what “good” means here. In the focus groups, some parents complained about the lack of commitment among teachers and administrators, while another parent said: “They [NPS] have really good schools here. It’s not the schools; it’s the area. It’s the people.” Our sense is that the global question does not yield detailed enough information to truly understand Fairmount residents’ feelings and opinions about their local schools. However, the gap between actual academic performance and parental educational perceptions needs to be bridged.

The community survey also asked about parental and guardian aspirations and expectations towards their children going to college. The results identify a second paradox: parents and guardians have high educational aspirations and expectations for their children, yet the likelihood of their children earning a college degree in most cases is quite small. Nearly all respondents reported that they expected their child to earn a bachelor’s degree or better. Yet, approximately 5% of West Side High School 9th graders have over the years earned a college degree of any type. A third of respondents expect their child to earn a graduate degree or professional degree. A large gap seems to exist between what is likely to happen and what parents and guardians hope will happen. The gap between these two needs to be bridged to make meaningful progress towards preparing Fairmount students to go to college and succeed. Parents and guardians have a good understanding of why they want their children to attend college: the great majority agrees that *“a college degree is necessary to get ahead in today’s world.”* However, many parents are less clear about the specifics of what is required to prepare for college.

Greater parental engagement with schools is associated with better schools and better students. On the community survey, the great majority of parents and guardians reported that they attended school events with some frequency. The least attended events were PTO meetings. The majority of respondents reported that they attended all school performances and similar events. These results suggest that stronger ties with parents might be created with more strategic use of school events. Also, attempts could be made to create a PTO that was more responsive to the needs of Fairmount parents, perhaps by providing information on a range of topics of interest in the neighborhood, and by combining these with meaningful school events.

Thirteenth Avenue Students: Perceptions of Academic Support & Student “Soft Skills”

Why It Matters

In recent years, researchers have increasingly focused on the role of “non-cognitive” factors in fostering academic success (Farrington et al, 2014). This perspective broadens the traditional focus on knowledge and academic skills to include consideration of the role of factors such as persistence, task orientation, self-discipline, academic self-concept and a range of other “soft” traits that can either support or hinder higher academic success. A growing body of research suggests that these factors can be very important in determining who succeeds in school, and also that many of these factors can be taught (Farrington et al, 2014). Additionally, the peer environment and the teaching environment can have profound effects on student academic success.

About the Data

The data presented in this section were collected by a survey developed and administered by *Turnaround for Children*. *Turnaround* is a non-profit organization that works with schools to create “a student support system, trains teachers in proven classroom management and instructional strategies, and works with school leaders to build a high-performing culture” (*Turnaround for Children* website, 2014). *Turnaround* is working in the *Thirteenth Avenue School* and conducted surveys with all students (grades 3-8) and staff in 2013-2014. Through the generosity of NPS and Turnaround, NSRC was permitted to analyze these data rather than ask *Thirteenth Avenue* students to complete yet another survey.¹¹

The *Turnaround for Children* student survey was administered to students who were asked to report about their experiences in math class in the past month. The questionnaire was administered to 342 students in grades 3 through 8.

The reader will recall that approximately half of Fairmount K-8 children attend the *Thirteenth Avenue School*.

Perceptions of Academic Support in the Thirteenth Avenue School

Student Interactions and Peer Support

The nature and quality of interactions among students can be an important support for learning, or can interfere with learning in the classroom and at home. **Figure 27** shows student responses to statements that address the issue of inter-student social interactions. Less than half of students reported that it was very true that “*I can get along with most of the students in my class.*” Even the statement “*I find it easy to start a conversation with most of students in my*

¹¹ Because of NPS concerns about survey burden at the Thirteenth Avenue School, NSRC was unable to administer a survey that was tailored to Newark Fairmount Promise Neighborhood needs.

class” yielded a low 55% of students reporting this as “very true.” In the absence of comparative results, these responses suggest less social cohesion among students than ideal.

Figure 27. Students’ self-assessed social efficacy with fellow students

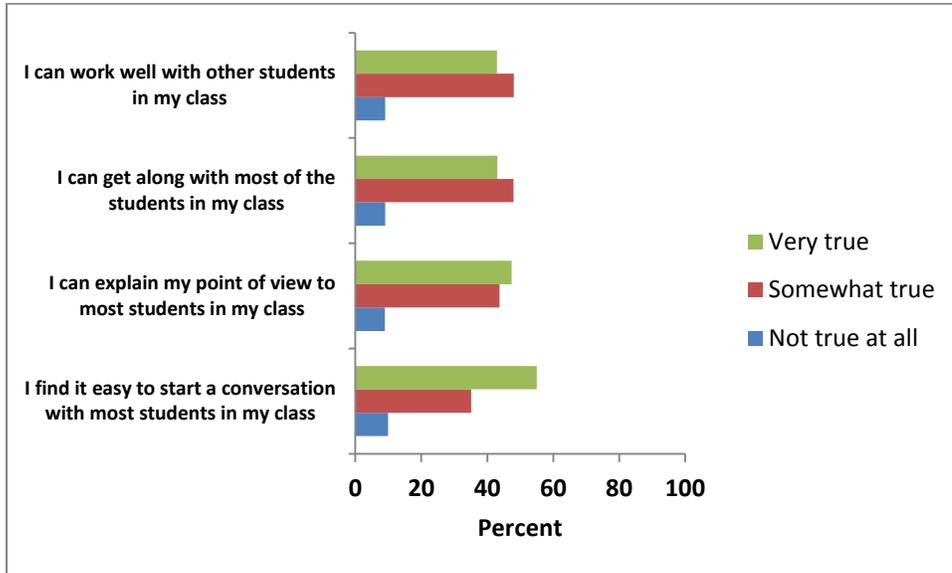
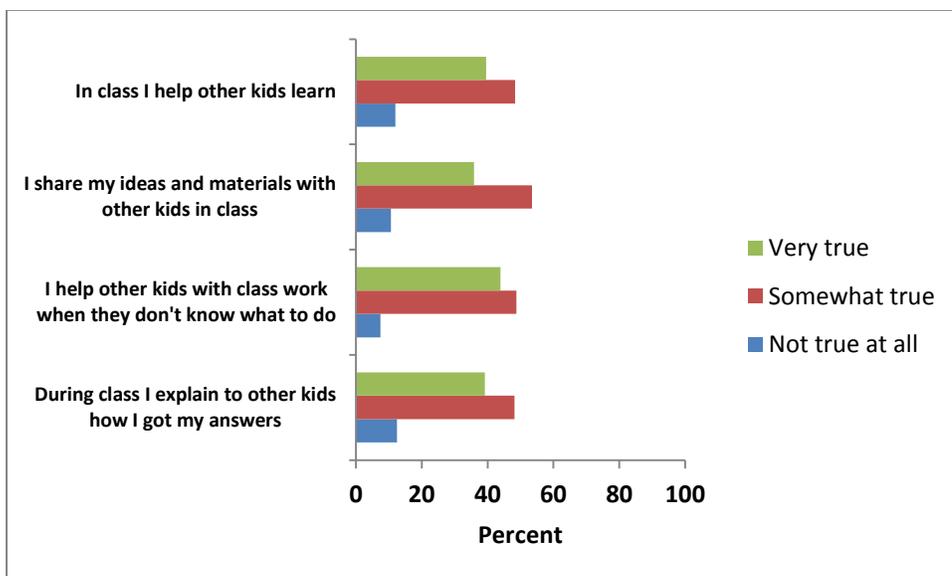


Figure 28 shows the responses to four statements about *student task related interactions*. Again, students do not seem to support each other’s academics to the extent one might like to see. Fewer than half responded to the *task related interactions* statements as “very true.” About 1 in 10 students responded to the *task related interactions* statements as “not at all.”

Figure 28. Students’ task related interactions



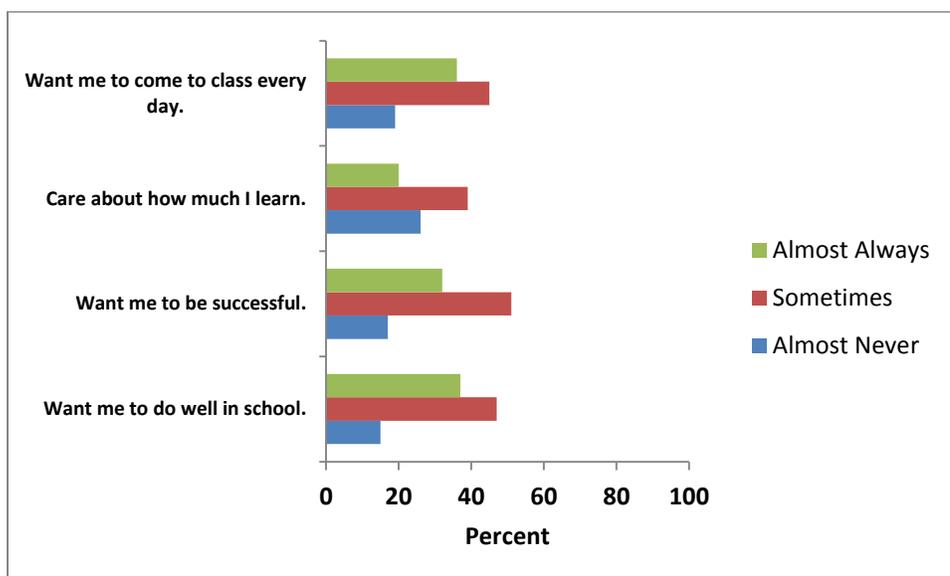
Positive peer support is an important aspect of successful schools. With positive peer support, students can challenge each other to do better, they can provide emotional support when things get difficult, and then can help each other to learn.

The *Turnaround* survey contained several statements to assess student perceptions of the emotional support provided by fellow *Thirteenth Avenue* students (**Figure 29**). Only about a third of students reported that they “almost always” felt that their classmates wanted them to do well in school (37%), be successful (32%), and attend class (36%). Perhaps more importantly, 15-26% of students felt fellow students “almost never” provided academic support on the four items presented in **Figure 29**.

Figure 30 shows items from the *Turnaround Student Emotional Support Scale*. The survey results indicate a generally low level of perceived student emotional support. For example, only about a quarter (24%) of students reported that they “almost always” felt that other students cared about them or cared about their feelings. Also, only a third (33%) of students “almost always” felt that other students were nice to them, and less than half (41%) “almost always” felt that other students liked them.

Although we have no comparison with results from other schools, these results suggest that some children are not very supportive of fellow students, and that a large proportion of children feel only partially supported by their fellow students.

Figure 29. Student perceptions of fellow students’ academic support: Items from the Student Academic Support Scale



**Figure 30. Student perceptions of student emotions:
Items from the Student Emotional Support Scale**

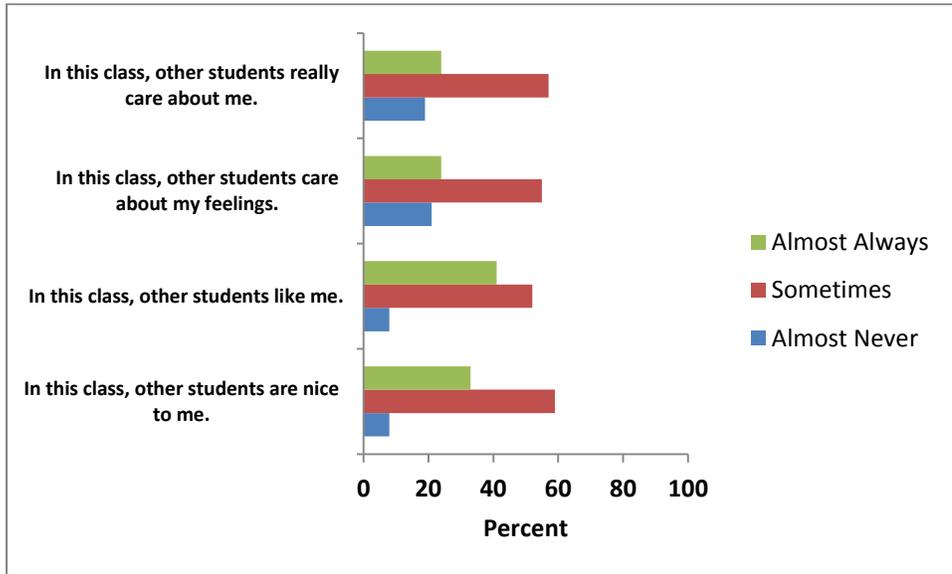


Figure 31. Median scores on the Student Interaction and Peer Support scales by grade

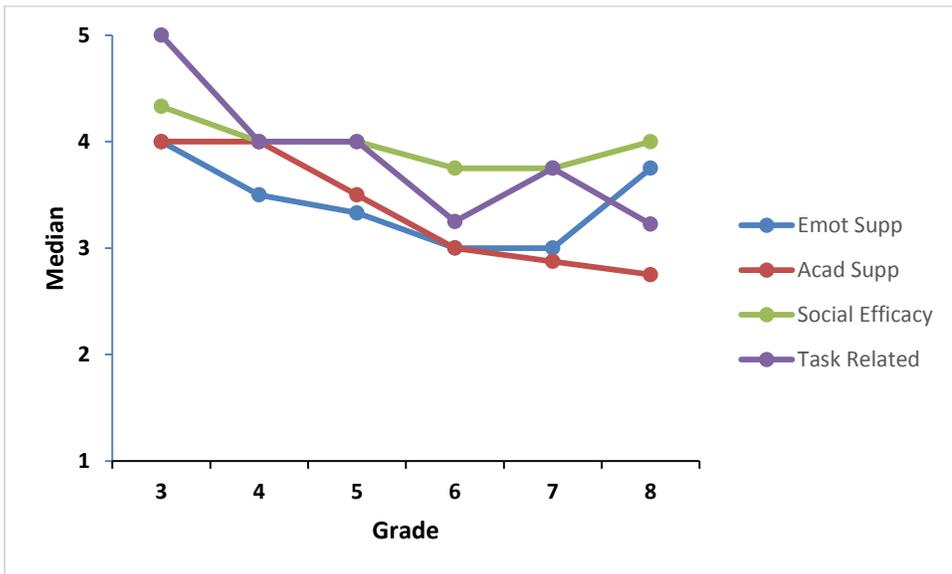


Figure 31 shows median student scores on the *Turnaround* scales by grade. The median is the value below which half the students fall. Also, recall that a value of 3 is a neutral score (“sometimes”), while 5 is a high score (“always”) and 1 is a low score (“never”). The figure shows a decline in perceived emotional and academic support, perceived efficacy in peer social interactions, and task related peer interactions with increasing grades. Of particular importance is the decline in *Student Academic Support* from “always” in the 3rd grade to “sometimes” in the

8th grade. Although this decline might be due to age-related differences in cognitive processing of the statements, the result suggests less and less support from other students for learning activities.

Student Academic “Soft” Skills

Researchers have increasingly focused on the role of “non-cognitive” skills in learning and academic achievement. These traits include constructs such as “grit” (the ability to persevere), resilience, goal directedness, etc. The *Student Mastery Goal Orientation* scale as presented here is one such measure (Figure 32). The statements in the scale measure students’ reported focus on personal improvement and on the understanding of concepts such that learning is seen as its own reward. The measure aims to capture students’ personal motivational beliefs and builds on the concept of a “growth mindset”—a habit of mind that promotes learning.

Figure 32 shows student responses to the six statements in the *Student Mastery Goal Orientation* scale. The great majority of students (70%) reported that they “almost always” did class work because they liked learning new things. About three-quarters of students (76%) responded “very true” to the statement, “I do class work because I want to get better at it.” The least “popular” statement was “I do class work because I enjoy it,” and even in this case half of students responded “almost always.” Very few students responded in ways that suggest that they were alienated from learning.

Figure 32. Student Mastery Goal Orientation Scale statements

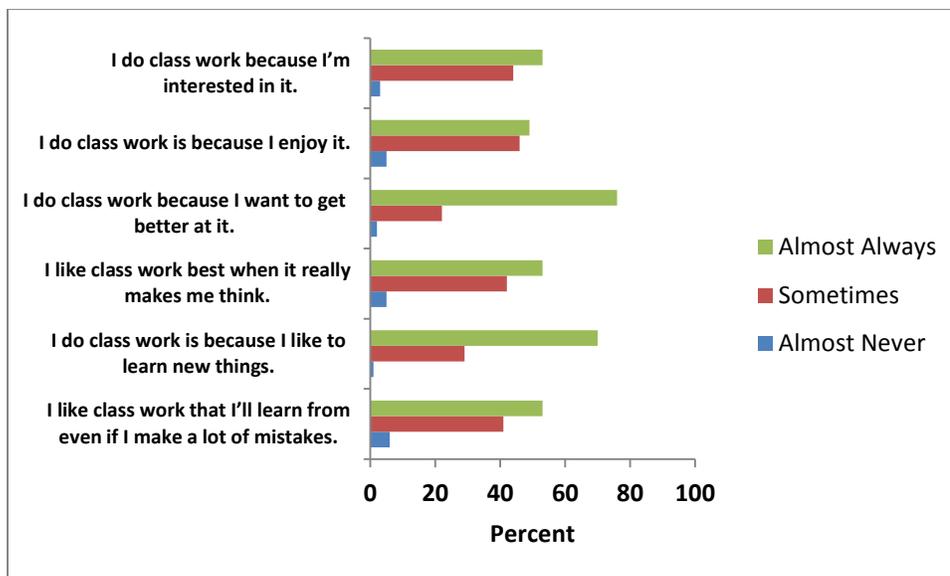


Figure 33. Student Academic Efficacy Scale statements

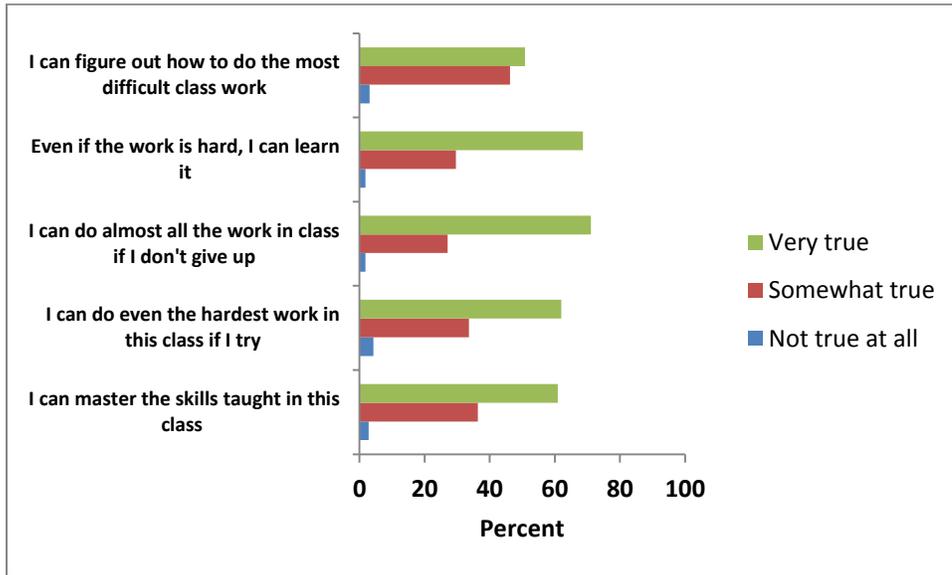


Figure 33 shows student responses to the five statements in the *Student Academic Efficacy* scale. These statements assess the extent to which a student feels that he or she can understand and master the class material through hard work and application. The great majority of students reported that they felt that they could successfully learn the course material through hard work. About a third of students answered “somewhat true” to the statements, but very few indicated that they would not be able to master the class material.

Figure 34. Students’ self-assessed social efficacy with teacher

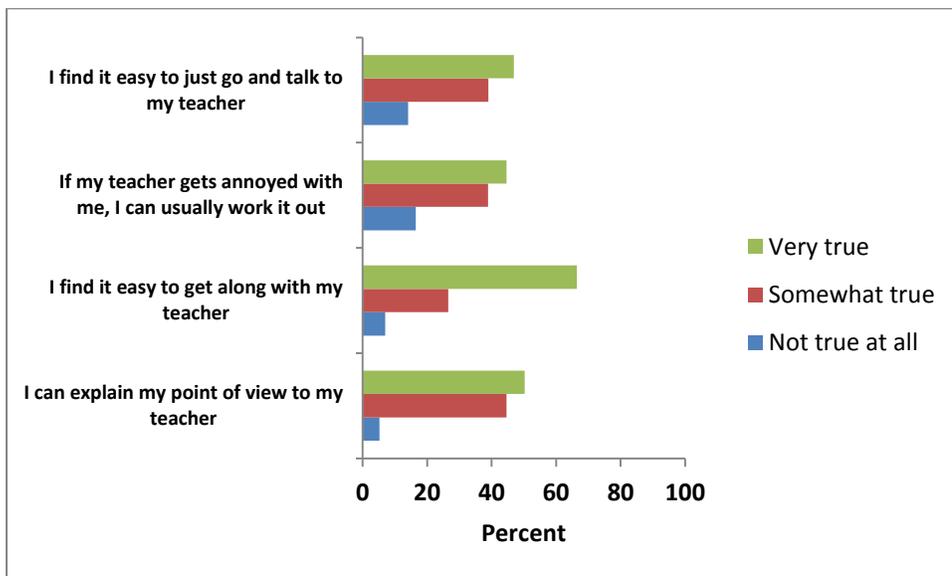


Figure 34 shows the responses to four statements that address student-teacher interactions. Two thirds of students reported that it is “very true” that he or she found “*it very easy to get along with my teacher.*” However, less than half of students felt it was very true that he or she found “*it easy to just go and talk to my teacher.*” On the other hand, a significant 16% of students reported that it was not true that “*if my teacher gets annoyed with me, I can usually work it out.*” In general, the results suggest that some students are inhibited from interacting with their teachers.

Figure 35. Student academic self-regulation

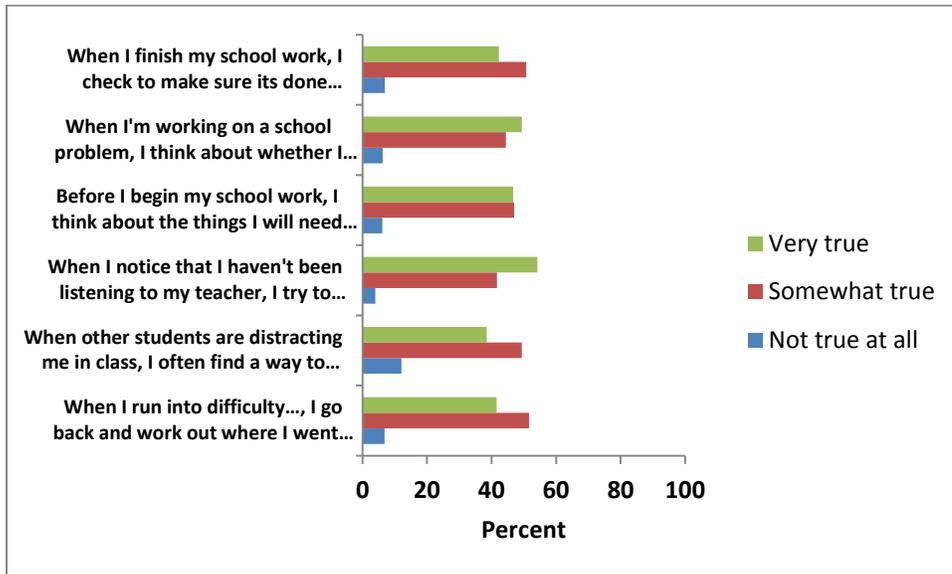


Figure 36. Median scores on student “soft” skills

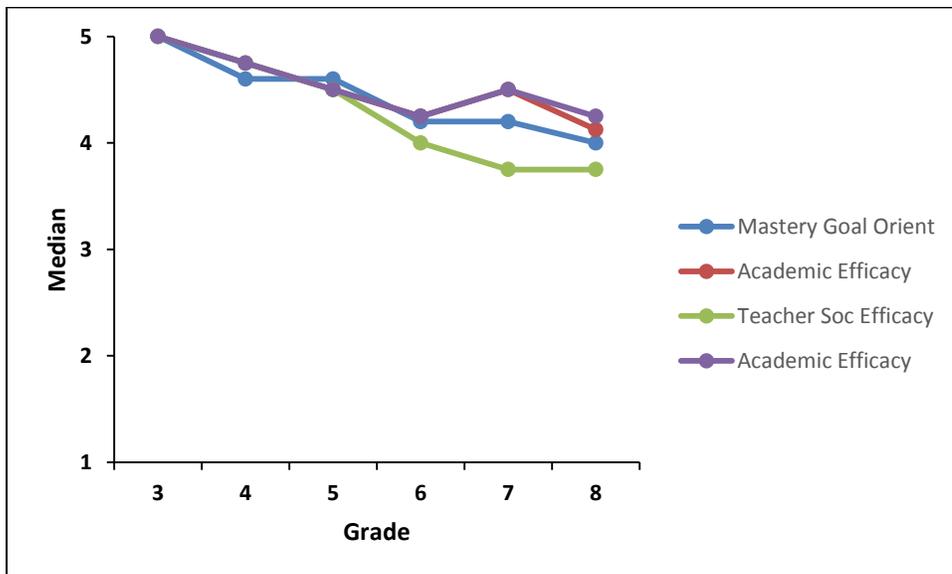


Figure 35 shows responses to six statements that assess a student’s reported ability to be self-directed and self-regulated with respect to school and classroom work. The results show that nearly all students profess some level of academic self-regulation. However, the students were more likely to report “somewhat true” for this series of statements. For example, half of students reported “somewhat true” in response to the statement “*when I’m working on a school problem, I think about whether I understand what I’m doing.*” Without comparative results, it is difficult to assess how different *Thirteenth Avenue School* students are from others, but these responses suggest that students could be encouraged to take greater responsibility for focusing on their school work and learning.

Figure 36 shows the median scores on the *Turnaround for Children* scales that assess student “soft skills” such as *Mastery Goal Orientation* and *Academic Efficacy*. The figure shows the higher grades are associated with modest declines in median scores on all the soft skill measures, with the average score declining from “almost always” to “always.”

