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Trends in Academic Performance in Cambridge, Massachusetts

VERSION 2025.1

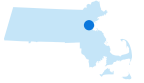
This report summarizes district-level educational outcomes using data from the Stanford Education Data Archive (SEDA) from 2009-2025. Figures may contain gaps where source data are unavailable.

For more information, please visit edopportunity.org

Report created by the Educational Opportunity Project at Stanford University in collaboration with the Education Scorecard at Harvard University, using data provided by the National Center for Education Statistics and the Education Data Center. See final page for full information on data sources.