Teacher Emotional and Academic Support

The *Turnaround for Children Teacher Emotional Support Scale* measures the extent to which a student feels that the teacher cares about them and likes them as a person. About half (49%) of the students felt that their teacher “almost always” understood how they felt about things, and that their teachers tried to help them when they were sad or upset. Many students (60%) also felt that they could “almost always” count on their teacher for help when they needed it (**Figure 37**). Relatively few students felt that their teacher “almost never” supported them.

Figure 37. Student perceptions of teacher emotional support

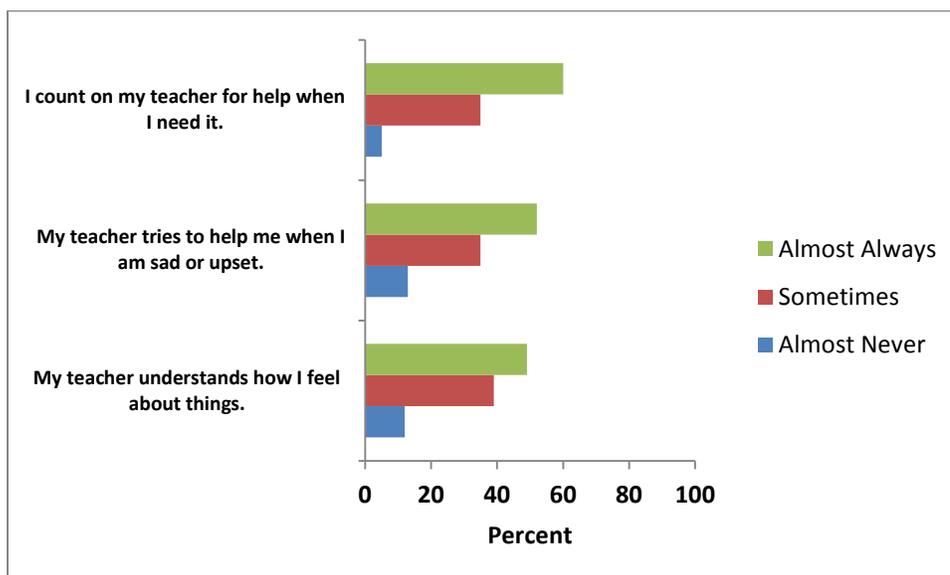


Figure 38 shows student perceptions of teacher academic support. The survey shows large majorities of students reported that their teacher almost always “wants me to do my best,”

“likes to see my work,” and “cares about how much I learn.” Fewer students reported that their teacher almost always “respects my opinion,” but only 1 in 10 students felt the teacher “almost never” respected their opinion. In general, the responses show most students feel like their teacher cares about their learning.

Figure 38. Student perceptions of teacher academic support

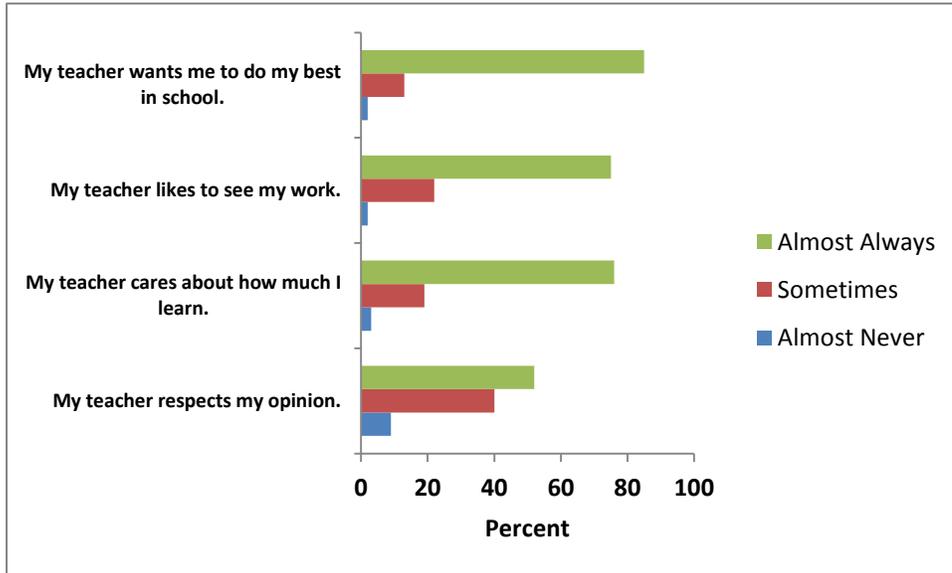


Figure 39. Teacher promotes student interaction in class

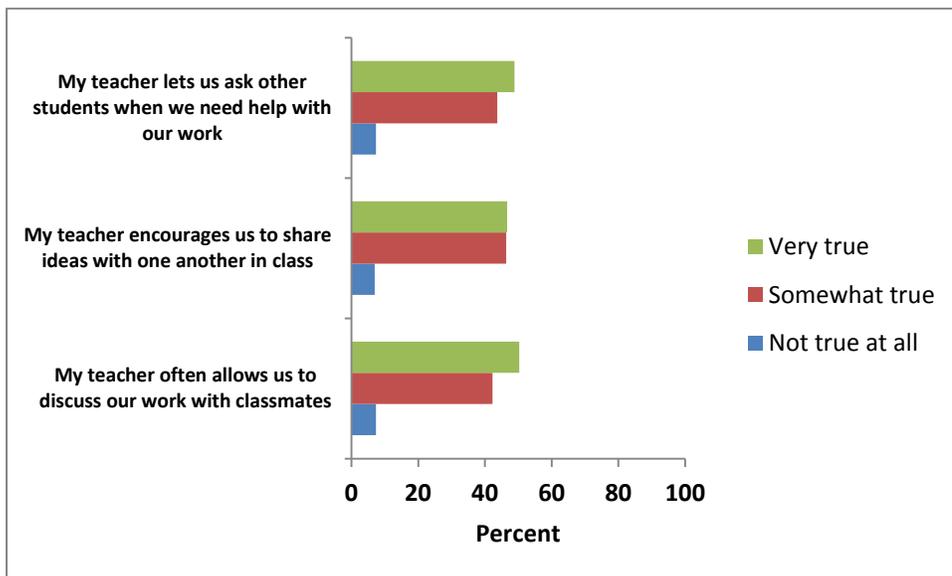


Table 39 shows the responses to three statements that probe whether the teacher promotes student interaction in class. The results show that about half of students said it was “very true”

that their teacher promoted student academic interaction in class. Again, just a small majority indicated that this was “not true at all.”

Figure 40 shows the responses to four statements that ask about whether a teacher encourages and rewards student “goal mastery.” About two thirds of students strongly agreed that their teacher promotes hard work and learning that goes beyond memorization.

Figure 40. Teacher promotes goal mastery among the students

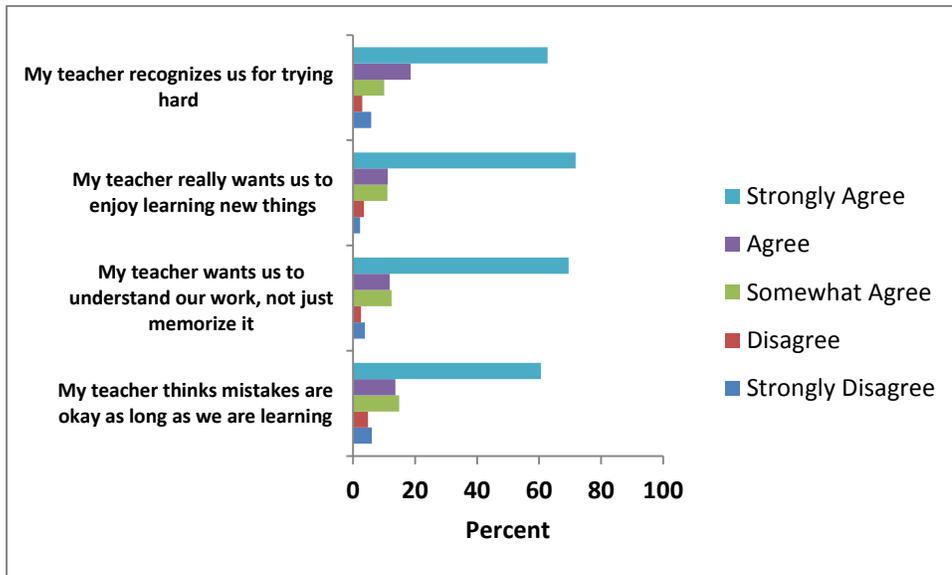


Figure 41. Teacher support for student academic press (“My teacher...”)

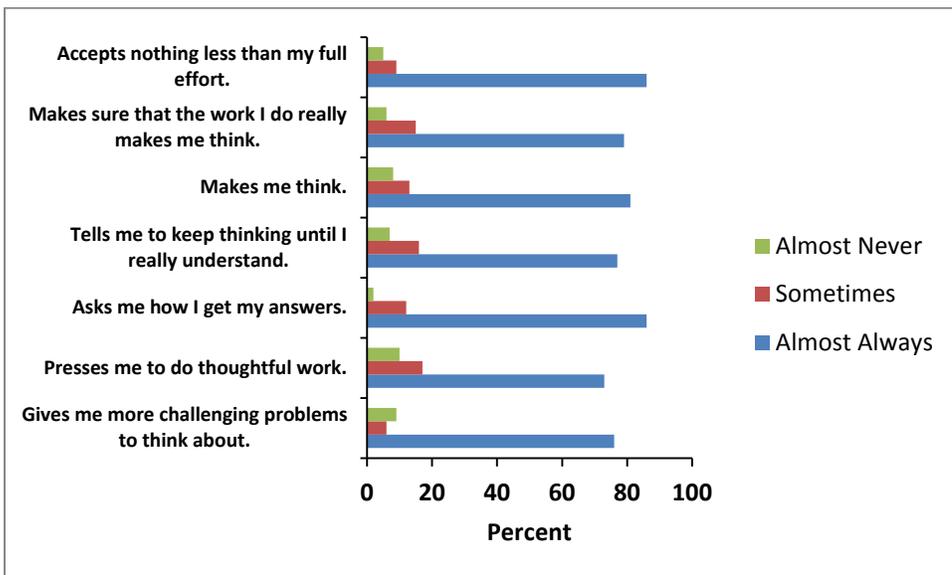


Figure 41 shows student perceptions of their teacher’s support of active learning and thinking (*Student Academic Press*). The great majority of students responded “almost always” to the *Academic Press* statements. For example, 86% of students reported that their teacher “accepts nothing less than my full effort.” And more than three quarters of students reported that their teacher almost always “makes me think.”

Figure 42. Median scores on the teacher academic and emotional support scales

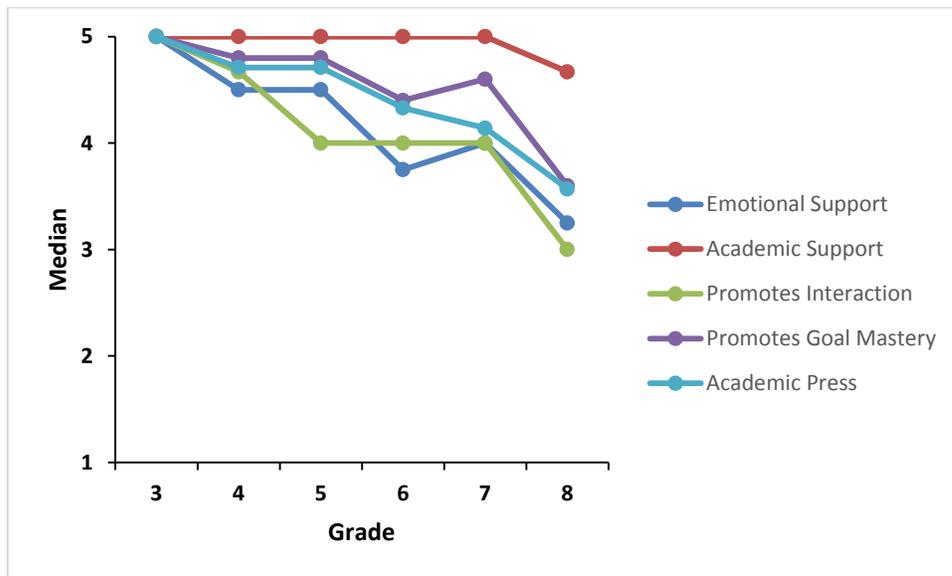


Figure 42 shows the median scores on the *Turnaround for Children* scales that assess student perceptions of teacher academic and emotional support. The figure shows student perceptions of teacher academic support do not change from grade-to-grade. In other words, students perceive that teachers want them to succeed academically. However, the other four scales steadily decline with increasing grades: older students report less emotional support from their teachers, less promotion of academic interaction among students, less teacher promotion of hard work and learning that goes beyond memorization, and less teacher pressing students to do well. The results suggest increasing alienation from teachers.

In summary, although we do not have comparable results from other schools, the results of the *Turnaround for Children* survey indicate that students generally feel that their *Thirteenth Avenue School* teachers provide emotional and academic support, support student academic interaction, and promote learning that goes beyond memorization and promotes hard and thoughtful work. However, a minority of students seem to feel much less supported by teachers. The proportion of such students increases from grade-to-grade, as does a general decline in feelings of academic support by fellow students.

Teacher Assessments of Themselves and the Thirteenth Avenue School

Why It Matters

To be effective teachers, teachers must have faith in their students, must persevere in the face of sometimes challenging situations, and inspire their students to learn.

About the Data

The data presented in this section come from the *Turnaround for Children* staff survey administered at the Thirteenth Avenue School. The survey asked teachers to respond to a range of statements that covered topics such as institutional programs and policies, school capacity, and teacher practices used to promote learning. Our analyses present the results for the 29 teachers who took the survey.

Thirteenth Avenue Teachers

Teachers were asked to respond to statements about the extent to which teachers can influence their students. **Figure 43** shows the teachers' responses. In general, most teachers "somewhat disagreed" or "somewhat agreed" with the survey statements, which we have combined into a "somewhat" category for presentation purposes. What this means is that the largest group of teachers held fairly nuanced, or even ambivalent opinions about teachers' influence on students. For example, the bulk of teachers responded that they either "somewhat agree" (44.8%) or "somewhat disagree" (6.9%) with the statement, "*the difficulties of a student's home experiences can be overcome by good teaching.*" Nevertheless, the largest group of teachers reported that they felt that they could have an important effect on a student, even if he or she came from a troubled background.

Figure 43. Teachers' opinions about the limits of teaching

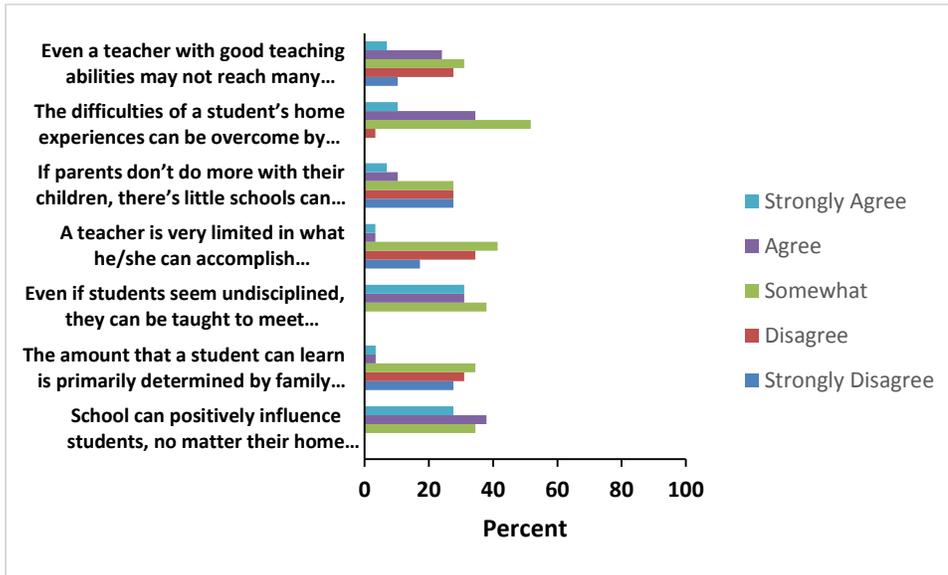


Figure 44 shows teacher responses to a series of statements about the teacher's control of his or her classroom. The figure shows that a majority of teachers believed that they had a considerable amount of influence on their classroom. However, a consistent minority of teachers felt that they only had "some" influence on a range of factors, like getting children to follow classroom rules, teaching students to value learning, and controlling disruptive behavior in the classroom.

Figure 44. Teachers' opinions about control of their classroom

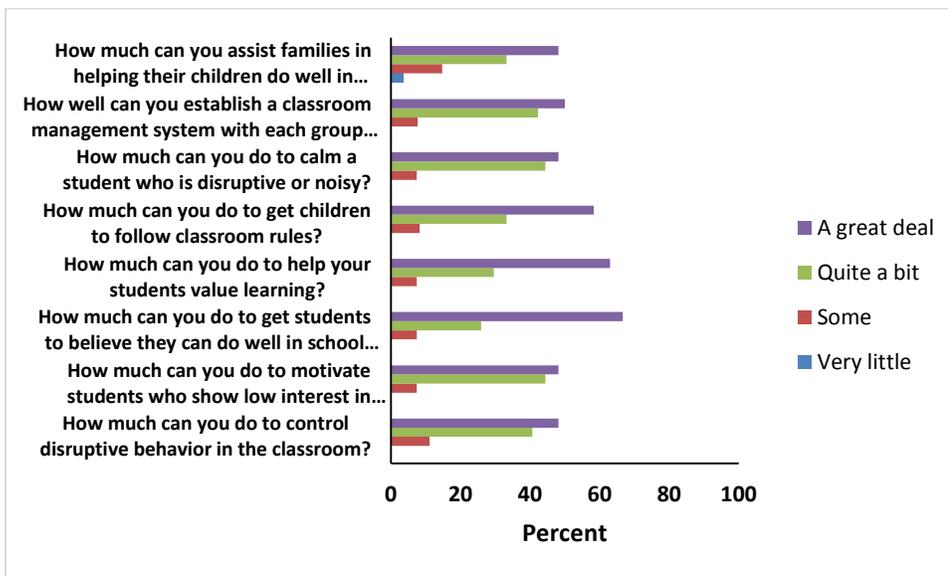


Figure 45. Teachers’ opinions about the Thirteenth Avenue School

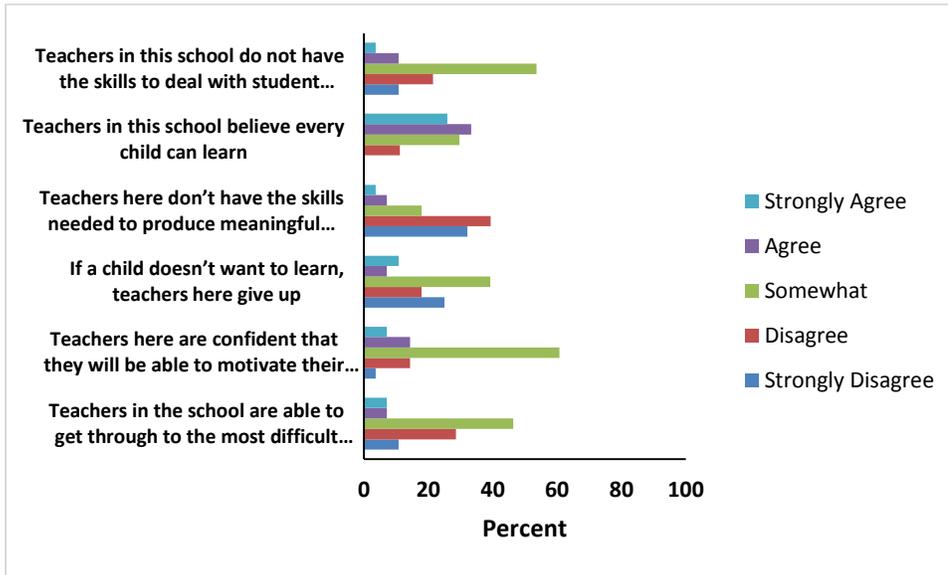


Figure 45 shows the *Thirteenth Avenue School’s* teacher responses to several statements about the school. In response to the statement, “*teachers in this school do not have the skills to deal with student disciplinary problems,*” most teachers were in the ambivalent category, with 36% of teachers in the “somewhat disagree” and 18% in the “strongly disagree” categories. One area of concern was the inability to get through to the most difficult students, with 39% of teachers doubtful that teachers in the school were capable of this.

What It Means

The *Turnaround for Children* teacher survey provides a mixed picture of teachers at the *Thirteenth Avenue School*. On the one hand, the majority of teachers are optimistic that they can positively influence their students and keep their classrooms under control. However, a minority of teachers appear to be “burned out” or overwhelmed by teaching Fairmount children.

The Household Technological Environment

Why It Is Important

Home access to a computer and broadband links to the Internet have become necessities for 21st Century parents and children. The internet is increasingly an important means by which parents keep track of their children’s progress in school, teachers provide students with information on assignments and supplemental teaching materials, and students research homework problems and utilize online resources for academic support. However, as helpful as

broadband connections can be to students, electronic devices such as computers, phones and other hand held devices provide distractions from homework.

About the Data

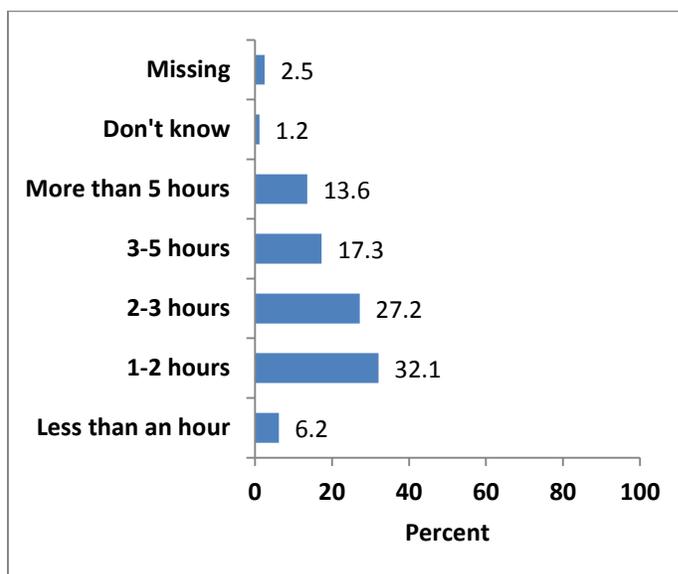
Data on students' access to computers and the Internet was collected by the NFPN community survey.

Access the Computers and the Internet

Nearly three quarters of parents and guardians (74%; 60 of 81) indicated that their children had home access to the Internet. Of those with home access to the Internet, 72% reported having broadband internet access, and 18% reported using dial-up. Out of 81 respondents, 52% (42) reported that they had a computer on which the child does homework, and 20% reported they had no such computer. Another 28% did not respond to the question.

The community survey asked about “how much ‘screen time’ (ex: watching television, playing video games, or using a computer for reasons other than school work) does your child get each weekday?” **Figure 46** shows the responses for an unspecified child. The figure shows nearly a third of children were on the computer, watching television, or playing games for 3 or more hours per night for reasons other than school work. Only a few participants reported less than an hour per night of recreational screen time.

Figure 46. The amount of screen time per day for reasons other than school work (N=81)



What It Means

The community survey results show Fairmount children are fairly well “plugged in.” This is not a particularly surprising result with the bundling of television and broadband services. However, a quarter of children are without home access to the Internet. Additionally, the technical specifications of home computers are unknown. Fairmount children spend an important amount of time each day in non-school related “screen time.”

The Built Environment

Vacant Properties & Housing Stock

Why It Matters

Vacant/abandoned properties are important to neighborhoods for a range of reasons. First, these properties can be havens for rats, sources of lead paint, potential fire hazards, and sources of other environmental dangers. Second, abandoned properties can be used for a range of illegal activities, including drug sales and unlicensed flop houses. Third, abandoned properties send “messages” that a community is in decline and, perhaps, that people do not care about a range of important community matters. And, vacant properties can adversely influence neighborhood property values.

About the Data

Data on the vacant properties in Fairmount were obtained from multiple sources, including the U.S. Census American Community Survey (ACS), our community inventory, interviews and focus groups, and youth researchers.

Housing Stock and Vacant/Abandoned Properties in Fairmount

The housing stock of the Fairmount area is primarily multiple family units of a wide range of ages. In the four census tracts that overlap Fairmount, a third (33%) were built pre-World War II. Another third of housing was built in the 1940s through 1970s. Between 2000 and 2008, there was a mini-housing boom in the neighborhood, when a large number of multifamily townhouses were built with government support. These comprise 28% of housing units in the four census tracts.

Aesthetically, one of the most noticeable features of Fairmount is the large number of vacant properties in the community. According to the US census, 30% of Fairmount housing units are vacant (ACS 5 Year Estimates, 2012). Our community inventory found 23% of the total area in the community (not including the cemetery) was vacant and 24% of parcels were vacant. Every block in Fairmount had vacancies. **Map 3** below shows the location of vacant properties in Fairmount. The block opposite *West Side High School* has a very high proportion of vacant properties.

Photo 1. A vacant property in Fairmount



Vacant properties are a source of safety and environmental health concerns for residents. One resident commented,

“... there's so many vacant properties and buildings. It's pretty dirty, not well maintained. Just the physical environment sends a message, I think, of despair and a lack of care. I do think that those sorts of things are recognized by kids, even if they don't know how to give a voice to them.”

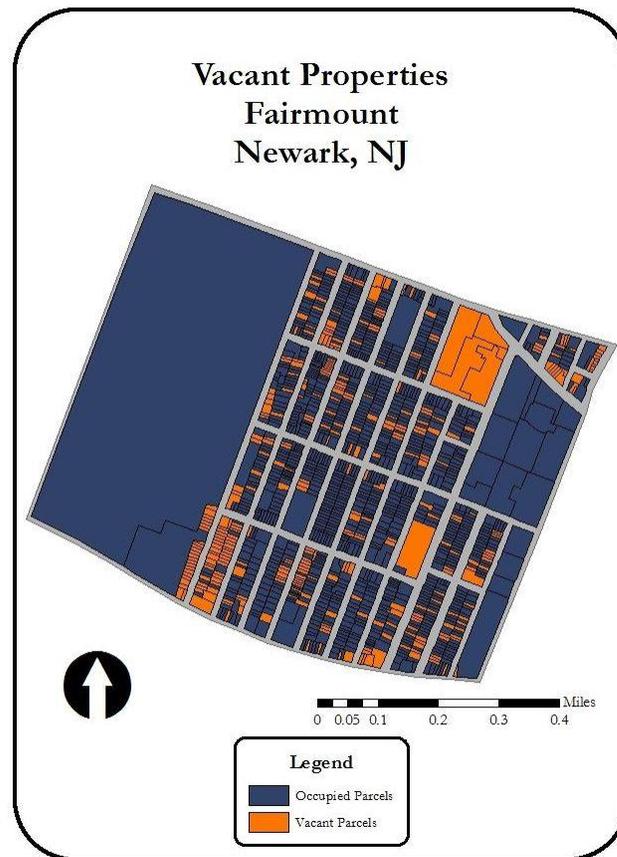
Another said,

"I think that homes that are vacant need to be boarded up and they need to be boarded up securely, and I think that they need to be constantly checked for access. I think that residents, whether renting or owning, should be held accountable for how their properties look."

A third spoke of how his church was once interested in purchasing vacant property, but ran up against road blocks,

“Right next to my church, we wanted to buy that one to fix it up for homeless people, right? But guess what: the people we were trying to get it from, he didn't want to sell it because it was a tax write-off...”

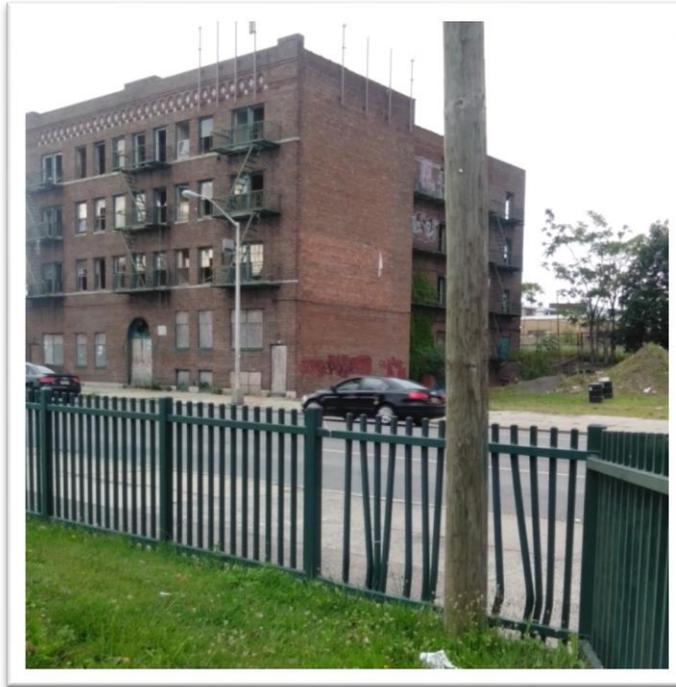
Map 3. Vacant Fairmount properties



As noted above, a large number of townhouses were built in Fairmount since 2000, and many residents expected that this would have a positive effect on the neighborhood. Today, a number of these are vacant, and show signs of fire and neglect. A Fairmount resident in focus group commented,

“... When the Boston boxes [sic “Bayonne Boxes”] were being built, I thought that was going to be such a marvelous thing for the community; that instead of these vacant lots, we were going to have new housing and to me, I thought it was going to make the neighborhood more stable. But to me, it's destabilized the neighborhood because instead of – I kind of stupidly thought we were going to have a lot of owner-occupied properties but instead we have a lot of outsiders that bought investment property and they in turn, even though they have investment property, they're not invested in the neighborhood.”

Photo 2. A boarded up/abandoned building in Fairmount



12) Abandoned building in front of my school - this is what I see everyday, something else to represent the poverty, and negativity of Newark

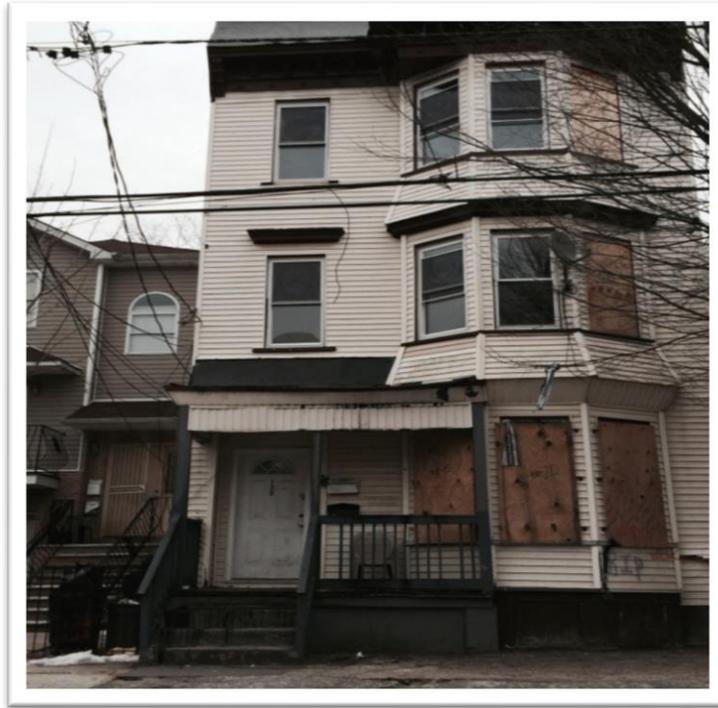
Young people in Fairmount were very aware of vacant properties. Two of our youth researchers photographed an abandoned building across from their school shown in **Photo 2**,

“Abandoned building in front of my school—this is what I see everyday [sic], something else to represent the poverty, and negativity of Newark.”

A teacher in Fairmount reflected on how vacant properties influence the community,

"not even a block but across the street from the school, more so, there's a day care center, and above the day care center it's vacant. It just seems as though the top part of the day care center is supposed to be residential living, but it's vacant. It just looks like it's about to come down. It just doesn't look like it's up to code. So in those regards, it just seems very suspicious. I would say crime, the environment, the safety of the area in general – the physical safety of it."

Photo 3. Boarded up/vacant house in Fairmount



What It Means

The large number of abandoned houses in the Fairmount neighborhood is one of the most frequently commented on features of the neighborhood. To many, the abandoned houses signify poverty, disorder, a lack of care, neglect and exploitation by landlords, etc. The abandoned properties also contribute to many residents' health concerns. Focus group participants stated that the high percentage of abandoned homes has led to rat infestations. Residents were also concerned about the age and condition of neighborhood school buildings. One parent believed that the schools in the community contain lead paint and that students were negatively affected by this. In another focus group, several participants expressed concern about the quality of the soil in the neighborhood and the building of the PSE&G switching station. The cleanliness of the neighborhood and the number of rodents is an important issue for many in the community.

Photo 4. Vacant small business in Fairmount



Transportation

Why It Matters

Many Fairmount residents have limited access to grocery stores, department stores, banks and a range of other amenities because they do not own an automobile, and because the Fairmount neighborhood has few of these resources. As a result, these residents must rely on public transportation, taxis, or rides provided by friends, family and neighbors.

About the Data

Data on Fairmount transportation come from the U.S. Census American Community Survey, the Fairmount community survey, New Jersey Transit bus route information, and interviews and focus groups.

Automobiles

The 2008-2012 American Community Survey showed 50% of households in the four Fairmount tracts owned an automobile. Seventy-one percent of Fairmount community survey respondents reported that did not own a car.

Bus Routes

Fairmount has the benefit of fairly easy access to New Jersey Transit buses. Buses run on the peripheral roads of South Orange Avenue, Bergen Street, West Market, and Central Avenue. Additionally, the number 5 bus line has stops in the center of Fairmount at 12th Avenue and South 10th Street. As a result, no resident is more than a few blocks from a bus stop.

Other Transportation Methods

Residents cite a variety of transportation options as available. The youth participant researchers listed a variety of transportation methods they had used in the previous week, which included: bus, light rail, walking, pastor's car, friend's cars, parent's cars.

What It Means

On the whole, Fairmount neighborhood residents have better access to transportation than many low income, urban neighborhoods. Half of households own a car. Additionally, public bus transportation is readily available, although bus schedules may not always be convenient or lead to places where people need to conduct business. Interviews with residents suggest that some level of ride sharing and loaning of automobiles occurs within Fairmount. One intriguing intervention for the neighborhood would be the development of an *Uber*-like app that facilitated secure sharing of rides within the Fairmount community.

The Social Environment

Much of academic literature on low income, urban communities has focused on their social characteristics and how these facilitate or inhibit the development and maintenance of social networks, and these effects on crime, access to job information, social support, and a range of other factors.

Neighborhood Mobility/Turnover

Why It Matters

Many sociologists argue that a key to the social health of a community is strong ties among neighbors, and informal means of social control. Ties among neighbors take time to create, and can also be destroyed or impaired when people move from the neighborhood. Therefore, one would expect high neighborhood turnover to contribute to fewer strong social ties among neighbors.

About the Data

Data on length of residence in Fairmount comes from two sources: the U.S. Census American Community Survey, and the Fairmount community survey.

Stability and Mobility in Fairmount

The NFPN community survey found substantial residential stability among survey respondents. The median length of residency in Fairmount was 10 years. **Figure 47** shows a great range in length of time in Fairmount. An important group of respondents have lived in the neighborhood for decades: over a third of respondents report living in Fairmount more than 20 years. On the other hand, another group had moved into the neighborhood fairly recently: a quarter of residents reporting living in Fairmount less than 5 years.

Figure 47. Length of residence in the Fairmount

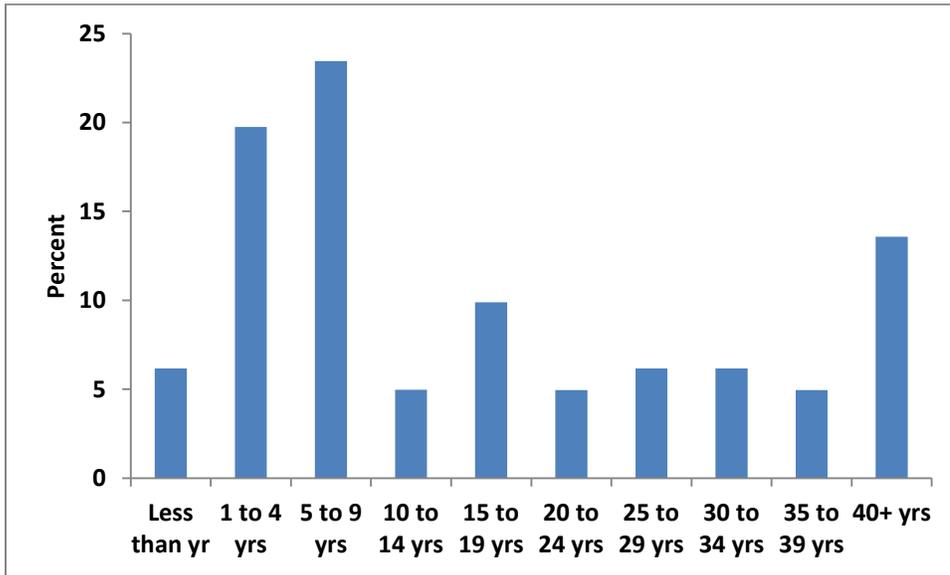
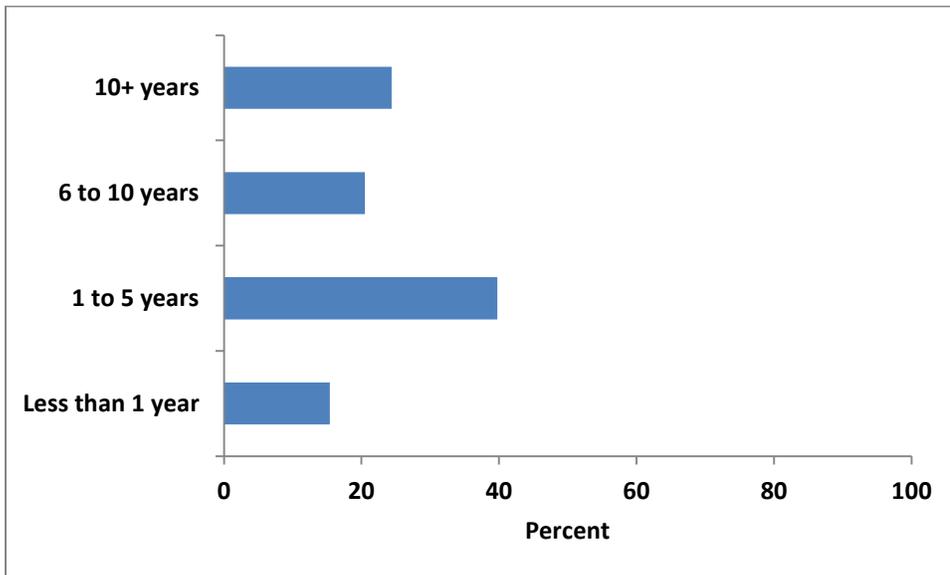


Figure 48. Length of time at current residence



N=81

The NFPN community survey asked respondents about the length of time that they had lived at their current residence (Figure 48). Nearly a quarter of respondents reported living at the same address for over 10 years. However, long-time residence in Fairmount did not necessarily translate into residential stability. Among those respondents who reported living in Fairmount 10 or more years, only half had lived in their current home for 10 years or more. Nearly half of survey respondents had lived in their home less than 5 years (Figure 49).

Figure 49. Length of time in current residence: lived in Fairmount 10+ years

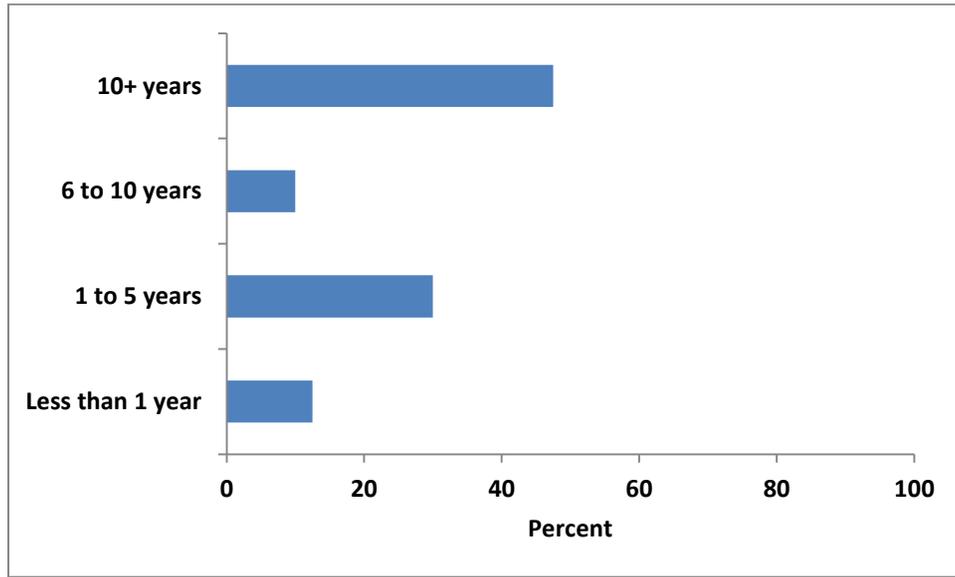


Figure 50. Prior residence for those respondents who moved in last five years (N=42).

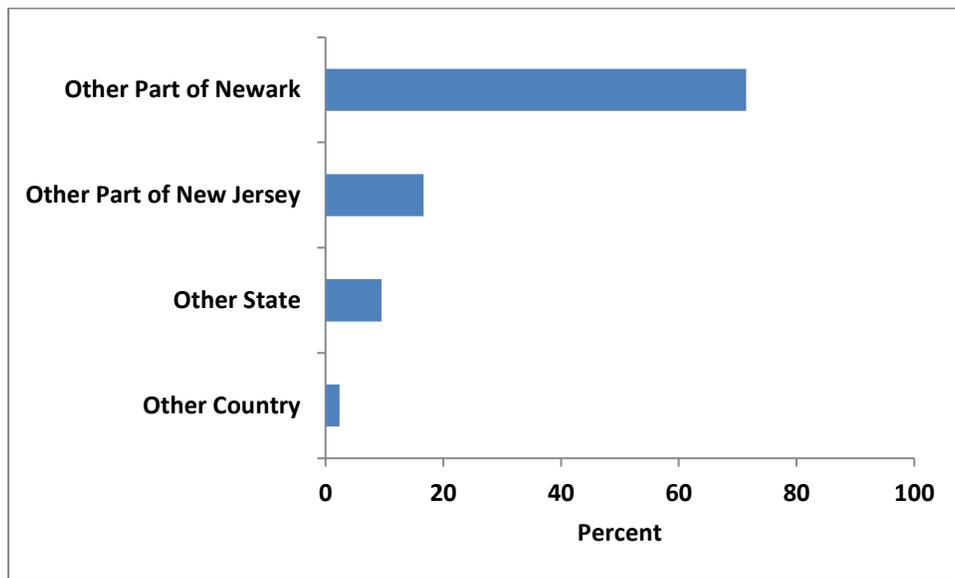


Figure 50 shows about three quarters of people who had moved in the past 5 years came from other parts of Newark, including the Fairmount area.

What It Means

The NFPN community survey data show that Fairmount is marked by both residential stability and instability. An important segment of the population has lived for years in Fairmount, and presumably many of these have strong ties to others in the neighborhood. These long-term

residents likely constitute much of the social “glue” of the community and could provide the basis for building a stronger network of social ties among Fairmount residents that could yield benefits in terms of crime, access to food and other resources requiring transportation, informal childcare, etc. On the other hand, a substantial segment of the population is fairly recent, and may need help to be tightly integrated into the community.

Future NFPN initiatives should promote residential stability within Fairmount to insure sustained exposure to NFPN programs and initiatives, and to help create strong, beneficial and sustained ties among neighbors.

Renters and Home Owners

Why It Matters

Many researchers believe that home ownership is an important social feature of neighborhoods because these residents are invested in their home and by extension in their community. And, these home owners are likely to reside in the community for years. All these characteristics provide home owners with strong incentives to build and maintain strong communities and also with the means to do so.

About the Data

Data on home ownership and renting was provided by the U.S. Census American Community Survey. Additionally, NFPN focus groups and interviews provided information on resident’s opinions about the significance of renting and home ownership.

Renting and Owning in Fairmount

Fairmount is largely populated by renters. The American Community Survey found 79% of units were renter occupied between 2008-2012 (ACS 5 Year Estimates, 2012). Our neighborhood survey found 89.1% were renters. The remainder of units were owner occupied.

One resident expressed concern about the lack of home ownership by residents,

"When the Boston boxes [new “townhouses”] were being built, I thought that was going to be such a marvelous thing for the community; that instead of these vacant lots, we were going to have new housing and to me, I thought it was going to make the neighborhood more stable. But to me, it's destabilized the neighborhood because instead of – I kind of stupidly thought we were going to have a lot of owner-occupied properties but instead we have a lot of outsiders that bought investment property and they in turn, even though they have investment property, they're not invested in the neighborhood. It's kind of – it is distressing to me to see that a lot of these houses, the building was never completed and the tenancy has not been stable."

What It Means

Nearly all Fairmount residents are renters of apartments, which means most residents have little economic investment in the neighborhood and are subject to the actions of

their landlords in both maintaining the property and enforcing reasonable behaviors by renters. The data in the prior section show both stability and mobility within the neighborhood, and much of this is likely due to difficulties in finding and retaining affordable housing.

We do not know the extent of the 2006 - 2008 housing market crash on Fairmount, but we suspect that this was considerable. When a large number new townhouses were built in the neighborhood in the 1990s and early 2000s, there was reason to believe that this would lead to income diversification in Fairmount due to an influx of home owners. However, Fairmount remains a neighborhood of renters with accompanying high mobility for an important segment of the population as documented by the American Community Survey, the rapidly deteriorating condition of many of these “new” townhouses, and resident statements.

Work, Unemployment and Income

Why It Matters

The central problem in Fairmount and other low income, urban communities is a lack of good paying jobs. The issue is not just a lack of jobs, but a lack of jobs that pay a living wage that can provide enough money to cover rent, utilities, car payments, good quality food, and a range of other expenses that better off families may take for granted. Problems such as low academic performance, high residential mobility, high crime, a lack of transportation, low quality diets, and poor access to health care are all strongly influenced by unemployment and low income. Additionally, Wilson (1996) and others (Dohan 2003) argue that jobs provide an important social structure that yields multiple benefits that go beyond income alone, including the formation of social capital, and providing structure and meaning to daily living.

About the Data

Data on occupations and unemployment in Fairmount come from the American Community Survey. We also asked residents questions about employment in the Fairmount community survey.

Work and Unemployment in Fairmount

Rates of unemployment in Fairmount are very high: 22% of working age adults were unemployed for the years 2008-2012 (ACS 5 Year Estimates, 2012). In the community survey, we asked about employment status (**Figure 51**). Out of 54 female respondents, about two-thirds either worked at job or were looking for a job. The remainder of the female respondents either did not work outside of the home (19%), were in school (7%), or could not work because of a disability (9%). Out of the 24 male respondents, the majority either worked at a job (38%) or were looking for a job (42%). Only one of the male respondents indicated that he was in school. In addition, almost twice the percentage of men (17%) as compared to women indicated that they could not work due to a disability.

Figure 51. Employment status by gender in Fairmount

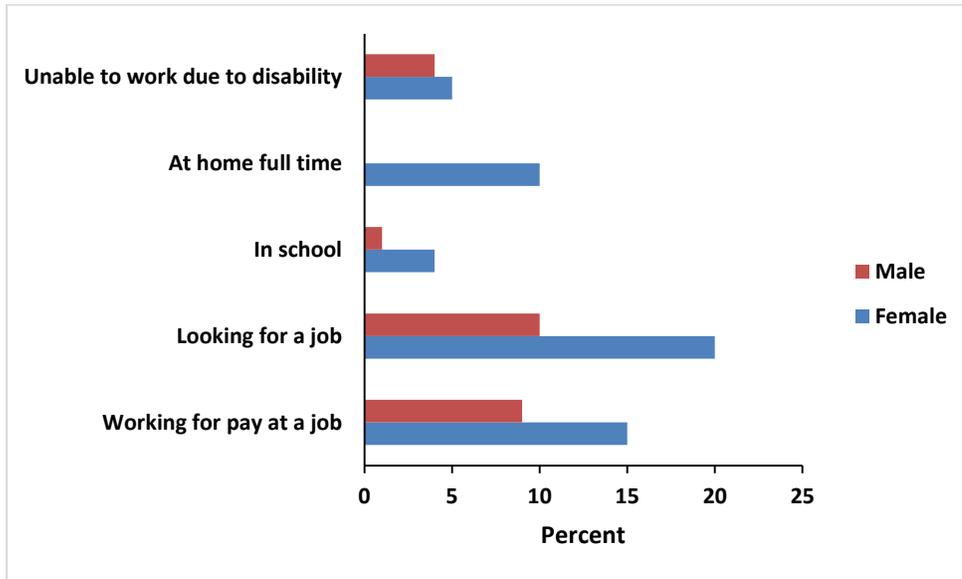


Table 12 shows the occupations in which Fairmount residents were employed (ACS 5 Year Estimates, 2012). The majority of employed Fairmount residents worked in the service industry or in blue collar employment.

Table 12. Occupations of Fairmount residents

Occupations	%
Professional and related occupations	18%
Transportation and material moving occupations	15%
Office and administrative support occupations	11%
Management, business, and financial operations occupations	9%
Personal care and service occupations	8%
Sales and related occupations	8%
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	7%
Healthcare support occupations	7%
Protective service occupations	6%
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance occupations	6%
Food preparation and serving related occupations	3%
Production occupations	2%

Incomes and Rates of Poverty in Fairmount

The American Community Survey shows the median household income in Fairmount to be \$26,627, considerably lower than for Newark as a whole (\$34,387) or New Jersey (\$71,637)(ACS 5 Year Estimate, 2012). Nearly a third of households earn less than \$15,000 per year. And, 62% of children live in households with incomes below the federal poverty level (\$23,050 for a family of four in 2012).

The monthly income data from the NFPN community survey participants demonstrates the very low household incomes, with 28% of participants reporting a total household income of under \$500 per month, and 72% having a total household income of under \$1500 per month.

What It Means

Unemployment rates are very high in Fairmount, and many reported incomes in Fairmount are extraordinarily low. Indeed, many incomes are far below what is required to pay for rent, heat, electricity, and other costs of living, which means that these residents must meet their needs through some combination of government and non-government support, and in some cases through involvement in illicit activities (Dohan, 2003). Nearly 2 out of every 3 Fairmount children live in households with incomes that fall below the federal poverty line.

In many ways very low incomes are at the very core of Fairmount existence. Low incomes lead to residential instability, low home ownership, high crime rates, weaker ties among neighbors, and a host of other issues.

Crime and Concerns About Safety

Why It Matters

Low income, urban residents often experience high crime rates and have well founded concerns about safety. Even non-criminal interactions with some residents can be problematic (Anderson, 1999). Safety concerns can have multiple adverse effects on residents, including restricting children's outside play, avoiding of travel during certain times of day, the adoption of "tough" demeanors and other behavioral strategies to avoid potentially dangerous situations, etc. Concerns about safety can also inhibit the creation and maintenance of trust among neighbors, and also reduce the likelihood of informal social controls that can be important means of enforcing social norms. Additionally, crime events can become a part of the neighborhood narrative, which may live long after the event itself and may to a degree define a neighborhood.

About the Data

The Cornwall Center at Rutgers generously provided NSRC with Newark crime data for the years 2009, 2010, 2012, and 2013.¹² ArcGIS was used to identify the subset of crimes that occurred within Fairmount. We present data for 2012 and compare these to crime rates for all of Newark

¹² Data for 2011 were not available.

and New Jersey. We also used ArcGIS to map the locations of these reported crimes. Also, the NFPN community survey contained a number of questions about crime and safety, and these topics were also covered during interviews and focus groups with Fairmont residents.

Crime in Fairmount

Table 13 shows 2012 crime statistics for Fairmount, Newark, and New Jersey.¹³ In interpreting **Table 13**, it is important to recall that many types of crimes are under-reported in communities like Fairmount. Therefore, crimes like burglary and rape may be under-reported, while other crimes such as auto theft, or crimes that result in serious injury are much more likely to be reported. In Fairmount, the most commonly reported crimes were auto theft, burglary, and robbery. Rape was the least commonly reported category of crime—less common than murder. In comparison with Newark, rates of all reported crimes, with the exception of rape, were higher in Fairmount than in Newark.

Because of their seriousness, the numbers of murders in Fairmount are particularly striking. In 2012, there were 6 murders in the neighborhood. The Fairmount murder rate was 2.8 times higher than the Newark rate and 23.8 times higher than the New Jersey rate. An examination of 17 murders between 2009 and 2013 show murders generally occurred between the hours of 11 pm and 3 am (13 of 17).¹⁴ The murders were scattered throughout the neighborhood in 12 of the 43 blocks.

The NFPN community survey asked the question *“Has your child ever lost a family member, friend, or classmate to violence?”* Nearly a third of respondents (28%) responded *yes*. A Fairmount resident reported, *“I’ve known numerous people that have died from violence and my daughter particularly was friendly with a young man who was killed, who was shot to death.”*

Other violent crimes were also high in Fairmount. The 2012 Fairmount aggravated assault rate was 2.1 times the Newark rate, and nearly 5 times the New Jersey rate. Under New Jersey law, aggravated assault is when an individual engages in a behavior that causes a bodily injury or could reasonably be expected to cause unjustified bodily injury.

The Fairmount robbery rates were more than twice the Newark rate, and nearly 12 times the New Jersey rate. Robbery is theft that is accompanied by either bodily injury or threat of injury. Only 1 rape was reported in 2012. In 2010, four rapes were reported. Again, there is good reason to suppose that rapes are under-reported in Fairmount.

¹³ The “risk ratios” presented here are the crime rate in Fairmount divided by the rate in either Newark or New Jersey. These value represent the increased risk due to living in Fairmount as compared to Newark or New Jersey overall. A value of 2.0 would show that the rate in Fairmount is twice the rate in the comparison population (e.g., Newark or New Jersey).

¹⁴ Crime data were missing for the 2011 year.

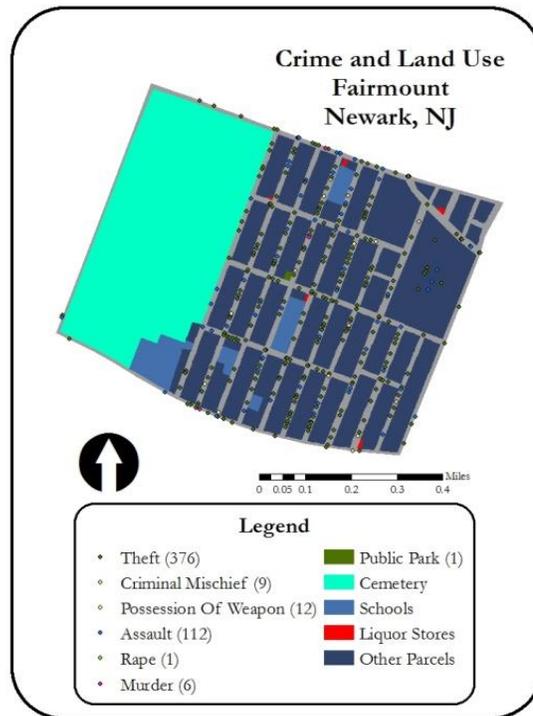
Burglary and automobile theft are non-violent crimes. The burglary rate in Fairmount was twice the Newark rate, and more than 3 times the New Jersey rate. And, automobile theft was 30% higher in Fairmount than in all of Newark, and nearly 5 times the New Jersey rate.

Table 13. Crimes reported to the Newark Police Department during 2012

Category of Crime	Fairmount		Newark		New Jersey	
	N	Rate per 100,000	Rate per 100,000	Risk Ratio	Rate per 100,000	Risk Ratio
Aggravated Assault	52	827	392	2.1	146	5.7
Auto Theft	119	1892	1421	1.3	186	4.8
Burglary	99	1574	769	2.0	478	3.3
Murder	6	95	34	2.8	4	23.8
Rape	1	16	20	0.8	12	1.3
Robbery	94	1494	708	2.1	128	11.7
Theft	119	1892	1467	1.3	1384	14.8

Map 4 shows the distribution of 2012 reported crimes within Fairmount. The map shows crimes were fairly evenly distributed throughout the neighborhood.

Map 4. Crime and land use in Fairmount



Concerns About Safety in Fairmount

Given the high crime rates of Fairmount, residents worry with good reason about safety. The community survey showed half of respondents (54%) strongly agreed that public safety was an important problem, and other 27% “agreed.” Most respondents (74%) felt safe walking alone in the neighborhood during the day, but nearly 80% did not feel safe walking alone at night. The community survey asked a question about school safety: 89% agreed that their child's school is a safe place for students. When asked whether their “*child is safe when traveling to or from school,*” 81% agreed.

Visual signs of crime abound in Fairmount in the form of security window bars and doors, tagging by gangs, and warnings about security systems, etc. One sign (**Photo 5**) calls for an end to Newark violence. **Photo 6** shows a sign that warns of a security surveillance system.

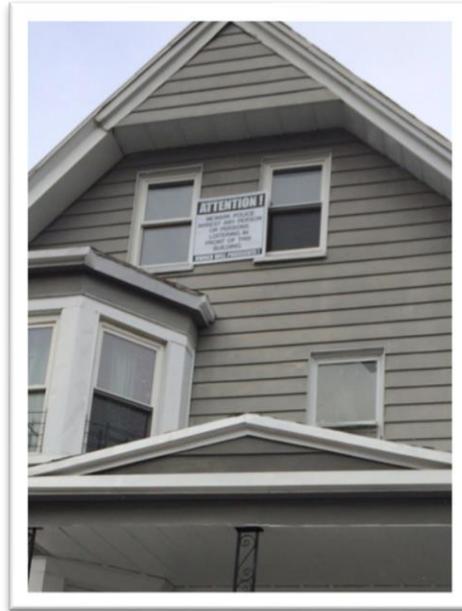
Photo 5. “Stop the Killings in Newark—Now”



Fairmount residents described strategies that they used to avoid crime. One woman described how when commuting back from work after dark she often walks down the middle of the street. Another explained,

"[I] try to get home early. I call my house to make sure somebody's home and can look out the window, or come down to the door. If I've been to the laundromat or to the store to go shopping, to make sure that somebody can come down and help me. Somebody's aware that I'm coming in if it is dark. That's basically it. When my daughter comes home from school, I try to meet her at the bus stop."

Photo 6. Sign warning of crime surveillance



A business owner described some of his strategies for avoiding crime, "bars on all windows. Locks on all doors. Double locks on all doors. Have a small, noisy dog. I try to know my neighbors as much as possible so that we look out for one another." Another woman who works in the neighborhood said she specifically chose a car that no one would want to steal and she makes sure not to leave anything visible that would entice thefts. A third resident said of the neighborhood, "There are a lot of break ins. Cars get vandalized. About two weeks ago, somebody got raped two houses down from where I live. I don't consider that being safe." A neighborhood youth reported, "There's gang members on the block. They like to rob, steal cars, break into people's houses and kill people over drugs on my block. I see that a lot."

What It Means

Crime and safety are major concerns of Fairmount residents. Crime adversely affects inner city residents in a broad range of ways. First, residents suffer directly from crime when they are attacked or their possessions are stolen. Second, residents expend time, energy and money in avoiding crime. Third, crimes provide the material for narratives about neighborhoods that have real effects on residents. For example, sociologist Elijah Anderson (2000) argues that "ghetto" behaviors develop in response to concerns about physical safety in inner city neighborhoods, and Mario Luis Small (2004) asserts that certain sentinel crimes live on in local consciousness for years, and structure how individuals interact with the social and physical environment. Fourth, crime activities provide opportunities for individuals who can see few other viable options for making a living. Lastly, high rates crime can inhibit social relations among neighbors and exacerbate relations with the police.

Fairmount Relations with the Police

Why It Matters

Together with informal social controls, policing is one major means of controlling crime and ensuring public safety. When community members and the police work in concert, the two groups can have important effects in reducing crime and increasing public safety.

About the Data

Data on Fairmount residents' opinions of the police come from the NFPN community survey and from interviews and focus groups.

Views of the Police in Fairmount

The community survey revealed mixed opinions of the police among parents and guardians. Nearly half of residents (44%) felt the police were responsive to community concerns, although only 10% strongly felt this way. However, another 53% disagreed, many of them strongly (25%). Nearly half of respondents (47%) agreed that police were "willing to engage the community in crime control and prevention," but again a significant proportion of respondents (44%) disagreed. Asked whether "the police are effective in solving neighborhood problems," only 30% agreed and 22% strongly disagreed.

The interviews and focus groups revealed complicated feelings about the police. One resident reported that,

"When we were growing up, you looked up to the firefighters and the police, things like that. But now, kids are scared of the police. Literally – they think bad about the police. If you bring up the police, they think negativity because they'll mess with the kids that are just standing around waiting for the bus but yet there's drug dealers right across the street – they don't even bother. Kids really have a negative feeling about the police."

Another stated,

"We need to see at least some police cars riding by without chasing people. They just come around the neighborhood, or park here, or park there. That would help. At least people would know that there's a police presence. Maybe even some cameras. There are no cameras around us. There are cameras in other places, but not around us. It's very dark in some areas..."

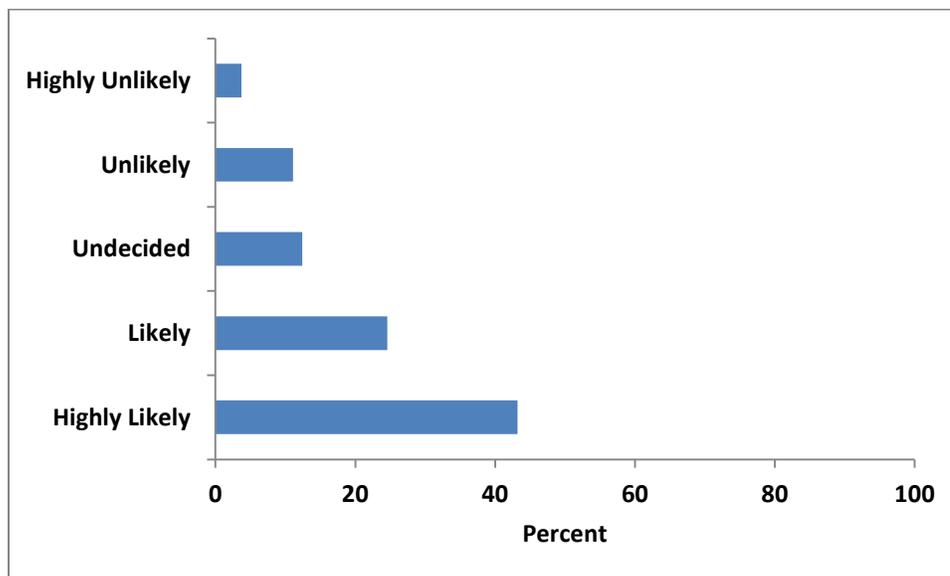
In an open-ended question, respondents were asked "what role do you think the police could play in improving the community?" A number of major themes were raised:

- Increase the police presence in the community, including walking the beat
- Be less arrogant and more sensitive to community members
- Provide a quicker response to crimes
- Establish positive relationships with youth
- Keep drug dealers and guns off the street.

Willingness to Report a Crime

The NFPN community survey asked respondents how willing they would be to report an unspecified crime that they witnessed (**Figure 52**). Forty-three percent of respondents reported that they were “highly likely” to report a crime, and another 25% reported that they were “likely” to report a crime. However, 15% reported that they were “unlikely” or “highly unlikely” to report a crime.

Figure 52. Responses to the question “How likely are you to report a crime that you may have witnessed?” (N=81)



What It Means

Fairmount residents’ concerns about the police appear to be highly conflicted. On the one hand, many residents would like to see a much greater, responsive and effective police presence. On the other hand, some residents see the Newark police as ineffective at best, while others view the police as a sort of “occupying power” that mistreats local youth and is insensitive to the needs and feelings of the community.

Relationships Among Neighbors

Why It Matters

Many social scientists believe that strong ties among neighbors confer important social benefits, including enhanced informal social control over antisocial behavior, the potential pooling of assets, the sharing of useful information, greater opportunity for shared child rearing, emotional support, and a range of other benefits. Strong neighborhoods have strong social ties among their residents.

About the Data

The NFPN community survey asked several questions to assess residents' community attachment and the social relations with neighbors. Residents also spoke about community ties in the focus groups and interviews.

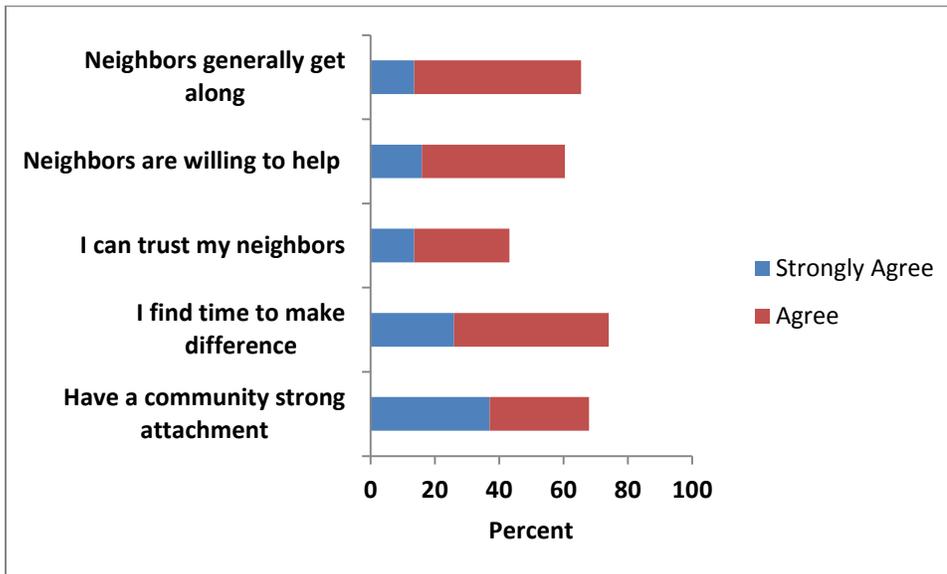
Relationships Among Neighbors in Fairmount

Most Fairmount residents who completed the survey indicated that they generally have a strong attachment to their community (76%), and that they make the time to make a positive difference in their community (76%) (Table 53). They also reported that their neighbors generally get along with each other (71%). However, only about half (45%) of respondents to this question indicated that they can trust their neighbors; yet, 59% say they have a neighbor who they would trust to watch their child in an emergency. Also, about two-thirds (63%) reported that their neighbors are willing to help each other.

Residents report having positive relationships with some neighbors. One woman reported that after one of her neighbors was shot, she baked her cookies and that she often sits on her porch or her neighbor's porch to socialize. Another interviewee said,

"Well, I have some nice neighbors. I have neighbors who have been long time neighbors and good friends. In fact, one friend who ... I met when I was at Essex County College and that was back in the 70s. Still a friend. Most of them are old, but there are some good neighbors around here."

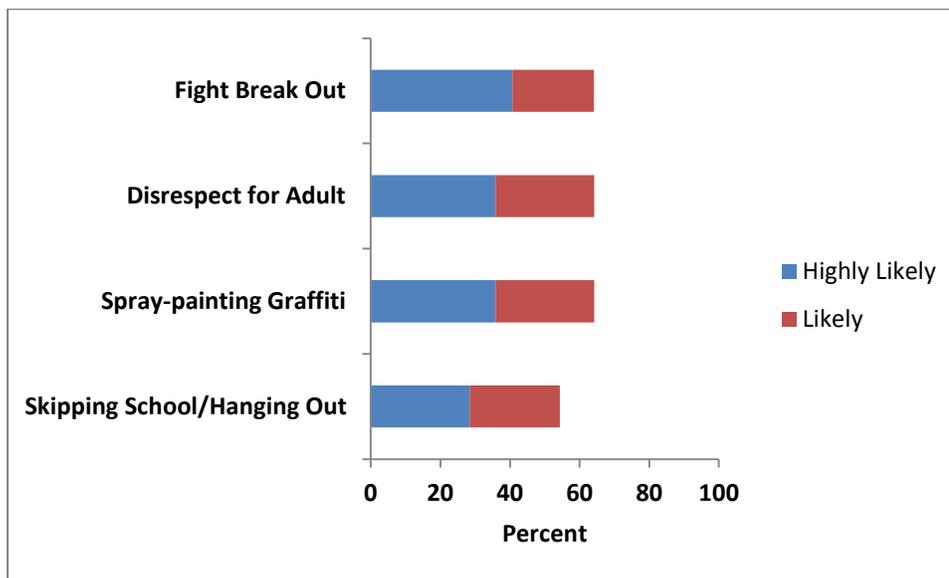
Figure 53. Questions concerning community trust and attachment



On the community survey, Fairmount residents were asked a series of questions about the extent to which they were likely to intervene if they saw a child engaging in a negative behavior

(Table 54). More than half of respondents reported that they were likely or highly likely to intervene if a fight broke out or child disrespected an adult. The percentage of respondents who were reported that they were very likely to intervene was about a third of adults, depending on the negative behavior. These results bely any supposition that Fairmount residents are passive about their neighborhood.

Figure 54. The percent of respondents who indicated that they were highly likely or likely to intervene if they witnessed a child engaging in negative behaviors (N=81)



What It Means

While faced with high unemployment, economic disadvantage and unacceptably high crime rates, most Fairmount residents nevertheless profess strong ties to their community, and a willingness to take action to make their neighborhood a better place. Most adults report that they are likely to intervene when they see neighbor children misbehave. And, most residents say they take time to make a difference in their community. Therefore, a strongly integrated social fabric exists within Fairmount. However, the one “dark cloud” in Fairmount is a lack of trust of some neighbors: fewer than half of respondents feel that they could trust their neighbors in general. Resident speak with warmth and nostalgia for a recent past when there was less crime, higher employment, and closer social ties in the neighborhood. Sustained efforts to promote and support positive social ties and reduce crime would likely yield substantial benefits to community members by increasing social capital in the form of babysitting, shared transportation to jobs and markets, informal social controls, and a range of other gains from closer social ties.

Health and the Health Environment

Infant Mortality

Why It Matters

The infant mortality rate (IMR) is a commonly used public health indicator that reflects access to health care and the health environment in general. The infant mortality rate is generally calculated as the number of infant deaths (up to age 1) per 1,000 live births.

About the Data

Research by Fatimah Abdul-Hakeem, MPH, of the School of Public Health at the former University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, examined infant mortality rates for Newark. These analyses used birth certificate data from the state of New Jersey for the years 2000-2006.

Infant Mortality in the NFPN

Ms. Abdul-Hakeem found an infant mortality rate of 9.4 deaths per 1,000 live births for Newark as a whole, which was 54% higher than the national rate of 6.1 deaths per 1,000 live births. In her analyses, the Fairmount neighborhood was split between two zip codes: 07103 and 07107. In zip code 07103, the infant mortality rate was 12.8 deaths per 1000 live births (95% CI: 9.2-16.3). In zip code 07107, which includes a large semi-suburban area to the north, the infant mortality rate was 8.7 deaths per 1000 live births (95% CI: 6.1-11.3). We regard the value for zip code 07103 more as likely to reflect the actual infant mortality rate for the Fairmount neighborhood; this value is twice the United States rate of 6.1 per 1000 live births, and somewhat higher than 11.5 deaths per 1,000 births, the national value for infants born to black mothers (Centers for Disease Control, 2014). The infant mortality rate in Fairmount is approximately the same as the infant mortality rate of Mexico.

What It means

Although the precise causes of infant mortality are poorly understood, relatively high rates of infant mortality in this community indicative of health disparities in general, and a unhealthy environment.

Birth Outcomes: Preterm Delivery & Small for Gestational Age

Why It Matters

Low birth weight is a combination of two different but sometimes related processes: preterm delivery and slowed fetal growth. Preterm delivery is the birth of a child before the 37th week of pregnancy. By definition, this means that a preterm child is born at least 3 weeks before the baby was due, which is around the 40th week. The causes of preterm deliveries are varied, but preterm deliveries are more common among black women than white women, and higher among low income and less educated women than the better educated and more affluent.

Aside from the medical costs associated with many preterm deliveries, many preterm children have cognitive and behavioral issues. A recent review of the literature concluded that “moderate and late preterm children are at risk for school problems, lower cognitive functioning, behavior problems, and psychiatric disorders” (de Jong, Verhoeven, & van Baar, 2012).

Small for gestational age (SGA) is the term used to describe newborns who have a birth weight that is low in comparison to other babies born at the same week of pregnancy. Health professionals define an SGA delivery as a newborn child who falls below the 10th percentile of weight for a given gestational age. As with preterm delivery, SGA is also associated with poorer cognitive function than heavier newborns (Lee and Houk, 2012).

About the Data

We do not have specific data on preterm deliveries or SGA in Fairmount. However, birth certificate data for Essex County for the years 1999 through 2003 provide some indication of likely Fairmount rates (Backstrand, 2007). A special research project using birth certificate data from New Jersey would provide specific information on Fairmount birth outcomes.

Figure 55. Rates of preterm delivery in Essex County, NJ (1999-2003)

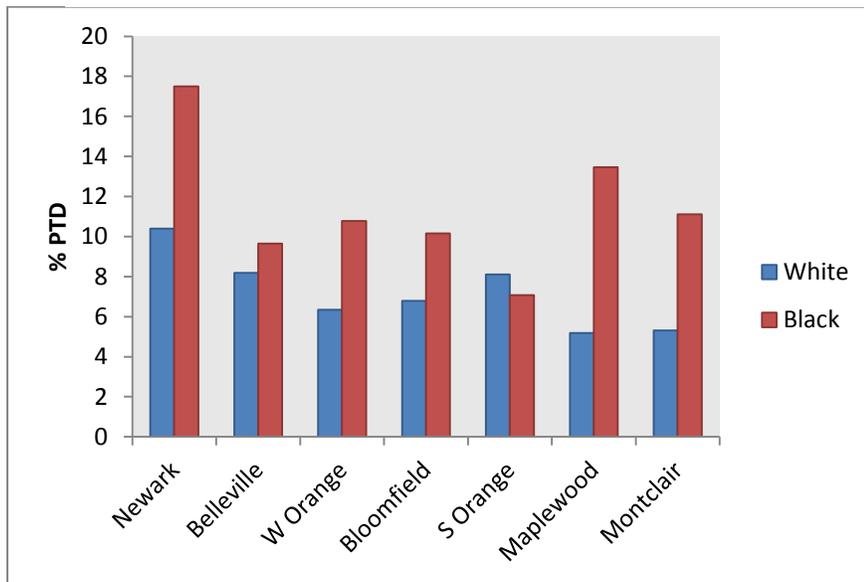
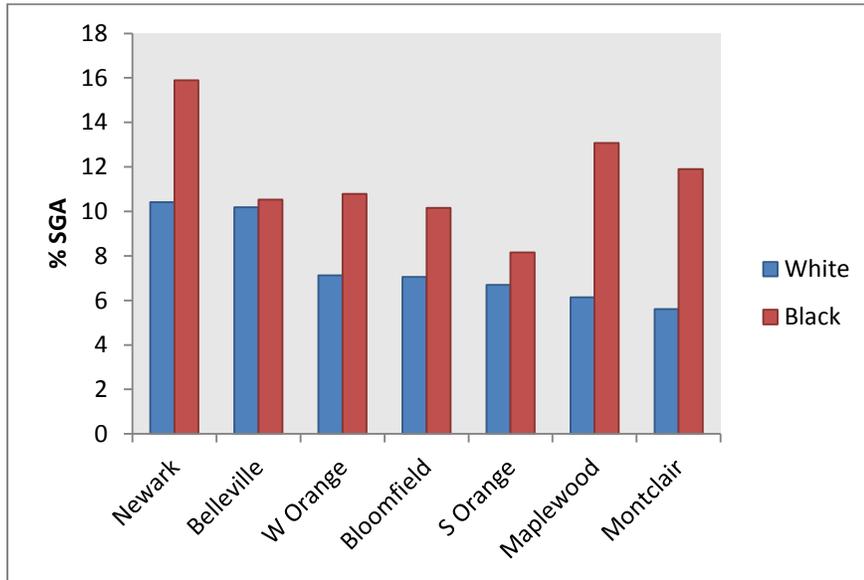


Figure 56. Rates of small for gestational age in Essex County, NJ (1999-2003)



Preterm Delivery in Newark

Figure 55 shows rates of preterm delivery for a number of Essex County, New Jersey communities during the four years 1999 through 2003. The rate of preterm delivery in Newark was nearly 18% for black mothers. In comparison, the preterm delivery rate for the U.S. in 2003 was 12.3% (Martin et al, 2005). The black Newark preterm delivery rate was about 60% higher than rates for white Newark mothers, and more than 3 times the rate among white mothers in neighboring middle class Maplewood.

Small for Gestational Age in Newark

Figure 56 shows rates of small for gestational age in Essex County. In 1999 through 2003, nearly 16% of deliveries by black mothers in Newark were SGA. In comparison, just 5% of deliveries by white Maplewood mothers were SGA. In other words, the rate of SGA among black Newark mothers was more than 3 times the white rate in Maplewood.

What It Means

Because of the extreme poverty of many Fairmount households, rates of preterm delivery and SGA in Fairmount very likely exceed the Newark rates, which are already very high. Preterm and SGA infants are more likely to have cognitive, behavioral and school problems than full term infants, and in the case of preterm deliveries are more likely to end up in special education (de Jong, Verhoeven, & van Baar, 2012; Lee and Houk, 2012).

Two different classes of interventions should be considered for Fairmount. First, programs to reduce the rates of preterm delivery and SGA. These might include programs to improve the health and nutritional status of potential mothers, and also programs to ensure that pregnant

mothers receive early, supportive prenatal care. A second of set of interventions would be programs designed mitigate the cognitive and other effects of preterm delivery and SGA.

Teenage Sexual Activity and Pregnancy

Why It Matters

Sexual activity among American teenagers is pervasive. Unprotected sex can lead to adverse outcomes, including exposure to HIV and other STDs, and to teenage pregnancies that can disadvantage both mother and child.

About the Data

For this section, we rely on data from the *2011 New Jersey Student Health Survey*, which is administered by the state on alternate years, for information on the sexual activities of New Jersey teenagers (New Jersey Department of Education, 2012). We also rely on data from the *American Community Survey* for 2009-2013, which provides fertility estimates for females aged 15 to 19 years.¹⁵

Rates of Teenage Pregnancy

Teenage pregnancies are a major focus of many Fairmount parents. In one focus group, a participant stated, “Kids are out here having sex and they're not wrapping it up.” Several of the focus group and interview participants stated that they themselves were teenage parents.

We do not know the rates of sexual activity or pregnancy among teenaged girls living in Fairmount. The 2011 report on the *New Jersey Student Health Survey Of High School Students* provides some insight into likely sexual behaviors in Fairmount. In all of New Jersey, nearly a quarter of high school students aged 15 years or younger had engaged in sexual intercourse, and half of students aged 16 and 17 years had experienced sexual intercourse (New Jersey Department of Education, 2012). Black and Hispanic students were more likely to have had sexual intercourse than white students and to have had engaged in sex at a young age, and to have had multiple partners. Additionally, Black students were 3.6 times more likely than white students to have not used birth control at the last sexual encounter; Hispanic students were 2.5 as likely as white students. Although these data do not provide a precise picture of teenage sexual activity in Fairmount, one can expect that many Fairmount teens are sexually active and at high risk of STDs and pregnancy.

We also do not have an accurate sense of teenage pregnancy rates in Fairmount. However, the birth rate for Newark adolescents aged 15 to 19 years is estimated by the *American Community Survey* to be 14 births per 1,000 females aged 15 to 19. This compares with 12 births per 1,000 females aged 15 to 19 for New Jersey as a whole. However, these values fall far below U.S. rates

¹⁵ Since these values are based on self-report, much more accurate approaches to calculating teenage pregnancy rates use birth certificate data.

that are based on birth certificate data: 20 per 1000 for white teenagers, 44 per 1,000 for black teenagers and 46 per 1,000 for Hispanic teenagers. One could reasonably expect the Fairmount rates to be at least as high as the national values based on birth certificate data.

In the focus groups and interviews, parents expressed great concern about teenage sexual activity and pregnancy.

What It Means

Teenaged sexual activity can lead to any number of adverse outcomes, including pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) such as HIV, gonorrhea, chlamydia, and human papilloma virus. Young people aged 13 to 24 are a quarter of all new HIV infections. And, black youth are an estimated 57% of new HIV infections among youth as compared to just 20% being white (Centers for Disease Control, 2014).

Teenaged pregnancies bring substantial costs for mother, child and society. Teenaged mothers are nearly twice as likely to drop out of school as girls who do not give birth during the teen years (Perper, Peterson, & Manlove, 2010). And, teenaged mothers are at greater risk of future poverty and economic deprivation. Children of teenaged mothers are also at greater risk of being born premature or small-for-gestational age, placed in a foster home, dropping out of school, facing unemployment as an adult and of being incarcerated (Hoffman, 2008).

Parents have a difficult time talking to their children about sex. “Or trying to explain stuff like that. It's hard for someone to sit there and talk to somebody – to talk to their child like, “Oh, you can just use this condom... Deep down, you don't want to talk to your child about this even though it's healthy. Some of the kids are too young.”

Sex education is needed for children at an early age. Some parents believed that it should start as early as 7 years old. Participants stressed that many adolescents are sexually active before high school and, therefore, sex education is necessary in elementary school. Some type of sex education is also important they suggested to teach adolescents about their bodies and personal hygiene.

Prenatal Care

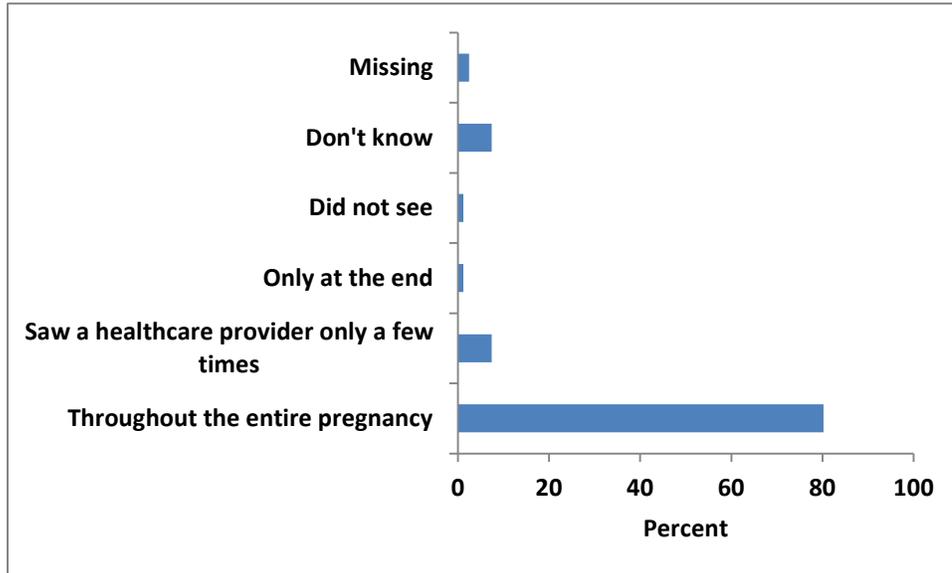
Why It Matters

Prenatal care is a critical component of preventive health care. Prenatal care optimally begins in the first trimester of pregnancy, and includes a suite of lab tests, physical exams, interviews and lifestyle advice. Early and sustained prenatal care protects the health of both mother and infant. Additionally, rates of prenatal care in a community are a good indicator of the extent to which individuals are integrated with the health care system.

About the Data

The NFPN community survey asked respondents the question, “Did your child’s biological mother receive prenatal care?” The New Jersey Department of Health (2013) recently reported on prenatal care in Greater Newark using birth certificate files.

Figure 57. Use of prenatal care during pregnancy



Use of Prenatal Care in Fairmount

Figure 57 shows the NFPN community survey respondents reported that most mothers received prenatal care “throughout the entire pregnancy.” However, birth certificate data for 2011 show just over half (54%) of Greater Newark pregnant mothers received “adequate” prenatal care (New Jersey Department of Health, 2013). We suspect that “adequate” rates are even lower in Fairmount.

What It Means

We regard the community survey question as inadequate to shed much light on use of prenatal care in Fairmount. In the future, analyses of birth certificate data should yield much more valid measures of prenatal care in Fairmount. We feel that the extent of use of prenatal care in Fairmount is presently unknown, although it is our guess that fewer than half of pregnancies receive adequate prenatal care.

Children’s Access To Medical Care

Why It Matters

Health care experts agree that children and adults benefit from having a single provider, or better yet a team of providers (a “medical home”) that know the patient and provide patient-centered, comprehensive, and accessible care. Children from low income families all too often

experience episodic, uncoordinated care. And, for many the emergency room is the primary source of care, which is both expensive and a poor substitute for high quality primary care.

About the Data

The NFPN community survey asked about usual sources of health care for children.

Figure 58. Place where child usually goes for health care

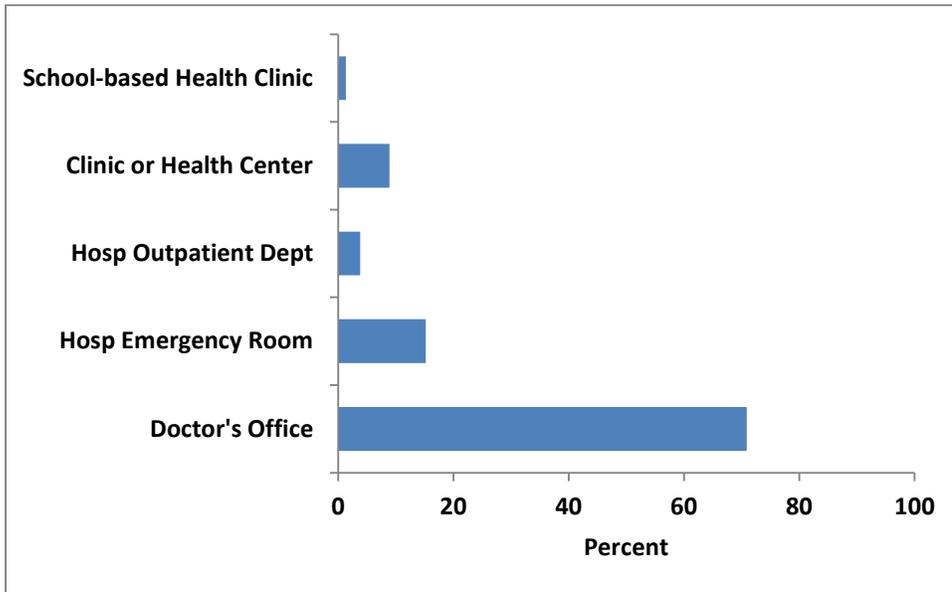
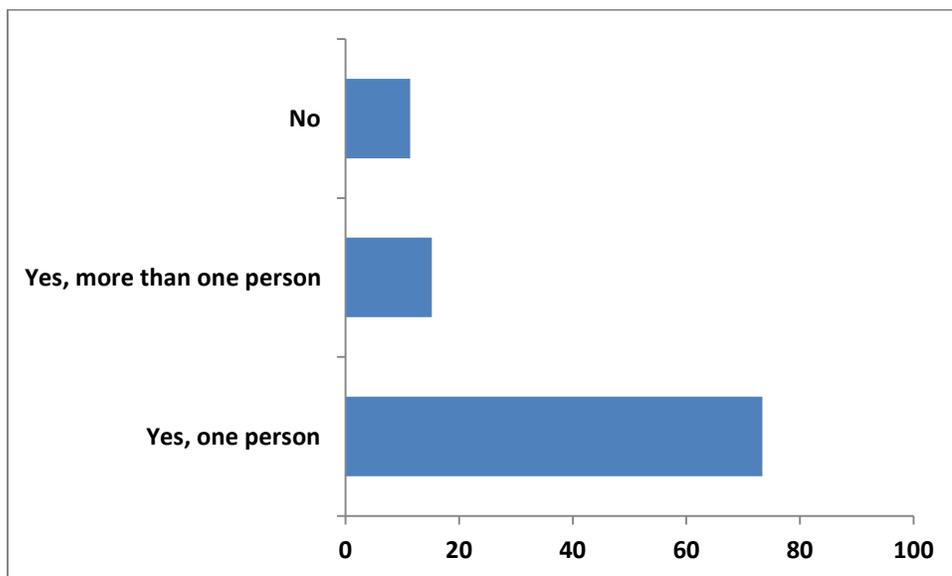


Figure 59. Does child have a doctor or nurse who knows child well and is familiar with parent/guardian



Access to Medical Care

Parents and guardians were asked *“Is there a place that your child USUALLY goes when he/she is sick or you need advice about his/her health?”* Ninety-five percent (77 of 81) answered “yes.”

Figure 58 shows where these children usually received health care. Parents and guardians reported that of those with a usual source of health care, nearly 80 percent received this at a doctor’s office. Just 15% were reported to usually receive care at a hospital emergency room.

Figure 59 shows the responses to the question, *“A personal doctor or nurse is a health professional who knows your child well and is familiar with your child’s health history. This can be a general doctor, a pediatrician, a specialist doctor, a nurse practitioner, or a physician’s assistant. Do you have one or more persons you think of as your child’s personal doctor or nurse?”* Nearly three-quarters of children were reported to have a health care professional who knew the child well.

Use of the Emergency Room

Despite the responses above, which indicate good access to medical care, 32% of respondents reported that their child had visited the emergency room (ER) during the past year. Nearly half of these respondents (46%) indicated that their child went to the ER 2 or more times during the past year. Asthma and injuries were the major reasons for these visits.

What It Means

The survey responses suggest that most Fairmount children have a health care professional who knows the child and who can provide continuity of care. However, approximately 1 in 10 children appear to have no such relationship and rely on the emergency room for care.

Alcohol and Drug Abuse

Why It Matters

Sales and use of illegal recreational drugs are often described as important problems in low income, urban neighborhoods. Drug sales have multiple negative effects on communities, contributing to a sense of lawlessness, making certain areas and times of day “off limits” for many people, providing bad role models, fueling the power of gangs, resulting in the imprisonment of young people, and providing ease of access to drugs that can directly harm people in a range of ways. Alcohol intake has less pernicious social effects on urban communities, but still is too often an important problem among teenagers and adults.

About the Data

Our information on drug abuse comes from parent/guardian focus groups and interviews. We did not collect quantitative information on alcohol or drug abuse. However, data from the 2011 *New Jersey Student Health Survey*, which is administered by the state on alternate years, provides data on self-reported alcohol and drug use by New Jersey teenagers (New Jersey Department of Education, 2012).

A review of the literature showed surprisingly little current information on the prevalence of alcohol and recreational drug use in urban settings such as Fairmount.

Drug Sales

Sales of illegal drugs are common events in parts of Fairmount, and often occur out in the open. These sales contribute to a sense of lawlessness and a social environment that is out of control.

A female youth informant noted,

"The boys and the guys – the drug dealers, they just basically hang on the corners. Some try to talk to girls. Things of that nature and everything. So when females walk past, they'll just say inappropriate things to them."

Another youth participant stated,

" I think that the police should stop the drug dealers and everything from being out there in the environment and being able to just blatantly be on the corner in front of the corner store selling drugs and everything."

These sales are often gang-related. As one youth informant stated,

"There's gang members on the block. They like to rob, steal cars, break into people's houses and kill people over drugs on my block. I see that a lot."

Recreational Drug Use in Fairmount

We have no reliable information on the extent of recreational drug use among adolescents in Fairmount. However, many residents perceive this to be a big problem. One youth participant noted,

"a lot of kids my age smoke weed [marijuana] or smoke black and milds [cigarillos] and everything like that... They also do a lot of drugs like pop Mollys [ecstasy/MDMA]. A lot of pills and everything, and they just use that as an escape from the world they got to live in every day. For a lot of them, they're just really depressed with their life that they have to do a lot of things like that every day just to keep them out of it. It's kind of sad."

Among New Jersey high school students, white, black and Hispanic students report approximately equal lifetime use of marijuana (around 40%). The New Jersey *Student Health Survey* data show little race/ethnicity differences in lifetime use of cocaine or crack (4 to 6%). Unfortunately, the reports using these data do not break out results for low income, urban areas.

Youth Alcohol Intake in Fairmount

Among New Jersey high school students, approximately 4 in 10 students reported having at least one drink during the past 30 days (New Jersey Department of Education, 2012). White and Hispanic students were approximately equal in having consumed alcohol during the past month, but alcohol intake among black students was much lower: just 29% of students. Black

high school students were also much less likely than whites or Hispanics to report binge drinking.

In New York City, using 2005 data, 35% of youth reported using alcohol during the past month (New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, 2007). Just 8% of black youth reported engaging in binge drinking during the past month, which was lower than the figures for Hispanic (18%) and white youth (28%).

What It Means

Information from Fairmount residents suggest that drugs are an important community problem, particularly in the form of drug sales. Residents would like to see the drug and associated gang problem dealt with efficiently and sensitively by the Newark police.

The prevalence of recreational drug use in Fairmount among teenagers is less clear. Based on data from other communities, alcohol intake is unlikely to be a major problem for Fairmount adolescents.

Asthma

Why It Matters

Asthma is a common chronic pediatric health problem. Asthma is associated with increased absenteeism from school (Silverstein et al, 2001; Bonilla et al, 2005). With proper medical treatment and environmental interventions, asthma can be substantially. However, this requires strong patient relationships with health care providers.

About the Data

The NFPN community survey asked parents and caregivers about whether their child had ever been diagnosed with asthma. We also asked parents and caregivers about asthma during the focus groups and interviews.

Asthma in Fairmount

On the NFPN community survey, parents and guardians were asked “Has a doctor ever told you your child has any of the following?” Over a third (36%) of respondents reported that their child had been diagnosed with asthma. Since these values are based on self-report on a unspecified child, these values have uncertain validity.¹⁶

A New York City study of school children found 28% of children were reported by their parents to have been diagnosed with asthma in those areas of the city with high asthma hospitalization rates (Claudio, Stingone & Godbold, 2006). These areas were centered around the South Bronx, Harlem and Central Brooklyn—areas that are not terribly different in many ways from Fairmount.

¹⁶ A future study might examine rates of asthma using direct measurement, and also document medical treatment of asthma in Fairmount.

What It Means

Asthma appears to be an important problem in Fairmount. Interventions are likely needed to identify children with asthma, create and support asthma management plans, and reduce asthma triggers.

Access to Healthful Food

Why it Matters

A healthful diet is dependent on access to varied, high quality and affordable food. Many low income populations live within areas that often are termed “food deserts”: places where it is difficult to obtain the range of high quality foods that are needed to maintain and promote health. Additionally, low incomes households are often faced with difficult decisions concerning the allocation of scarce funds, sometimes having to choose between food and a range of other essentials such as heat, rent, car payments, etc. As a result, low income households often suffer from “food insecurity,” the “limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways” (Bickle et al, 2000). Additionally, members of low income households disproportionately eat energy dense/high calorie foods and are less likely to consume more costly and perishable fresh fruits and vegetables (Drewnowski A & Eichelsdoerfer, 2010).

Diet can adversely influence children in many ways. First, poor quality diets during pregnancy have been increasingly associated with both short-term and long-term health effects on children. Childhood obesity, although a problem at all economic levels, is disproportionately a problem in low income populations (Levine, 2011). In 2012, more than one third of U.S. children and adolescents were overweight or obese (Ogden et al, 2014).

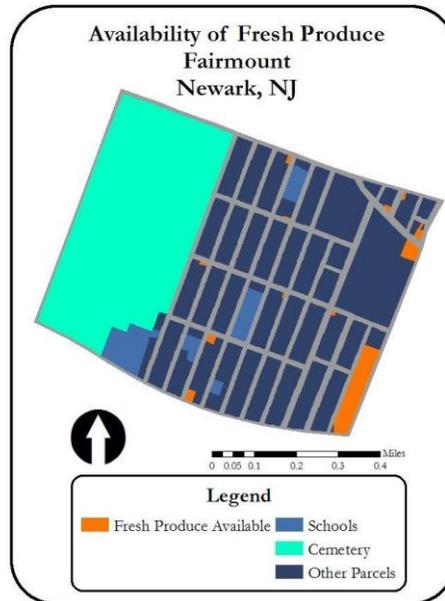
About the Data

Information on food acquisition and the food environment of Fairmount comes from the NFPN community assessment of neighborhood resources, the NFPN survey of neighborhood residents with children, and focus groups with neighborhood residents. Estimated rates of food insecurity in Essex County, New Jersey come from the *Feed America* organization (*Feed America*, 2014).

Access to Food

Map 5 shows the locations where fresh produce can be obtained in Fairmount. A *Pathmark* supermarket, a part of a large regional chain, is located in the southeast corner of the NFPN on Bergen Street. Some blocks to the north of the NFPN on Bergen Street is a second, new smaller supermarket (*Food Depot*). As **Map 5** indicates, a number of smaller bodegas are scattered throughout the neighborhood, so that few residents have more than a few blocks to travel to gain access to some food. All of the bodegas in the neighborhood have the ingredients to at least make a salad, which we define as lettuce, tomato, and onions. However, bodegas have a much more limited supply of fruits, vegetables, and poultry and meat than supermarkets, and sell these at much higher prices.

Map 5. Sources of fresh produce in Fairmount



The NFPN community survey asked respondents “*where do you do most frequently buy groceries?*” As would be expected, the NFPN community survey showed nearly 45% of participants relied on the *Pathmark* for grocery shopping (**Figure 60**). However, over a third of respondents reported that they travelled outside of Newark to grocery shop. A number of residents purchased groceries in Kearny. Others reported shopping in East Orange, West Orange, South Orange, Harrison, Union, and Hillside. Just 6% of respondents reported using a bodega as a principal source of groceries.

Although nearly half of respondents reported the Bergen Street *Pathmark* as their principal grocery store, the quality of food at this *Pathmark* was questioned by survey, interview, and focus group participants. A 2012 project by Susan Caleb, a former UMDNJ School of Public Health student, showed the physical appearance of the produce at the Bergen Street *Pathmark* was far inferior to that sold at the South Orange *Pathmark*.

Despite complaints about food quality, some residents argue that having the *Pathmark* on Bergen Street is a better option than having to rely solely on neighborhood bodegas for groceries, “I think that the *Pathmark* is a good option, but also [...] I realize that there's a lot of crap in there. But I think it's better. Going to *Pathmark* is better than going to any of these bodegas” (Business owner and resident). However, because of concerns about food quality and other issues, 37% of survey participants reported that they go out of the neighborhood to do the majority of their grocery shopping. Many residents reported that this was not a burden

because of the availability of transportation. Recall that *American Community Survey* data show half of Fairmount households own a car.

Figure 60. Where do you most frequently buy groceries?

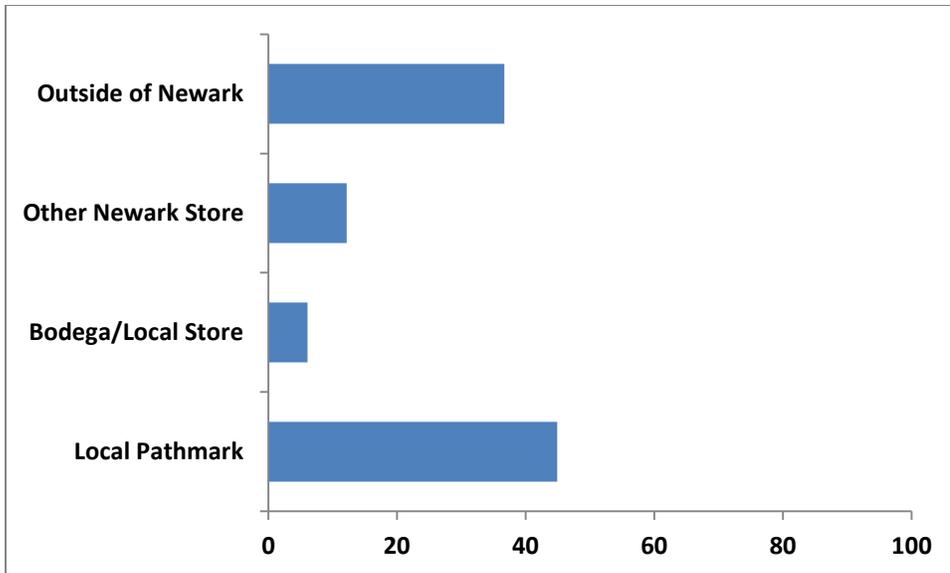
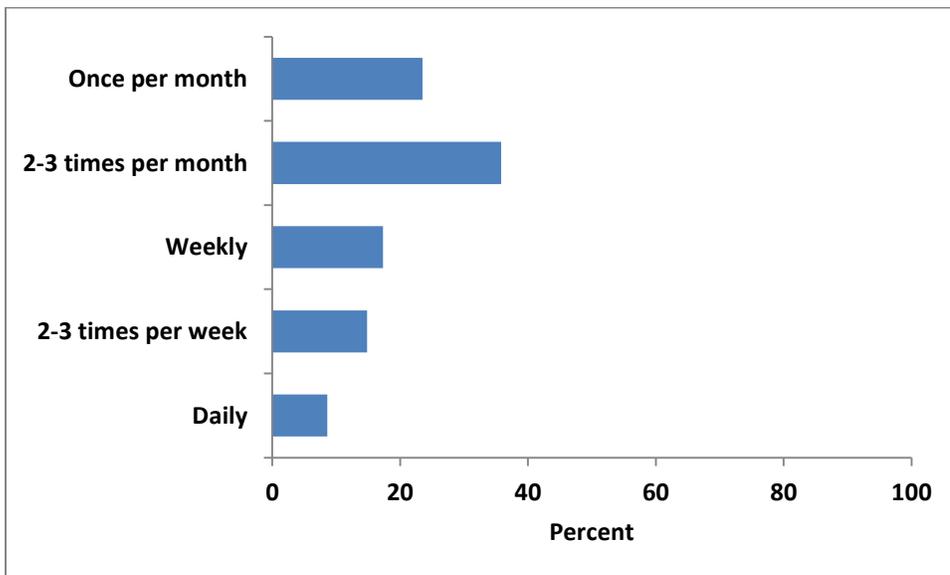


Figure 61. How frequently respondent shopped at principal source of groceries



NFPN community survey respondents were asked how often they shopped at their favorite grocery store. The survey showed 36% of respondents do their grocery shopped 2 to 3 times a month, while 23% of survey respondents there shopped once a month (**Figure 61**).

Food Security

Food security is a term that refers to the ability to access sufficient food at all times to support an active and healthy life. A food insecure family might, for example, run out of food at the month, or be reduced to eating a monotonous, low cost diet comprised of starchy staples, etc.

We do not have specific information on the extent of food insecurity in Fairmount. However, the *Feeding America* organization, using data collected by the *American Community Survey* and other federal surveys, estimate that 19% of individuals and 18% of children from Essex County are food insecure (*Feeding America*, 2014). Based on the very low incomes of many households in Fairmount, the food insecurity rates are likely to be far greater than the Essex County value.¹⁷

What it Means

Our research shows the Fairmount Neighborhood does not meet the definition of a food desert: a *Pathmark* supermarket is located in the neighborhood and a second grocery store has recently opened just a few blocks north of the neighborhood on Bergen Street. Additionally, several bodegas are scattered throughout the neighborhood. Therefore, Fairmount residents have theoretical access to a varied and healthful diet. However, this does not mean that obtaining acceptable, high quality, and healthy food is necessarily easy or affordable. And, estimated rates of food insecurity in Essex County are quite high (nearly 1 in 8 children), and are in all likelihood much higher in Fairmount.

Half of Fairmount households own a car, so transportation to supermarkets outside of Newark is common for some households. The scattered locations of these food venues suggests that at least some of these residents may do shopping near their place of employment.

Relatively few respondents reported using bodegas as their principal source of groceries. Research in the south ward of Newark by Dr. Hanna Hamdi has shown bodega food prices increase at the beginning of each month in response to flows of public assistance and food stamps into the community (Hamdi, 2012). With the supermarkets concentrated on Bergen Street, residents of the “back” (western) part of the neighborhood must travel several blocks to reach a supermarket.

Access to good nutrition is identified as a concern by some in the neighborhood. A business owner and resident when asked about issues in the neighborhood said,

“Food. How we get food. Also, access to fresh food. The fact that kids are spending so much time drinking sugary drinks and these corner waters and junk foods. You can look at any of these corner stores and there's a pack of kids in there in the morning before they even get to school just eating junk. And I think education for the parents about nutritional values” (Business owner and resident).

¹⁷ A future survey should try to carefully measure the rates and extent of food insecurity in Fairmount.

The same participant suggested that a community program that focuses on nutrition would be ideal. This resident suggested that a lack of knowledge of healthy eating was a major issue for the community. “[T]hat’s the cause of most of the sicknesses: poor diets” (Business owner and resident). However, the program needed to be more than simply educational: she suggested that it should also be a hands-on program, “if you can grow some stuff, pick your own apples, pick your own berries, that’s a plus” (Business owner and resident).

Children’s Physical Activity

Why It Matters

In the midst of an United States obesity epidemic, children have never needed more opportunities for physical activity. Children’s exercise and play has numerous health and social benefits. Safe, attractive, and convenient parks, playgrounds, and other recreational sites provide venues for physical activity and also provide potential for the development of social relationships with other parents and neighbors.

About the Data

Data on access to green space and playgrounds was collected in the community survey and through focus groups and interviews. The community inventory documented the availability of open space and recreational opportunities in Fairmount.

Photo 7. The KaBoom Playground at the corner of 9th Street and 12th Avenue



Access to Places for Recreation: Parks, Playgrounds, & Supervised Play

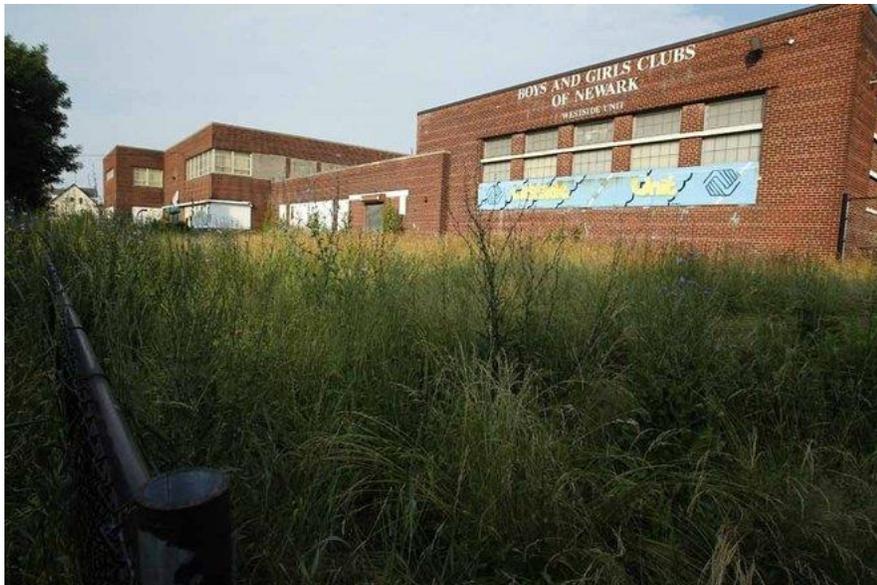
Fairmount has few places where children can engage in physical activity—other than on the streets and sidewalks or in backyards. The entire neighborhood has just one playground: the *KaBoom Playground*, which is located at the corner of 9th Street and 12th Avenue. The playground is equipped with swings, a slide, a see-saw, and picnic benches. The playground renovated just last year and is geared toward children between the ages of 4 and 12. However, it was quickly adopted by local drug users and soon was marked by graffiti and litter (**Photo 7**). The *Urban League of Essex County* has made a concerted and sustained effort to maintain and refurbish the playground, but the struggle to keep the playground in good shape requires constant attention.

Other than the *KaBoom Playground*, a tiny triangular park is located at the intersection of West Market Street and Central Avenue, which contains trees and benches, but is bounded by the two major streets.

Not surprisingly, Fairmount residents report that there is no place for children to play. The NFPN community survey asked respondents whether there were enough parks and playgrounds in the neighborhood, and just 17% agreed. And, just 16% felt that these were of high quality.

Parents who were interviewed stated that their children typically play in and around the home. One 18 year old female reported that she walks three blocks south of the neighborhood, to the 31 acre West Side Park to hang out. Several days after interviewing this young woman, a 17-year old girl was shot dead in front of a friend’s home just across from West Side Park in an execution style attack.

Photo 8. The Boys and Girls Club of Newark, 161 Littleton Avenue (closed)



Source: The Star-Ledger

Other recreational activities are limited to non-existent. Many community members talk about the former *Boys & Girls Club of Newark*, which was located at 161 Littleton Avenue, as being once a favorite venue (**Photo 8**). Those who grew up in the neighborhood state that they frequently went to the facility to hang out with friends, exercise, and have a safe place to go when parents were at work. Unfortunately, this facility closed down in 2008 due to budget constraints. The building that once housed the *Boys & Girls Club* currently sits vacant. An effort to buy the property by *AristaCare Health Services* for a nursing home was rebuffed in 2011 when the organization encountered strong community opposition to the sale. The property was recently sold to the charter school, TEAM Academy, which plans to demolish the building for new construction.

The loss of the *Boys & Girls Club* was a topic that came up in every focus group and nearly every interview. Parents and community members recognize that young Fairmount residents are in need of a space where they can be physically active. Their frustration with the lack of community centers is heightened by the high percentage of vacant properties within the neighborhood. One parent explains, “there's so many open fields here for a skating rink. We have movie theater right here, but we need a skating rink. There's no swimming pool. There's no swimming pool right here.” It is difficult for parents in the community to ensure that their children get adequate exercise when there are few secure places for physical activity.

When asked in an open-ended survey question about where besides parks and playgrounds that their children played, 14 residents (17%) said their children played in the backyard. A quarter of respondents reported that their children played in front of the house.

Fairmount Children's Physical Activity

The NFPN community survey asked parents and guardian's about their child's physical activity. **Figure 62** shows responses to the question, “*How much time each day is your child physically active (physical activity at school, sports, running, etc.)?*” Two-thirds of respondents reported that their child was active an hour or more a day. Ten percent reported that their child engaged in less than 30 minutes of physical activity per day.

Figure 62. Amount of time each day that your child is physically active (physical activity at school, sports, running, etc.)?

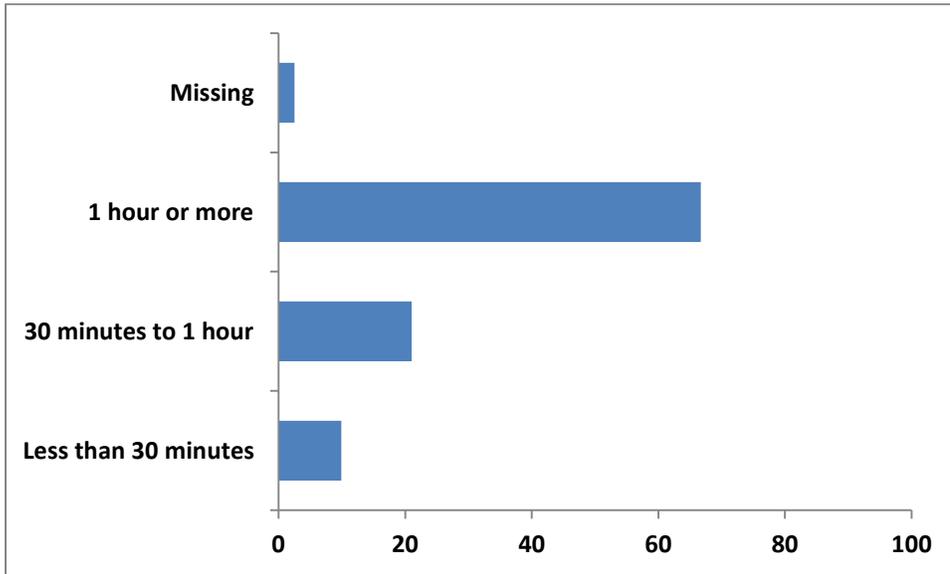


Figure 63. Number of days per week that child was physically active at least 60 minutes

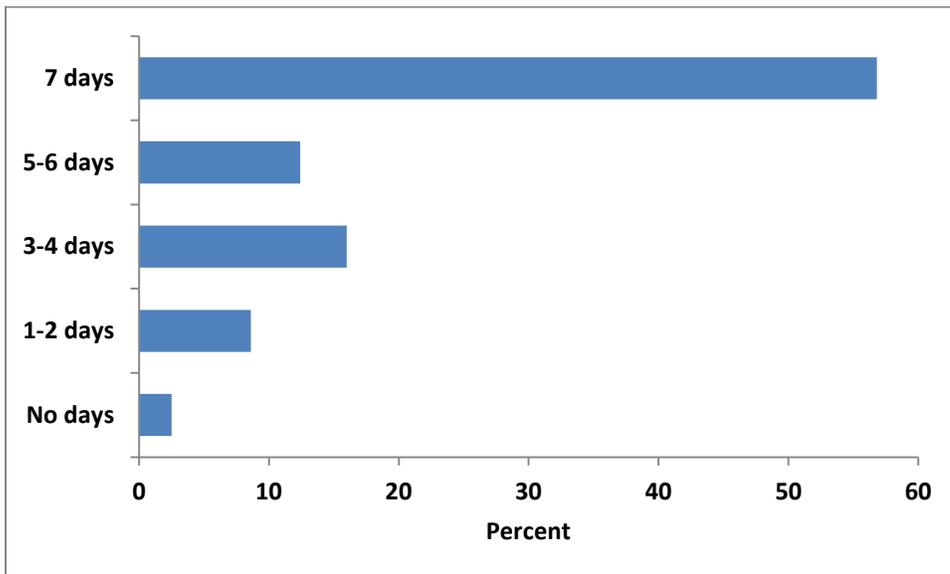


Figure 63 shows parent and guardian responses to the question, “During the past 7 days, on how many days was your child physically active for a total of at least 60 minutes per day? (Add up all the time your child spent in any kind of physical activity that increased his/her heart rate and made him/her breathe hard some of the time.)” Half of parents and guardians reported that their child was physically active for at least 60 minutes every day of the week. Eleven percent of respondents reported that their child was active less than 60 minutes per day for the majority of days of the week.

What It Means

Fairmount children have few locations where they can engage in safe and supervised physical activity. The *Boys and Girls Club of Newark* on Littleton Avenue once provided such a venue, and its closing in 2008 was a major blow to the neighborhood. The building currently stands vacant, and may soon be demolished, although neighborhood children sneak onto the premises to play basketball and use the playground.

Only two parks fall within the Fairmount bounds: the *KaBoom Playground*, which is located at the corner of 9th Street and 12th Avenue, and a tiny park wedged between two major streets (Central Avenue and West Market Street).

Because of a lack of recreational resources in Fairmount, local children must either travel outside of the neighborhood, or play in the front yard or street. In some cases, children play in their backyards. As a result, Fairmount children have little opportunity to engage in secure, supervised physical activity. Although most parents and guardians report that their children engage in adequate physical activity, the GRPA indicators that were used for this assessment are terribly limited in their capacity to assess children's activity. A more detailed study of physical activity in Fairmount would yield useful information on the specifics of children's play and physical activity.

The Required GPRA Indicators

What Are GPRA Indicators?

GPRA (Government Performance and Results Act) indicators are federally mandated quantitative measures that can be used to evaluate program performance. The Promise Neighborhood program has 15 GRPA indicators: 7 academic project indicators and 8 family community-support indicators. Organizations that receive federal Promise Neighborhood implementation grants must collect these metrics. Although not required of agencies receiving Promise Neighborhood planning grants, we made great efforts to collect this information for three reasons: 1) to gain experience in obtaining this information, 2) to demonstrate capacity to collect this information, and 3) to obtain important baseline data that could be used to plan for implementation of a Promise Neighborhood in Fairmount.

Newark Fairmount Promise Neighborhood GPRA Indicators

The Promise Neighborhood program has 15 required GPRA indicators. Many of these have sub-measures. An Urban Institute document describes the data sources and equations used to calculate these measures (Comey et al, 2013). **Table 14** summarizes these GPRA indicators for the Newark Fairmount Promise Neighborhood. The sections below outline the sources of data used in our calculations, and makes describes the data that are required to comply with Department of Education GPRA requirements.

GPR #1. Number and percent of children birth to kindergarten entry who have a place where they usually go, other than an emergency room, when they are sick or in need of advice about their health

GPR Protocol: The GPR #1 target population is Promise Neighborhood children ages 0 to 5 years. The data are to be collected by a random neighborhood survey of parents and guardians.

NFPN Protocol: In compliance with Promise Neighborhood guidelines, NSRC staff collected information for this indicator using a probability survey of Fairmount parents and guardians with children . The survey included the three GPR mandated questions:

- *“Is there a place that your child USUALLY goes when he/she is sick or you need advice about his/her health?”*
- *Is it a doctor’s office, emergency room, hospital outpatient department of some other place?*
- *A personal doctor of nurse is a health professional who knows your child well and is familiar with your child’s health history. This can be a general doctor, a pediatrician, a specialist doctor, a nurse practitioner, or a physician’s assistant. Do you have one or more persons you think of as your child’s personal doctor or nurse.”*

NFPS addressed these questions to the parent with respect to the child with the next upcoming birthday.

NFPN Results for GPR #1: For parents with a child 0 to 5 years, the value for GPR #1 was 82.6% (19 of 23)(**Table 14**). Based on a population of 680 Fairmount children (from the 2010 Census), we estimate that 564 Fairmount children under age 6 have a medical home.

Changes Required for Compliance with Federal GPR Guidelines: None. The NFPN GPR #1 methodology is in compliance for federal Department of Education guidelines. However, future NFPN surveys should ask about whether the child lives in Fairmount.

Table 14. Summary of GPRA Indicators

GPRA		Measure	Population	N	%
Number	Equation				
1	1.a,b	Children with a medical home	Ages 0 to 5 years	564	83
2	2.a	Children with age-appropriate functioning	3-year olds	---	---
	2.b		Kindergarteners	---	---
3	3.a,b	Participating in center-based early learning	Ages 0 to 5 years	360	53
	3.c,d	Participating in home-based childcare		---	---
	3.e,f	Participating in center-based or home-based early learning		---	---
4	4.a	Students at or above grade level in math (<i>Thirteenth Avenue School & West Side HS</i>)	Grade 3		14
			Grade 4		15
			Grade 5		21
			Grade 6		26
			Grade 7		---
			Grade 8		---
			High School		40
	4.b	Students at or above grade level in language arts (<i>Thirteenth Avenue School & West Side HS</i>)	Grade 3		14
			Grade 4		15
			Grade 5		17
			Grade 6		14
			Grade 7		18
			Grade 8		30
			High School		71
5	5.1	Average daily attendance (<i>Thirteenth Avenue School & West Side HS</i>)	Grade 6		---
			Grade 7		---
			Grade 8		---
			Grade 9		---
	5.1a	Percent of days absent (<i>Thirteenth Avenue School & West Side HS</i>)	Grade 6		---
			Grade 7		---
			Grade 8		---
			Grade 9		---
	5.2b	Rate of chronic absenteeism (<i>Thirteenth Avenue School & West Side HS</i>)	Grade 6		---
			Grade 7		---
			Grade 8		---
			Grade 9		---
		Grades K-8		32	
6	---	Graduation rate (<i>West Side HS</i>)	9 th grade cohort		66
7	7.a	Students who enrolled in college or university (<i>West Side HS, 2010 graduates</i>)	High school graduate cohort	117	42
	7.b	Students who enrolled in college without remediation		---	---
	7.c	Students who graduated within traditional 100 percent completion time (AA & BA/BS)(<i>West Side HS, 2004 graduates</i>)		15	6
	7.d	Students who graduated within 150		19	8

		percent completion time (AA & BA/BS)(West Side HS, 2004 graduates)			
	7.e	Students who graduated within 100 percent completion time (vocational)		---	---
	7.f	Students who graduated within 150 percent completion time (vocational)		---	---
	7.g	Students who earned industry certificate		---	---
8	8	Students who participate in at least 60 min of physical activity, 7 days per week	Fairmount middle and high school students†	---	54
9	9	Students who consume 5 or more fruits and vegetables per day	Fairmount middle and high school students at target schools†	---	15
10	10.a	Students who feel safe at school	Fairmont middle and high school students†	---	88
	10.b	Students who feel traveling to and from school is safe		---	76
	10.c	Students who feel school and travelling to and from school is safe		---	71
11	11	Student mobility rate	West Side HS		26
			Thirteenth Avenue School		43
			MLK School		43
12	12.a,b	Parents read to children at least 3 times per week	Children aged 0 to 5	788	87
13	13.a	Parents who encourage children to read	Kindergarten through 8 th grade	1101	71
14	14.a	Parents talk to children about college	9 th through 12 th graders	1153	100
	14.b	Parents talk to children about careers		1061	92
	14.c	Parents talk to children about college and careers		1061	92
15	15.a	Students with access to Internet only at home	Middle and High School students	0	0
	15.b	Students with access to Internet only at school		231	20
	15.c	Students with access to Internet both at home and school		922	80
	15.d	Students without access to Internet at both home and school		0	0

† Parental report, not student report

GPRA #2: Number and percent of three-year-olds and children in kindergarten who demonstrate at the beginning of the program or school year age-appropriate functioning across multiple domains of early learning as determined using developmentally-appropriate early learning measures

GPRA Protocol: The GPRA #2 target population is Promise Neighborhood 3-year-olds and children in kindergarten. The data are valid assessments of early learning development and skills to be obtained from “early childhood partners” (i.e., NPS and other early childhood providers in Fairmount).

NFPN Protocol: NSRC was unable to obtain this information from NPS and Newark charter schools.

NFPN Results for GPRA #2: The NFPN has no data for GRPRA #2 indicators.

Changes Required for Compliance with Federal GPRA Guidelines: For compliance with Department of Education requirements, the NFPN should in the future “collect aggregated assessment data from their early child care providers for the three year olds and kindergarten students attending the targeted early learning centers or target schools” (Comey et al, 2013, pp. 63-64).

GPRA #3. Number and percent of children, from birth to kindergarten entry, participating in center-based or formal home-based early learning settings or programs, which may include Early Head Start, Head Start, child care, or publicly-funded preschool.

GPRA Protocol: The GPRA #3 target population is children aged 5 or younger in the Promise Neighborhood. The data should be collected by a random community survey of parents and guardians with children.

Source of NFPN Data: In compliance with Promise Neighborhood guidelines, these data come from the NFPN random community survey, which contained the following GPRA questions for parents with a child aged 5 or younger:

1. *“Now I want to ask you about child care centers your child may attend. Such centers include early learning centers, nursery schools, day care centers, and other preschools or kindergarten. Is your child now regularly attending a child care center more than 10 hours per week?”*
2. *“How many children are usually care for together, in the same group at the same time, by your childcare provider, counting your child?”*
3. *“Now I'd like to ask you about other care your child receives outside of a childcare center from either a relative or nonrelative other than a parent or guardian. A relative could include grandparents, brothers or sisters, or any other relative. A nonrelative could include home child care providers, regular sitters, or neighbors. It does not include child*

care centers or preschools as described in the last question. Let's talk about whether the child receives care outside of a childcare center from either a relative or nonrelative other than a parent or guardian. Is your child currently receiving care from a relative or nonrelative other than a parent on a regular basis more than 10 hours per week?"

[NFPN Results for GPRA #3:](#) Of parents or guardians with a target child under age 6, 53.3% (8 of 15) reported that the target child regularly attended a child care center more than 10 hours per week. Based on a population of 680 Fairmount children under 6 (from the 2010 Census), we estimate that 360 Fairmount children under age 6 regularly attend a child care center more than 10 hours per week.

The second component and third components of GPRA #3 are focused on home-based childcare. The NFPN community survey asked the GPRA question,

"Now I'd like to ask you about other care your child receives outside of a childcare center from either a relative or nonrelative other than a parent or guardian. A relative could include grandparents, brothers or sisters, or any other relative. A nonrelative could include home child care providers, regular sitters, or neighbors. It does not include child care centers or preschools as described in the last question. Let's talk about whether the child receives care outside of a childcare center from either a relative or nonrelative other than a parent or guardian. Is your child currently receiving care from a relative or nonrelative other than a parent on a regular basis more than 10 hours per week?"

However, NSRC did not ask a second question, the community survey did not ask "How many children are usually cared for together at the same time by the provider...on a regular basis more than 10 hours per week?" (in question 3, above). The DOE definition is for providers who take care of two or more children (Comey et al, 2013, p. 69). Therefore, we are unable to provide the percent and number of children attending home-based child care.

[Changes Required for Compliance with Federal GPRA Guidelines:](#) The center-based GPRA #3 indicator was collected in compliance with DOE requirements. However, the home-based (and home-based plus center-based) indicators could not be calculated because of an omitted question from the survey. In the future, the community survey must contain question given above.

[GPRA #4. Number and percent of students at or above grade level according to State mathematics and English language arts assessments in at least the grades required by the ESEA \(3rd through 8th and once in high school\)](#)

[GPRA Protocol:](#) The GPRA #4 children are those 3rd through 8th graders who attend Promise Neighborhood target schools. The data are to be obtained from the Promise Neighborhood target schools.

NFPN Protocol: NSRC defined the target schools as the *Thirteenth Avenue School* and *West Side High School*.¹⁸ For GPRA #4, we used data from the 2012-2013 NJASK for the *Thirteenth Avenue School* and *West Side High School* as obtained from the New Jersey School Report Cards. The State of New Jersey censored the mathematics values for the 7th and 8th grades at the *Thirteenth Avenue School*.

NFPN Results for GPRA #4: The percent of students at the *Thirteenth Avenue School* who were at grade level or higher in mathematics ranged from 14% (3rd grade) to 26% (6th grade), and for language arts from 14% (3rd grade) to 30% (8th grade). The percent of *West Side High School* students who were at or above grade level on the HSPA exam was 71% for language arts and 40% for mathematics.

Changes Required for Compliance with Federal GPRA Guidelines: With the exception of 7th and 8th grade mathematics (which were censored by the state), the NFPN GPRA #4 indicators are in compliance with DOE requirements. No future changes are required.

GPRA #5. Attendance rate of students in 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th grade as defined by chronic absenteeism

GPRA Protocol: The GPRA students are 6th through 9th graders at target schools. The data are to be obtained from the target schools.

NFPN Protocol: NSRC identified the *Thirteenth Avenue School* and *West Side High School* as the target schools. NSRC was unable to obtain information on the average attendance rate of students at *Thirteenth Avenue* and *West Side High School*. However, NSRC was able to obtain information on chronic absenteeism. For 2013, the New Jersey Department of Education provides information on rates of chronic absenteeism, which is defined by the state as greater than 18 days absent in a school year. These data were provided on the Department of Education website. However, we were unable to obtain these data for each grade. Therefore, we have an aggregate value for *Thirteenth Avenue*, but not the grade by grade detail requested by the federal DOE. Aggregate data for *West Side High School* were unavailable.

NFPN Results for GPRA #5: Approximately a third (32.1%) of *Thirteenth Avenue* students were chronically absent for the year 2012-2013.

Changes Required for Compliance with Federal GPRA Guidelines: In the future, the NFPN will require data on average attendance and chronic absenteeism for each grade from each target school for the 6th through 9th grades.

¹⁸ The reader should note that only half of Fairmount K-8 children attended the *Thirteenth Avenue School*. Others are distributed throughout Newark. Also, only a third of high school students attended *West Side High School*, and the high school was closed in the June 2014..

GPR #6. West Side High School Graduation Rates

GPR Protocol: The GPR #6 focus is on 9th grade students who are enrolled in the target high school (*West Side High School*). The data are to be obtained from school districts or the state.

NFPN Protocol: The four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate for *West Side High School* was obtained from the New Jersey Department of Education.¹⁹

NFPN Results for GPR #6: The State of New Jersey reports the adjusted cohort 4-year graduation rates for *West Side High School* to have been 66% in 2012-13, 61% in 2011-12, and 54% in 2010-11.

Changes Required for Compliance with Federal GPR Requirements: This GPR value is in compliance with federal DOE requirements. However, new target high schools will need to be identified, or perhaps some “basket” of high schools selected.

GPR #7. Number and percent of Promise Neighborhood students who graduate with a regular high school diploma and obtain postsecondary degrees, vocational certificates, or other industry-recognized certifications or credentials without the need for remediation

GPR Protocol: The GPR #7 focus is on high school graduates from target high schools. The data need to be collected via information from district on high school graduates, information on these students from the National Student Clearinghouse, and from post-graduation surveys.

NFPN Protocol: NSRC identified *West Side High School* as the target high school. NSRC had graduation and college enrollment data for *West Side High School* graduates from the years 2004 through 2011. The college matriculation and degree values presented here are based on *National Student Clearinghouse* data from April of 2012. The college enrollment values are for the 2010 *West Side High School* graduates. The degree attainment values are for the 2004 graduation cohort. This older graduation cohort was used because the GPR indicator allows graduates up to 6 years to earn a bachelor’s degree and 3 years to earn an associate degree. NSRC has no information on whether high school graduates had need of remediation, which would have required a post-graduation survey. Also, NSRC had no information on enrollment in vocational and certificate programs.

NFPN Results for GPR #7: In 2010, *West Side High School* had 280 graduates. Of these, 117 (41.8%) enrolled in community college or university within 16 months of high school graduation. Just over a quarter of graduates (28.2%) enrolled at a 2-year college, and 15.7% enrolled at a 4-year college.

A second GPR indicator in this category (7.b) is the percent of student who enrolled in college without remediation. NSRC does not have this information.

¹⁹ The reader should note that *West Side High School* has now been closed by the Newark Public Schools.

A third GPRA indicator in this category (7.c) is the percent of students who graduated within the traditional 100% completion time (4 years for the bachelor's degree and 2 years for the associate degree). Of 234 West Side High School graduates in 2004, 14 students earned a bachelor's degree and 1 student earned an associate degree within the traditional 100% completion time. No students earned both degrees.

A fourth GPRA indicator in this category (7.d) is the percent of students who graduated within 150% of the traditional completion time (6 years for the bachelor's degree and 3 years for the associate degree). Using this "looser" time frame, 15 students earned a bachelor's degree and 2 students earned an associate degree within the traditional 100% completion time. Again, no students earned both degrees.

Three additional GPRA indicators in this category (7.e, 7.f, and 7.g) are the percent of high school graduates who completed a vocational program, and/or earned an industry-recognized certificate or credential. NRSC has no information on enrollments on vocational programs and industry-recognized certificates/credentials.

Changes Required for Compliance with Federal GPRA Requirements: Because NPS closed *West Side* at the end of the 2013-2014 year, NFPN will need to rethink its choice of a target high school.

Although NSRC had the required National Student Clearinghouse data from NPS, in the future the NFPN will need to work with NPS to assure obtaining the most recent data on target high graduates each year in the spring. In the future, a high school alumni survey will need to be created to collect some of the GPRA indicators in this category. In particular, information will need to be gathered from high school graduates on remediation, enrollment in vocational programs, and the earning of certificates.

GPRA #8: Number and percent of children who participate in at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity daily.

GPRA Protocol: The GPRA #8 focus is on all middle and high school students enrolled in target Promise Neighborhood middle and high schools. Data are to be collected by school climate surveys.

NFPN Protocol: NSRC was unable to conduct school climate surveys because of NPS concerns about survey overload. Therefore, NSRC does not have this information for *West Side High School* and the *Thirteenth Avenue School* students. However, NSRC did present modified versions of the GPRA indicator to parents about their children. The community survey asked "During the past 7 days, on how many days was your child physically active for a total of at least 60 minutes?"

[NFPN Results for GPRA #8:](#) Most (53.8%) parents and guardians with children aged 11 to 18 reported that “their child was physically active daily for an hour (21 or 39).

[Changes Required for Compliance with Federal GPRA Requirements:](#) In the future, the NFPN will need to conduct school climate surveys that contain these and other related questions about physical activity. The *Urban Institute* recommends collecting additional information on student activity, including watching television, participation in organized sports, etc.

[GPRA #9: Number and percent of children who consume five or more servings of fruits and vegetables daily](#)

[GPRA Protocol:](#) The GPRA #9 focus is on all middle and high school students enrolled in the target Promise Neighborhood middle and high schools. The data are to be collected by school climate survey.

[NFPN Protocol:](#) Because NSRC did not receive permission to conduct school climate survey, we asked parents a single question of parents on the NFPN community survey: “*How many servings of fruit and/or vegetables did your child eat yesterday? (1 serving = 1 banana or 1 small apple or 1/2 cup of berries or 1/2 cup of raw vegetables or a cup of leafy greens)* .

[NFPN Results for GPRA #9:](#) The GPRA #9 indicator measures the proportion of students who eat 5 or more fruits and vegetables. Using the modified question in the community survey, 15.4% of parents and guardians with children aged 11 to 18 reported that their child ate 5 fruits and vegetables per day (6 of 39).

[Changes Required for Compliance with Federal GPRA Guidelines:](#) In the future, the student climate surveys will need to have six required questions²⁰:

1. During the past 7 days, how many times did you drink 100% fruit juices such as orange juice, apple juice, or grape juice?
2. During the past 7 days, how many times did you eat fruit?
3. During the past 7 days, how many times did you eat green salad?
4. During the past 7 days, how many times did you eat potatoes?
5. During the past 7 days, how many times did you eat carrots?
6. During the past 7 days, how many times did you eat other vegetables?

Also, future surveys should also contain measures of household and child food security, which, although not required, would yield important information on the diets of Fairmount children.

²⁰ See Comey et al., 2013 for the precise wording.

GPR #10. Number and percent of students who feel safe at school and traveling to and from school, as measured by a school climate needs assessment

GPR Protocol: The GPR #10 focus is on students who attend target middle and high schools. The data are to be collected by school climate survey.

NFPN Protocol: NSRC was unable to conduct a student climate survey at either *West Side High School* or the *Thirteenth Avenue School* because of NPS concerns about survey burden. The NFPN community survey asked parents and guardians of children in kindergarten through high school to agree or disagree with modified versions of the recommended GPR questions: “*My child’s school is a safe place for students,*” and “*My child is safe when traveling to or from school.*”

NFPN Results for GPR #10: Of 34 parents or guardians with a middle or high school child, 88.2% (30 of 34) reported that they felt their child’s school was a “safe place for students.” Respondents were less confident about safety when traveling to and from school. Nevertheless, 76.5% agreed or strongly agreed that “*my child is safe when traveling to or from school.*”

Changes Required for Compliance with Federal GPR Guidelines:

In the future, the NFPN will need to conduct school climate surveys that contain these two safety questions.

GPR #11. Student mobility rates

GPR Protocol: The GPR #11 focus is on student mobility at target schools. The data are to be obtained from Promise Neighborhood target schools.

NFPN Protocol: NSRC was unable to obtain more recent information on student mobility from NPS. In prior years, the New Jersey Department of Education has reported this information. Values for this GPR are from the New Jersey Department of Education online database for 2010-2011. The New Jersey DOE defines student mobility in the same way as the federal Department of Education. Students from the *Martin Luther King, Jr.* and the *Thirteenth Avenue Schools* are now combined on the *Thirteenth Avenue* campus. And, *West Side High School* is now closed.

NFPN Results for GPR #11: In 2010-2011, the mobility rates were very high for both the *MLK* (43%) and *Thirteenth Avenue Schools* (43%). The mobility rate for *West Side High School* was much lower than the two K-8 schools, but was still a very high 26%.

Changes Required for Compliance with Federal GPR Guidelines: In the future, the NFPN will need up-to-date information on student mobility at target schools.

GPR# 12. For children birth to kindergarten entry, the number and percent of parents or family members who report reading to their children three or more times a week.

GPR# Protocol: The GPR# 12 targets are parents or guardians of Fairmount children from birth through kindergarten (children under age 6). The data to be collected by random community survey.

NFPN Protocol: The random NFPN community survey used a slight modification of the GPR# mandated question for parents and guardians of a target child²¹ under age 6: *“In a typical week, how often do you do each of the following with your child: read books.”*

NFPN Results for GPR# 12: Of respondents with a target child aged 5 or younger, 87.0% reported reading to their child at least 3 times per week (20 of 23). GPR# 12 asks for an estimate of the number of parents in Fairmount who read to their children at least 3 times per week. Reluctantly, we calculated this value as 788 parents using GPR# equation 12.b.²²

Changes Required for Compliance with Federal GPR# Requirements: None. The NFPN GPR# 12 methodology is in compliance for federal Department of Education guidelines. However, NSRC believes that the Promise Neighborhood program should scrap the number of reading parents measure as meaningless.

GPR# 13. For children in kindergarten through the 8th grade, the number and percent of parents or family members who report encouraging their children to read books outside of school

GPR# Protocol: The GPR# 13 target population is parents or guardians of kindergarteners through 8th graders who live in the Promise Neighborhood. The data are to be collected by random community survey.

NFPN Protocol: NSRC followed the Promise Neighborhood protocol and collected this information via a probability sample of Fairmount households with children. NSRC used a slightly modified version of the GPR# question *“In a typical week, how frequently do you do each of the following with your child? - Read Books.”* This was done because NSRC also asked about singing songs and telling stories using the same introduction. NSRC also asked parents and guardians the GPR# question: *“In the past week how often did your child read to himself/herself or to others outside of school?”* The values presented are the percent of respondents with children aged 5 to 14.

²¹ Child with nearest coming birthday.

²² The number of parents in Fairmount (1551) was estimated from the number of children aged 0 to 5 in the 2010 decennial census and the knowledge that 2/3 of children live in single parent households. This number was multiplied by 87%. We regard this figure as essentially nonsensical, but it does seem to meet the GPR# request.

[NFPN Results for GPRA #13:](#) All parents of children aged 5 to 14 (12 of 12) reported that they or other family members read books to the child on 3 or more occasions per day, while 71.2% (37 of 52) reported that their child read to self or to others outside of school 3 or more times per week. Despite a considerable amount of missing data for family members reading to children, we report a figure of 71% for GPRA #13.

GPRA #13 asks for an estimate of the number of parents of children grades K - 8 who support reading. We calculated a value of 1101 parents who support reading.²³

[Changes Required for Compliance with Federal GPRA Guidelines:](#) None. The NFPN GPRA #13 methodology is in compliance with Promise Neighborhood recommendations. However, future community surveys might ask more specific information about specific ages of children and reading. The large number of missing values for family members reading books to children needs to be addressed.

[GPRA #14. For children in the 9th to 12th grades, the number and percent of parents or family members who report talking with their child about the importance of college and career.](#)

[GPRA Protocol:](#) Parents or guardians of 9th through 12 graders who live in Fairmount. Data to be collected by random community survey.

[NFPN Protocol:](#) In compliance with Promise Neighborhood GPRA protocol, NSRC collected information on college and career conversations in a probability sample of Fairmount parents and guardians. The community survey contained the required question: *“In the first semester or term of this school year, how often have you and/or your spouse/partner provided advice or information about the following to your high school student?”*

- *Selecting courses or programs at school*
- *Plans and preparation for college entrance exams such as ACT, SAT, ASVAB*
- *Applying to college or other schools after high school*
- *Specific jobs your high school student might apply for after completing or leaving high school”*

[NFPN Results for GPRA #14:](#) The percent of high school parents who reported talking to their children about college (GPRA 14.a) was 100.0% (13 of 13). The percent of parents/guardians who reported talking to children about future jobs (GPRA 14.b) was 92.3% (12 of 13). And, the percent of parents and guardians who reported talking to children about college and career was 92.3%.

²³ We calculated this value as follows. The number of parents of children aged 5 to 14 in Fairmount (1350), which was estimated from the number of children aged 0 to 5 in the 2010 decennial census, and the knowledge that 2/3 of children live in single parent households. This number (1350) was multiplied by 71%. As for the GPRA 13 number of parents figure, we regard this figure as nonsensical, but it does seem to meet the GPRA request.

GPRA #14 also asks for an estimate of the number of parents of high school students who talk to their children about college and career. Using GPRA equations, we calculate that 1153 parents talk to their high school child about college, and 1061 talk to their child about careers.

Changes Required for Compliance with Federal GPRA Guidelines: None. The NFPN GPRA 12 methodology is in compliance for Promise Neighborhood guidelines. The NFPN community survey also asked about parental expectations for college going as recommended by the Urban Institute.

GPRA #15. Number and percent of students who have school and home access (and percent of the day they have access) to broadband internet and a connected computing device).

GPRA Protocol: The GPRA #15 target population is middle school and high school aged students enrolled at target schools; the data are to be collected by a target school climate survey.

NFPN Protocol: Because the NSRC was unable to conduct student climate surveys, we used the following mandated GPRA question for in the Fairmount community survey: *During a typical week, how does your child have access to the internet at home?* NSRC omitted the GPRA question about school internet access because all Fairmount schools have internet access.

NFPN Results for GPRA #15: The first GPRA #15 indicator (15.a) is the percent of students with access to the internet only at home. The value for this indicator is 0% of students.

The second GPRA #15 indicator is the percent of students with access to the internet only at school. Using the GPRA 15.b equation for parents and guardians with children aged 11 to 18, 19.5% (8 of 41) of parents and guardians had children who only had internet access at school. We estimate this number to be 231 children.

The third GPRA #15 indicator is the percent of students with access to the internet both at school and at home. Based on the NFPN community survey, the percentage with access at both locations was 80.5%. We estimate this number to be 922 students with access to the internet at home and at school.

The fourth GPRA #15 indicator is the percent of students without internet access at home or school. No Fairmount middle school and high school children are without internet access.

Changes Required for Compliance with Federal GPRA Requirements: In the future, both the home and school GPRA questions should be asked in a school climate survey to be in compliance with Promise Neighborhood guidelines.

Future Fairmount GPRA Challenges

In preparing for a future Promise Neighborhood implementation grant, a number of deficiencies and challenges will need to be addressed. First, only a relatively small percent of Fairmount students attend local schools. About half of K-8 students attend the *Thirteenth Avenue School*,

and about a third of Fairmount students attended *West Side High School*. And, *West Side High School* was closed in June of 2014. The campus is now home to the *Newark Early College* for grades 7 through 12 and an accompanying “acceleration academy,” and *Newark Vocational High School*. Former *West Side* students were able to continue at *Newark Early College*, or to participate in the *One Newark Enrolls* universal enrollment plan. The *West Side High School* of the past is closed. Fairmount Promise Neighborhood staff will need to consult with the U.S. Department of Education to receive guidance on creating a Promise Neighborhood that exists in an environment with a week neighborhood school arrangement.

NSRC was unable to collect key information that is mandated by the Promise Neighborhood program GPRA indicators. In the future, these issues will need to be resolved. We outline the future data collection requirements below:

- *Random Community Survey*: NSRC was successful in piloting a random community survey in Fairmount, and learned a great deal about how to conduct future surveys. The NFPN community survey collected information from 81 respondents. Future surveys will need to be much larger to provide accurate results in the segmentation analyses. Also, some additional questions may be added, and the existing pilot survey will need to be greatly reduced in size.
- *School Climate Surveys*: NSRC was unable to receive permission to conduct school climate surveys in the *Thirteenth Avenue School* and *West Side High School* due to NPS concerns about survey burden. However, NPS will need to provide access to its schools if Promise Neighborhood GPRA guidelines are to be met. Because Fairmount students are distributed among NPS and charter schools, the NFPN may also need cooperation from the charter schools to meet Promise Neighborhood requirements.
- *Age-Appropriate Functioning of 3-year-olds and Kindergarteners*: The NFPN will need to,
“work with their early childhood partners to ensure they are using either the school readiness assessment recognized by their state or local school district, or they are using a nationally recognized assessment tool or set of tools for their program that measures age-appropriate functioning across the multiple domains. Partners should implement those assessments at the beginning of the programmatic or school year” (Comey, 2013 , p.63).

This will require close collaboration between NFPN and both NFPN and local pre-K providers.

- *Post-Graduation Survey*: The Promise Neighborhood guidelines call for a high school post-secondary survey to assess rates of remediation in college, and also enrollment in vocational and certificate programs.
- *College Attendance and Degree Attainment*: NSRC was fortunate in having data on *West Side High School* graduates and their post-secondary college enrollment via from NPS and the National Student Clearinghouse. In the future, the NFPN will need to receive updated National Student Clearinghouse data in the fall of each year.
- *School Attendance, Absenteeism, Mobility, Scores on Standardized Tests, and cohort graduation rates*: NSRC was able to gather much of this information from the New

Jersey Department of Education website. However, the NFPN should obtain this information in a timely manner from NPS.

In summary, NSRC was able to provide values for most of the GPRA's mandated by the Promise Neighborhood program. However, in the future the Newark Fairmount Promise Neighborhood will need much closer collaboration with the Newark Public Schools than has occurred to date.

Fairmount: What Does It All Mean?

Promise and Problems

Fairmount has severe educational and economic problems. A few facts illustrate some of the issues that residents face:

- An average of 4 murders per year;
- Robbery rates that are nearly 12 times the New Jersey rate;
- Nearly a quarter of working age adults are unemployed;
- A third of households earn less than \$15,000 per year;
- Nearly 2/3 of children live below the federal poverty line;
- Just 18% of *Thirteenth Avenue School* students are proficient in language arts and just 15% are proficient in mathematics;
- Less than 10% of *West Side High School* graduates earn a college degree;
- More than a third of teenage males “disappear” from the U.S. Census by age 18—these “missing” men are a symptom of the lack of economic opportunities in Fairmount for young adults, men and women.

Despite these unacceptable economic and social conditions, Fairmount has great strengths. Many residents have lived in the Fairmount area for decades, and have long-standing ties with others in the community. More than 2/3 of residents profess strong ties to the neighborhood. Most residents report taking action to make their neighborhood a better place. Most adults report that they are likely to intervene if they see neighbor children misbehave. And, most residents say that they take time to make a difference in their community. Therefore, a strong social fabric exists—for at least some people residing within Fairmount. However, a “dark cloud” over the neighborhood is a lack of trust of some neighbors: fewer than half of respondents feel that they can trust their neighbors. Yet, residents speak with warmth and nostalgia for a recent past when there was less crime, less unemployment, and closer social ties among neighbors.

Improving the Social Environment

Keeping People in Fairmount

For success, interventions in Fairmount will need to be sustained. This will require children and parents to live within Fairmount for extended periods of time. Currently, annual turnover in

Fairmount neighborhood schools is very high: a quarter of students at *West Side High School*, and nearly half of students at the *13th Avenue School* move from one school to another during the school year. We do not fully understand the causes of this mobility, but we believe that much of this is caused by people who for economic reasons must move into or out of the neighborhood. Other reasons may have to do with the suitability of the neighborhood as a place to live, including crime, neighbors, apartment quality, etc.

If children are to experience sustained exposure to Fairmount interventions, then the NFPN program will need to find ways to keep students within Fairmount. This may require buffering people from economic crises, helping with rent payments or energy bills, aiding with refinancing of homes, etc.

NFPN initiatives are needed to make Fairmount a place where parents want to stay and raise their children. For some, the high vacancy rate is an important reason why Fairmount is less desirable: 30% of Fairmount housing units are vacant. Residents report that vacant properties send a message that the neighborhood is undesirable. And, that vacant properties become hosts to rats and illegal activities, and provide venues for fire and arson.

Crime is another major concern in Fairmount. The NFPN community survey and interviews show Fairmount residents see local crime as a major problem. And, crime statistics show that this is the case. Yet, residents have conflicted feelings about the police: residents desire more policing and more effective policing, yet many also regard the police as ineffective at best, and insensitive and threatening at worst. Initiatives are needed to establish closer community relations with the police. Additionally, innovative community-based programs are needed to prevent crime in Fairmount.

Nearly half of Fairmount residents have no name for this geographically distinct neighborhood. We propose a Fairmount neighborhood campaign to establish the Fairmount name and position it as a neighborhood on the rise. With easy access to New Jersey transit busses and proximity to downtown, the Fairmont Neighborhood can become a nexus of educational and economic opportunity. This initiative might include Fairmount banners, and efforts in conjunction with neighborhood schools and after-school organizations; school aged children could engage in projects such as cleaning up the streets and establishing community flower/vegetable gardens. However, steps must be taken to ensure that these improvements are not rapidly destroyed. Community-based programs to support and protect local parks and green spaces will be needed. Lastly, these “cosmetic “ interventions are no substitute for real, sustained changes that improve the lives of Fairmount residents. Otherwise, a “broken windows” approach risks becoming a “Potemkin Village” that hides more than it reveals.

Increasing Social Capital, Social Networks, and Collective Efficacy

“Social capital” is a term that has become increasingly popular in recent years, which refers to social networks and the access to resources that occurs as a result of these networks. A great deal of research has been conducted on the functions and limitations of social capital in low

income populations (see Small, 2004). Small (2010) argues that social networks are created via the mundane activities of daily life through interactions at schools, daycare, church, etc. As a result of social networks, people gain access to information and to social support. Additionally, social networks create the potential for joint action, and support in enforcing informal social controls (e.g., intervening when children engage in vandalism), etc. Robert Sampson (2013) and other social scientists have argued that *collective efficacy* (the ability of individuals to work together on a problem) is an important feature of neighborhoods that work.

Many Fairmount residents recall with nostalgia a time when they could rely on and trust their neighbors. We believe that NFPN programs should strive to create and foster positive social networks whenever possible as means of empowering community members, creating social capital, and supporting collective efficacy that can yield benefits for Fairmount’s children and families.

Improving Access to Quality Jobs

In our view, the core problem of low income, urban neighborhoods, like Fairmount, is the lack of good paying jobs (rather than a lack of jobs *per se*). Initiatives to provide Fairmount residents with good paying jobs are needed. Efforts are needed to retain these residents within Fairmount—lest they move to more attractive neighborhoods, taking their income with them and depriving their children of Promise Neighborhood services (see above).

Of course, low skill workers can improve their job options through job training and higher education. NFPN initiatives will need to support both. Additionally, safe, high quality childcare is needed in Fairmount to provide mothers and other caregivers with peace of mind and the opportunity to work. Safe, secure, high quality daycare that provides paid and volunteer opportunities for Fairmount grandparents would be an interesting initiative. Also, parents will need support so that a sick child does mean a day without pay.

One major barrier to finding and holding a good paying job is the “spatial mismatch” that often occurs between higher paying suburban jobs and urban residence. Transportation is often a critical barrier to gaining access to these better paying jobs. Half of Fairmount households do not have an automobile. As noted above, programs to promote ride sharing might increase access to jobs and increase the formation of productive social networks within the neighborhood.

Improving the Educational Environment

Creating a New Narrative of Educational Success

Fairmount parent’s educational narratives are paradoxical and to a large extent at odds with the reality of education in the neighborhood. On the one hand, Fairmount parents have very high expectations for the educational attainment of their children. Yet, the odds of their children earning a college degree are depressingly low. On the NFPN community survey, nearly all respondents reported that they expected their child to earn a bachelor’s degree or better. A third of respondents expect their child to earn a graduate degree or professional degree. Yet,

just 5% of *West Side High School* 9th graders in recent years have earned a college degree. Therefore, a large gap exists between what is likely to happen and what parents and guardians hope will happen. This gap needs to be bridged to make meaningful progress towards preparing Fairmount students to go to college and succeed.

Parents and guardians have a good understanding of why their children should attend college: the great majority agree that *“a college degree is necessary to get ahead in today’s world.”* However, many parents are less clear about the specifics of what is required to prepare for, apply to, and attend college.

The NFPN community survey inquired about parent and guardian views about their child’s school. We found that in general parents were very positive about their child’s school. Nearly half of respondents strongly agreed with the statement, *“my child’s school is a good school.”* More than half indicated that their school was better than others in Newark. These responses are in stark contrast to the low academic performance of the *Thirteenth Avenue School* and other NPS schools that are attended by Fairmount children. Parent’s expectations towards schools, and their willingness to be active in ensuring that those expectations be met, are important for successful education to occur.

So, most Fairmount parents seem to be very positive about their children’s economic and academic future, and seem to approve of their local schools. Yet, most of their children are faring very badly on standardized tests and have very poor prospects for graduating from college or entering the middle class. It is reasonable to assume that this “gap” in educational understanding by parents is an important contributor in maintaining the poor academic status quo. Fairmount parents need a realistic understanding of the future prospects of their children, need to be empowered to collectively demand the highest quality public education, and need to understand what they can and must do at home to foster academic success.

Healthy Infants and Mothers

Future academic and economic success must be built on a solid foundation that begins during pregnancy and early childhood. However, many children who are born to Fairmount parents are already faced with daunting conditions. Preterm deliveries and low for gestational age deliveries are almost certainly very high in Fairmount; both adverse birth outcomes are associated with poorer academic performance. Additionally, rates of recommended prenatal care are likely relatively low. And, although the community survey suggests that most Fairmount children have a source of regular medical care, many children would benefit from medical homes, and a range of other services for young children, including nutritional counseling, access to nutritious food, parenting courses, quality daycare, etc.

A related issue is the provision of support to mothers. Two-thirds of children in Fairmount live in single, female-headed households. And, far too many children are born to teenaged mothers. Child rearing is challenging under the best of circumstances. We believe that initiatives are

needed to socially link mothers, while providing opportunities for recreation and health and parenting education. These would be popular and yield real benefits for both mother and child.

We propose the creation of “Mothers Clubs” that provide immediate, concrete benefits such as access to babysitting, transportation to grocery stores or shopping clubs, and recreational opportunities (“Mom’s Night Out”). In addition, mothers would be provided with parenting and health education. The program goals would be to create expanded social networks among mothers, create avenues for social support and stress reduction, and also provide concrete skills and knowledge that would foster the development of the child. This program might work in conjunction with local health care providers, and build upon the medical, legal and social benefit counseling that is already provided by the multi-disciplinarian HEAL Clinic recently established by the Rutgers Schools of Medicine, Law and the Department of Social Work at Rutgers University, Newark.

The Implications of One Newark Enrolls

The NFPN community survey shows great numbers of Fairmount children do not attend either the *Thirteenth Avenue School* or *West Side High School*. We expect this to become even more common in coming years with the maturity of *One Newark Enrolls*. Strong educational supports will need to be created to ensure the academic and future professional success of Fairmount’s children. However, in the absence of community based schools, NFPN may need to develop innovative approaches to directly support education that are not necessarily school-based. For example, Fairmount-based after school programs might be created that provide targeted educational help for lagging students, but which also provide opportunities for fun and the development of non-cognitive skills such as grit and task orientation.

Recommendations for Daycare and Pre-K Education

The NFPN community survey showed daycare is used by just a third of respondents with young children. Focus groups suggest that many programs are underfunded. And, providers are said to often turn children away who do not have vouchers because their parents do not work and, therefore, do not qualify for the program. A program to provide active job seekers with daycare when needed would be helpful.

Additional research is needed to fully understand the specifics of daycare and pre-K education in Fairmount. We believe greater availability of well-designed and supportive daycare would be very popular while providing important support to parents and contributing to the future academic success of young children. An innovative system of daycare that actively involves parents and grandparents could also be an important means of strengthening ties among Fairmount parents and creating social capital

The NFPN community survey also shows that far too few children are receiving free pre-K education, despite its availability as a result of the *Abbott vs. Burke* decisions. NFPN must learn why parents are not taking advantage of this opportunity. One important issue may involve concerns about the safety and quality of local daycare and preschool options. Unlike some

districts, such as the Elizabeth Public Schools, which provides all pre-K education in its district, the Newark Public Schools subcontracts out a substantial proportion of pre-K in the city; many parents have doubts about the quality of some pre-K programs. NFPN should ensure that local pre-K education reflects best practices in early childhood education.

Recommendations for Supporting K-8 Education

The academic performance of Fairmount students generally falls far below what is needed to thrive in the 21st Century economy. Without change, many Fairmount children will become adults who live in poverty and experience high rates of unemployment.

Education is a cumulative process. High school and college academic success is the result of earlier academic experiences. Abundant research shows poor academic mastery and low self-efficacy in education are highly correlated (Hickman, Barthlomew, Mathwig and Heinrich 2008). Indeed, early academic performance and attachment are better indicators of high school graduation than student socioeconomic background. Research indicates that student performance and attendance in kindergarten are already strong predictors of whether or not a student will graduate from high school and/or earn a post-secondary degree (Schunk and Pajares, 2001). Sadly, “Children’s academic development pathways tend to continue and end as they started in Kindergarten” (Hickman et al, 2008). Therefore, interventions to support and improve academic performance in Fairmount children need to begin early and to be sustained. Students’ education also must be fun, engaging, yet rigorous, and demanding. Non-cognitive skills need to be fostered in addition to “hard skills” and knowledge.

The academic trajectory continues throughout elementary school. Students with poor reading skills in third grade, and with low school attendance, often develop behavioral problems later, and exhibit higher dropout rates as compared to better academically performing peers. Course failures and attendance rates during the middle school years are key predictors that can identify over half of future school dropouts (Allensworth and Eaton, 2007). Therefore, students should be tracked so that timely interventions can be implemented when children are at risk of falling behind

Recommendations for High School

In 2013, NPS implemented several measures to address *West Side High School* students’ poor educational outcomes. The following school year, the newly designated *West Side “Renew School”* was closed and its campus became the site for *Newark Early College* and *Newark Vocational High School*. Constant flux and continual change of programs and school staff is bound to confuse school personnel, students and their families. We recommend that the district engage in extensive community outreach and communications to provide accurate and timely information about available high school programs, career pathways and graduation requirements.

Research demonstrates that early identification of at-risk students and appropriate interventions can greatly increase student retention and graduation rates. Allensworth and

Easton (2007) report that freshman-year indicators strongly predict whether or not a student will graduate from high school. Specifically, course performance and attendance are highly correlated with graduation success; students failing at least one semester course and/or with 9 or more absences during the semester are at-risk of dropping out. Absence rates in the first school quarter combined with first quarter course grades clearly indicate a student in need of academic and social support. We recommend that NPS implement an Early Warning System to monitor students' progress during high school, and identify students in need of support. Extended Learning Time, recently implemented in NPS, can also provide additional class time for one-on-one tutoring, career exploration, and experiential learning. Extended Learning Time programming can also provide academic interventions and course work centered on career readiness and opportunities.

The Newark Public Schools have received extensive Perkins funding for 21st Century Career and Technology Education (CTE). CTE programming affords students internship opportunities and experiential learning, and clearly identifies pathways to well-paying jobs. Close coordination among local K-8 schools, district administrators and personnel, especially guidance counselors, would be helpful to inform students and their families about CTE programs as they complete the *One Newark Enrolls* application for high school entry. CTE programs of study at *West Side* included: construction trade, general business management and accounting, information technology, and hospitality and tourism. We recommend that students be encouraged to take the first level CTE course beginning in their freshman year to guarantee sufficient time for a career related internship in their senior year if they desire.

Recommendations for Supporting Students Going to College

NSRC's report on college going among NPS high school graduates makes several recommendations that are relevant to Fairmount (Backstrand et al, 2014):

- *Take steps to improve academic performance.*
- *Provide pathways to good jobs that do not require a college degree.*
- *Create a "college going culture" at every high school.*
- *Make clear to NPS students that going to college is hard work and challenging.*
- *Educate NPS guidance counselors and other school administrators and staff about low college degree completion rates, the financial challenges that this pathway may produce, and the length of time that it often takes to earn a degree for students enrolling in 2-year institutions.*
- *Foster the development of "soft" skills that may enable NPS graduates to persist in college and earn a degree.*
- *Encourage students to attend a 4-year college if possible.*
- *Support students who are college capable, but who are at risk of not attending college.*
- *Develop a tracking system to assess and monitor college readiness throughout high school.*

- *Identify 2-year and 4- year post-secondary school options* where NPS graduates are successful, that are reasonably affordable, and that can meet the needs of first generation college-students, and students who are economically disadvantaged, black and Latino, and male.
- *Provide intensive and sustained college guidance and support for all NPS high school students.*
- *Offer “college knowledge” workshops* for NPS students (and their parents) who are interested in applying to college (Roderick et al., 2009).
- *Provide after school programs and activities at every high school* so that students can safely study and socialize after school hours.
- *Investigate the establishment of a supplemental, non-profit organization* through a public-private partnership that aims to increase the number of students applying to and attending college through a multidimensional approach.
- *Establish a college-going orientation before high school.*
- *Advocate for limits on the number of remedial courses* that are required by colleges before students are permitted to take credit-bearing courses.
- *Strengthen existing collaborations and develop new ones with local higher education institutions* (Essex County College, New Jersey Institute of Technology, Rutgers University-Newark and Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences) to promote college readiness and more effective transitions to college.

Support for each of these recommendations is provided in the NSRC post-secondary report (Backstrand et al, 2014).

In Conclusion

Fairmount residents are faced with an array of social and economic problems, including high unemployment, very low incomes, high crime rates, etc. Within this challenging environment, Fairmount children are born, raised and educated. As adults, these children will be faced with finding employment in a 21st Century world that has little need for low-skill employees. Unfortunately, most of Fairmount’s children fall far behind their New Jersey peers when it comes to academic performance. Without well designed, comprehensive, and targeted interventions, many Fairmount children will be ill prepared to thrive in the coming decades. As a result, many will be condemned to living in poverty, relying on governmental support, or engaging in criminal activities to make ends meet. Fairmount’s children deserve better.

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Appendix A. Research Methods

For this report, NSRC employed data from a wide variety of sources, including both existing information and new data generated by a community survey, interviews, focus groups, etc.

Table A.1 summarizes different the sources of information that were used in this report.

Table A.1. Sources of information used in this report

	Source	Detail
New Data	Community Survey	2 survey events with computerized data entry (N=81)
	Community Inventory	Parcel-by-parcel inventory of 43 blocks. Photography
	Focus Groups	3 community focus groups (N=25). 1 early childhood provider focus group (N=4).
	Interviews	In-depth interviews with adults (N=13)
	Youth Participant Research	Descriptive Words. Photo Voice. Activities List. Fairmount Story. Fairmount Picture. My Neighborhood Poem (N=8)
Existing Data	TurnAround for Children surveys	student, staff/teacher surveys, 2013
	Fairmount Crime Data	For years 2009-2010, 2012.
	2010 Decennial Census	Age, gender, race/ethnicity at block group level
	2009-2012 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates	Other census data at census tract level
	New Jersey Department of Education School Report Card Data	School performance and enrollment data, 2012-2013

United States Census Bureau Data

2010 Census

Every ten years, the United States Census Bureau endeavors to enumerate all persons in the United States. The 2010 census collected limited information, restricting its questions about age, gender, race/ethnicity, household structure and type of housing. Summaries of these responses are then provided in aggregate format to protect individual’s identities. For this report, we present data from Summary File 1, which provides information on age, gender, and race/ethnicity at the block level. This block level detail permitted us to provide a complete census count of Fairmount on a limited number of factors.

The American Community Survey

In 2005, the former “long form” of the U.S. Census was replaced by an ongoing probability sample of the United States: the American Community Survey (ACS). Five year ACS summary files provide a comprehensive portrait of the U.S. down to the block group (usually between 600 and 3,000 people) for some variables and at the census tract level for others (with an average size of about 4,000 persons). Two census tracts (13 and 14) fall completely within Fairmount, and two overlap (15, and 17). Fairmount has five block groups: three that fall completely within Fairmount (tract 13, block group 1; tract 14, block groups 1 and 2), and two that overlap (tract 17, block group 2; tract 15, block group 1). For this report, when necessary, we report values that include neighboring areas.

ACS data presented in this report include household income, unemployment, and mobility.

School Level Data

New Jersey School Performance Reports 2012-2013 and Newark Public Schools' School Snapshots for 2012-2013 were used to describe the schools in Fairmount and the schools that Fairmount students attended. These aggregate values provide no basis for discriminating between Fairmount and non-Fairmount children.

Newark Crime Data

This report presents Newark Police Department crime data for the Fairmount neighborhood for the years 2009-2010, and 2012. Data for 2011 were missing. The crime data were provided by our partners at the *Joseph C. Cornwall Center for Metropolitan Studies*, which had earlier received them from the Newark Police Department. The locations of the crimes had been geocoded by the Newark Police Department. Using ArcGIS, Fairmount crimes were identified and their locations mapped. Crime rates were calculated per 100,000 persons using the Fairmount 2010 census population as the denominator.

TurnAround for Children Surveys of Students and Staff/Teachers

This report presents information that was collected and graciously provided by *Turnaround for Children*. *Turnaround* is a non-profit organization that works with schools to create “a student support system, trains teachers in proven classroom management and instructional strategies, and works with school leaders to build a high-performing culture” (*Turnaround for Children* website, 2014). *Turnaround* is working with Fairmount’s *Thirteenth Avenue School* and conducted surveys with all students (grades 3-8) and staff in 2013-2014. Due to NPS concerns about survey burden, NSRC collaborated with *Turnaround* and analyzed their data rather than ask *Thirteenth Avenue* students to complete yet another survey.

Sampling

The *Turnaround* survey was administered to all *Thirteenth Avenue* students in grades 3 through 8 (N=342). Students were given the surveys on optical answer sheets (“bubble sheets”) and these values were then scanned into an SPSS data base. *Turnaround* administered a second

survey to 39 teachers at the *Thirteenth Avenue School* using *Survey Monkey* and optical answer sheets.

Survey Content

The *Turnaround* survey was constructed by *Turnaround* staff after a thorough review of the literature and was designed to

“measure a cluster of “non-cognitive” or “learning” attributes—mindsets, skills, strategies and behavior—which research evidence and practitioner experience increasingly demonstrate are essential for effective learning and sustained achievement...The resulting survey contains thirteen sub-scales consisting of 59 items in total, to assess two broad domains: 1) student attributes that support learning and long-term persistence to ward academic success such as motivation, academic and social self-efficacy, self-regulated learning and engagement; and 2) associated qualities of students’ classroom environment such as adult and peer support, goal orientation, and academic expectation” (*Turnaround for Children* website, 2014).

The 13 survey subscales have good psychometric properties with Cronbach alphas in the range of 0.71 to 0.86. In this report, we present frequencies of selected items. However, the scales could be used in the future to evaluate program effects.

The teacher survey was also constructed based on a thorough review of the literature.

Human Subjects

NSRC received Rutgers University IRB approval to analyze the de-identified student and the teacher survey data.

The NFPN Community Survey

Overview

The NSRC staff administered a 135 question pilot survey to 81 parents/guardians who resided at a random sample of 500 Fairmount housing units. To participate in the survey, the respondents additionally needed to self-identify as having a child under the age of 18. The survey contained questions on a broad range of topics, including education, childcare and parenting, health, and the neighborhood environment.

NSRC employed a probability sample for this pilot survey for two reasons:

- The needs assessment would benefit from representative information on Fairmount residents. Prior to the survey, NSRC had no good information on a range of issues that would be important in designing a Promise Neighborhood;
- We wished to gain experience in conducting a probability-based community in this community.

Sampling Procedure

To create the sampling frame, project staff first used *ArcGIS* to designate Fairmount's boundaries and then clipped the Newark land parcels map to the selected area. Staff joined the 2013 New Jersey Assessor's database to the parcel clip using the city-block-lot identifier (PamsPIN). The assessor's database includes addresses and information about the type of building as well as the number of dwellings on each parcel. After selecting the residential addresses, which omitted vacant parcels and non-residential parcels, we created a table that contained all of the residential addresses in Fairmount as well as the number of dwellings per address.

Because the housing complex *Georgia King Village* was not listed in the assessor's database and comprises a large part of the community, staff visited the *Georgia King Village* apartment complex to gather information about the number of dwellings and the mailing addresses for this location (*Georgia King Village*, while privately owned, is governed by HUD guidelines and residents receive federal housing assistance). Next, staff combined the list of addresses from the assessor's database with the addresses that we collected for *Georgia King Village*. We then created separate entries for each housing unit by using available information about the number of dwellings at each residence.

A probability sample of 500 households were then chosen using a random number generator. This represented x% of the xxx enumerated household units.

Sample Size

This pilot survey had a sample of 81 participants, which represents an estimated 43% of eligible participants in our random sample.

Survey Procedures

Once the 500 housing units were selected, NSRC staff sent a letter in English to each address, informing them about the project, the requirements for participation (a caretaker of child 18 and under), the incentives for participation (\$25 cash cards for the first 120 participants), and the survey date/location/time. These letters were delivered about four or five days before the survey event. Teams of Rutgers University-Newark students and volunteers then went door-knocking in the community to remind selected households about the survey and to answer any questions that they might have had. The door-knocking took place over the two days prior to the survey and on the day of the survey. This process was repeated for two separate survey events.

The Survey Events

On two occasions, one in November and one in March, NSRC conducted "survey events" at the *Urban League of Essex County* offices in the Fairmount community. In this space, we established a waiting area for participants with games, books, snacks, and activities for children as well as snacks for adults. Our team of 12 surveyors and four volunteers staffed the waiting area, conducted door-knocking, checked addresses at the door, and conducted the surveys at

computer stations. All questions and answer choices were read aloud to participants and their answers were entered into *Qualtrics* (Provo, Utah) by the researcher. Participants were provided with a \$25 cash card, whether they had completed the survey or not.

An Online Survey

To conclude our survey we wanted to test a digital version of the pilot survey. We sent a mailer, a web link, and a randomly generated personal code to all selected residents to take the survey online via *Qualtrics*. Residents who took it then brought their letter and code to Rutgers University-Newark to receive the \$25 cashcard. Only 2 residents took the survey this way, informing us that this is not an ideal format for this community.

Survey Research Staff

The 12 survey research staff were largely Urban Systems Ph.D. students and graduates. All the research staff had completed Rutgers human subjects training, and were identified as research staff in the Rutgers IRB application.

Survey Support Staff

The NSRC team worked with 4 student interns from Rutgers-Newark, all of whom had attended Newark high schools. Additionally, fifteen Rutgers-Newark students from 2 sections of the *Public Service for Responsible Citizenship* Course in the School of Public Affairs and Administration (SPAA) worked with NSRC to fulfill their community service hours (they all exceeded the required hours). In addition, two volunteers (1 from SPAA and 1 from the community) participated in the project. All took part in a research ethics training run by NSRC. These volunteers assisted with door-knocking, and worked in the waiting area assisting with children's activities during the survey event. These support persons did not engage in data collection unless they had gone through human subjects training and were listed on the IRB application.

Survey Content

The 135 question survey was detailed and extensive and took approximately forty-five minutes for participants to complete although not all participants answered all questions as a number of them are directed to parents of children in certain age groups and participants were asked to answer for one of their children throughout. In addition to demographic questions and questions about interest in possible programming, the survey questions covered the following domains:

Education

- Schools students attend
- School satisfaction
- Perceptions of school quality
- Student mobility
- School safety

- Parent involvement
- Computer/Internet access at home
- Access to books at home
- Reading at home
- School choice
- Understanding of school reform models

Childcare/Parenting

- Childcare/childcare usage
- Childcare/childcare quality
- Comfort with types of childcare
- Language interactions w/ young child
- College preparation
- College expectations

Health

- Healthcare home
- Use of ER
- Specific medical issues
- Child's overall health
- Prenatal care
- Screen time
- Physical activity
- Fruits/vegetable access
- Grocery shopping
- Exposure to violence

Environment

- Safety
- Satisfaction
- Mobility
- Resources in community
- Collective efficacy
- Parks and playgrounds
- Efficacy

The survey was drafted and revised based on input from experts in particular fields (early childhood education, K-12 education, and health). NSRC received very specific feedback to gear the survey to the local context. We then pre- tested the survey on a small number of parents. We also presented the research design to the Planning Council who assisted us with ideas for implementation based on their experience in the community.

IRB/Human Subjects

Next we applied for and received Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval from Rutgers University.

After obtaining IRB approval,

A total of 81 participants took the survey at the two survey events. The survey yielded in-depth data. This event was the first attempt at community participation. After conducting the first survey event, it is our estimation that of the 500 housing units selected, because of vacant property and the qualification that participants must be a caretaker of a child under 18, only 191 units were eligible. Thus we had approximately a 42% participation rate of eligible participants at the survey events.

The NFPN Community Inventory

In the winter of 2013-2014, NSRC staff and volunteers conducted a community inventory of Fairmount to yield data for this report. NSRC had parcel level data and census block data for the 43 blocks in the Promise Neighborhood. We had the GEOIDs for the 43 blocks. Block groups for the neighborhood were mapped and used for the inventory. Teams of two persons went parcel-by-parcel throughout the 43 blocks to mark selected indicators and take picture documentation of each block. Each team had a parcel map with street names, and a data collection tool for each parcel. The teams also took photographs of the community as they conducted the inventory. These data were then entered and analyzed using ArcGIS. Maps were created to document land usage throughout the community.

Focus Groups

NSRC staff conducted four focus groups to collect data on Fairmount residents' opinions on a range of topics. Four focus groups with 29 participants were conducted in the community with Fairmount parents, residents, and childcare providers. Twenty-five residents participated in three focus groups in the community, of whom the vast majority were parents of children under 18. Participants were selected to reach a broad spectrum of residents. NSRC worked with our community partners to generate lists of community residents, parents, and neighborhood association members. Snowball sampling was also utilized as these residents referred others to our team.

These focus groups covered general views of the community, educational needs, health concerns, crime, and social services. These focus groups were recorded, transcribed, coded, and analyzed using *NVivo* software. All participants received a \$25 cash card for participation.

A focus group was also conducted with four directors of childcare centers in Fairmount at Rutgers University. This focus group assessed the particular needs of early childhood education providers, the students in the community, and best practices.

Interviews

A total of 13 in-depth interviews were conducted for this research. Six interviews were conducted with adult Fairmount residents or those who worked in Fairmount. Purposive sampling was utilized to obtain information from residents whose voices had not been as represented in the survey or focus groups. We targeted business owners in the community, middle class residents, and teachers. The interviews lasted between 30 and 90 minutes. These interviews were recorded, transcribed, and coded using *NVivo*. Residents were interviewed in their homes, places of work, or at Rutgers University-Newark. These questions, like the focus group questions, covered general views of the community, educational needs, health concerns, crime and social services. These yielded more in-depth information than the focus groups.

NSRC staff also conducted 7 in-depth interviews with teenagers who lived in or went to school in Fairmount. These interviews were conducted as part of the youth participant research described below. These teenagers are part of a summer program, the *RU Ready for Work program*, which is held on the Rutgers University-Newark's campus in the summer. The interviews assessed their views of growing up in Fairmount or attending school, the spaces that they enjoyed and did not enjoy, safety, exposure to violence, and thoughts about their schools, and college and career plans.

Youth Participant Research

Seven teenagers who go to school or live in Fairmount, and one who lived nearby, participated in our youth participant research. These teenagers met with our researchers four times to learn about the project, participate in in-depth interviews, and then to complete a variety of projects about their neighborhood. During our working meetings we provided pizza and drinks to the youth researchers. Upon completion of the project they received a movie ticket. For one project, the youth researchers listed descriptive words about Fairmount. A second project asked the youth researchers to list all of their activities over the course of the last week inside and outside of Fairmount, as well as their modes of transportation to each. A third activity asked the teenagers to write a story about an experience that they had in Fairmount, and to draw and caption a picture. A fourth activity asked them to brainstorm and develop a "My Neighborhood" poem. They also completed a photo voice project in which they took pictures of their physical environment over the course of one week and then captioned these pictures.

Student Level Data

NSRC staff submitted a formal request to the Newark Public Schools for student level data on academic performance, with a breakdown of GPRA indicators, but did not receive the data as of the time this report was finalized. We also asked the two charter schools in the neighborhood for this data as well, but failed to receive data from either of these schools.

The Promise Neighborhood planning grant process took place during a time of major transition at the Newark Public Schools (NPS). During the planning grant year, NPS reorganized their enrollment system under a much debated program known as *One Newark*. As a result of the

changes, politics, and other forces, we were unable to acquire student level data within the time frame of the planning grant.

Appendix B. Characteristics of the Community Survey Respondents

The details of the community survey are presented in **Appendix A**. The survey was administered to 81 heads of households with a least one child under age 18. To obtain this sample, 500 households were randomly selected from a list of housing units within Fairmount. Selected household were invited by mail to participate in the survey. Teams of Rutgers University-Newark students and volunteers went door-knocking in the community to remind selected households about the survey, and to answer any questions that they might have had. Door-knocking took place over the two days prior to the survey, and on the day of the survey. This process was repeated for two separate survey events. Taking into account the inclusion requirement that the household head have a child under 18, and estimates of vacancy rates in Fairmount, we estimated that approximately 191 households units would be eligible for the study. The 81 households are 42% of 191 households. All participants were given a \$25 incentive for having participated in the study.

A majority of respondents were female (68%). Very few respondents were married (14%) or living with a partner (15%). Nearly three quarters of respondents were either single, divorced, or widowed. This percentage largely agrees with the U.S. Census figure of xx% of households headed by a single, female. Of the 75 respondents who reported their race/ethnicity, 77% were non-Hispanic black, 21% Hispanic, and 1% non-Hispanic white. These results compare well with the U.S. Census figures.

Figure B.1. Marital status of community survey respondents

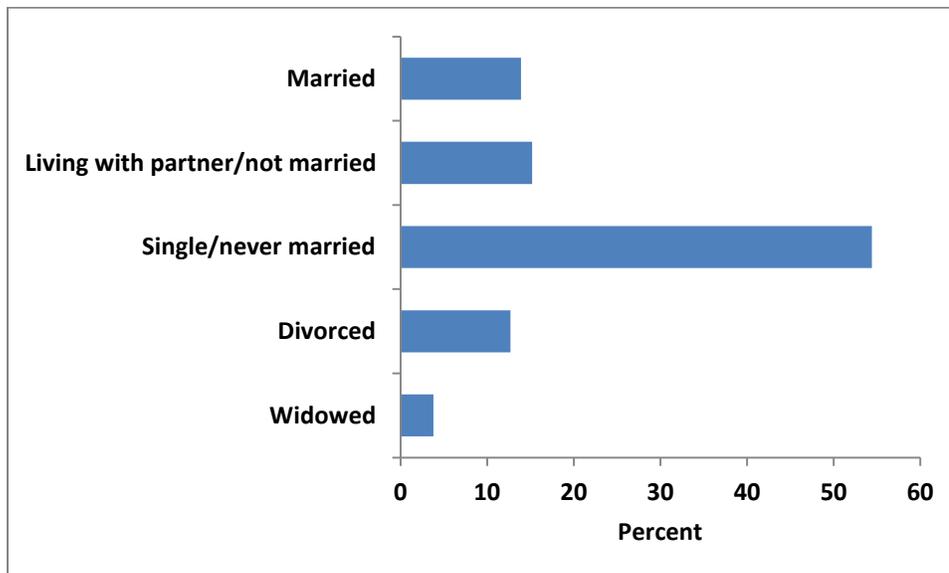
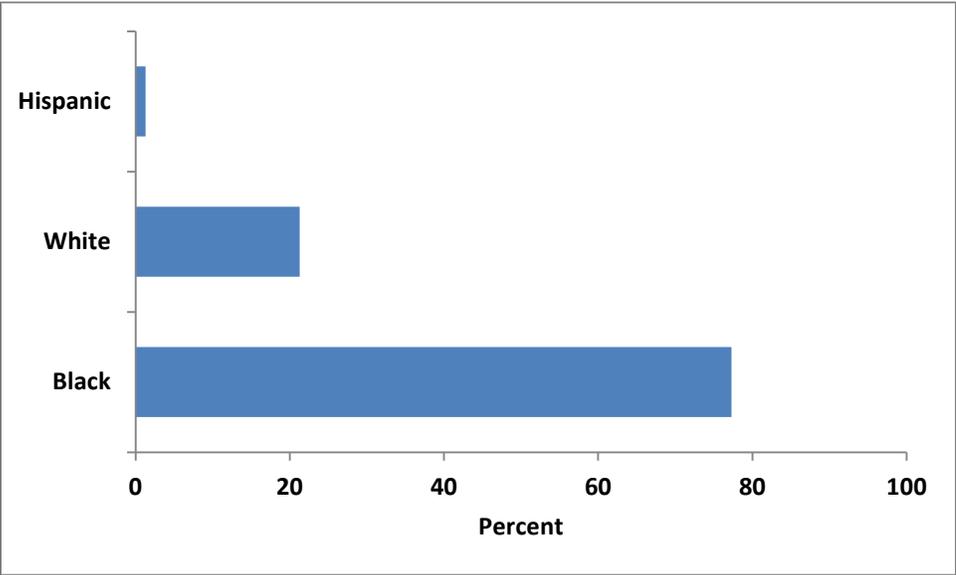


Figure B.2. Race/Ethnicity of community survey respondents



Appendix C. Fairmount Neighborhood Childcare Centers

Name	Address	Zip Code	Capacity
CCLC at Newark	132-142 Cabinet Street	07107	145
CDI Head Start- 444 Central	444 Central Ave	07107	75
CDI Head Start- Edna R Thomas	432-437 South 15 th Street	07103	60
CDI Head Start- Elizabeth Avenue	43-45 Elizabeth Avenue	07103	116
CDI Head Start- Providence	469 South 17th Street	07103	35
CDI Head Start-177 Central	177 Central Ave	07103	99
CDI Head Start-Trinity Baptist	400 South 12 th St	07103	60
Edward T. Bowser CCC	180 Lincoln Street	07103	30
Emmanuel's Wee Garden Center	54-60 Irvine Turner Blvd.	07103	30
First Steps CCC	15 South 9 th St	07107	78
Full Gospel Christian Academy	531 South Orange Ave	07103	57
Gospel Christian Academy Child Care & Learning Center	688-692 Springfield Ave	07103	60
Kiddie Korner Learning Center	740 South 18th Street	07103	45
King Memorial CCC	224 W. Kinney Street	07103	76
Mighty Oaks Learning Center	96 South 6 th St	07107	48
NCC Community Hills Early Learning Center	85 Irvine Turner Blvd.	07103	165
NCC Harmony House Early Learning	278 South Orange Ave	07103	115
New Hope Day Care	49 12 th Avenue, #4903	07103	60
Page Academy	530-532 Central Ave	07107	110
Saint Ann's Community Day Care Center	110 16th Ave	07103	173
Sarah Ward Nursery School	105 Lock Street	07103	101
Starlight Daycare Center	372-374 South Orange Ave	07103	60
Sunshine DCC	286 South 7 th St	07103	57
Tri City Peoples Corporation	675-681 South 19th Street	07103	138
United Day Care	702-710 South 14th Street	07103	40
United Neighbors Developmental CCC	487 Orange Street	07107	77
Urban League of Essex County CDC	494-504 Central Ave	07107	75
		TOTAL:	2185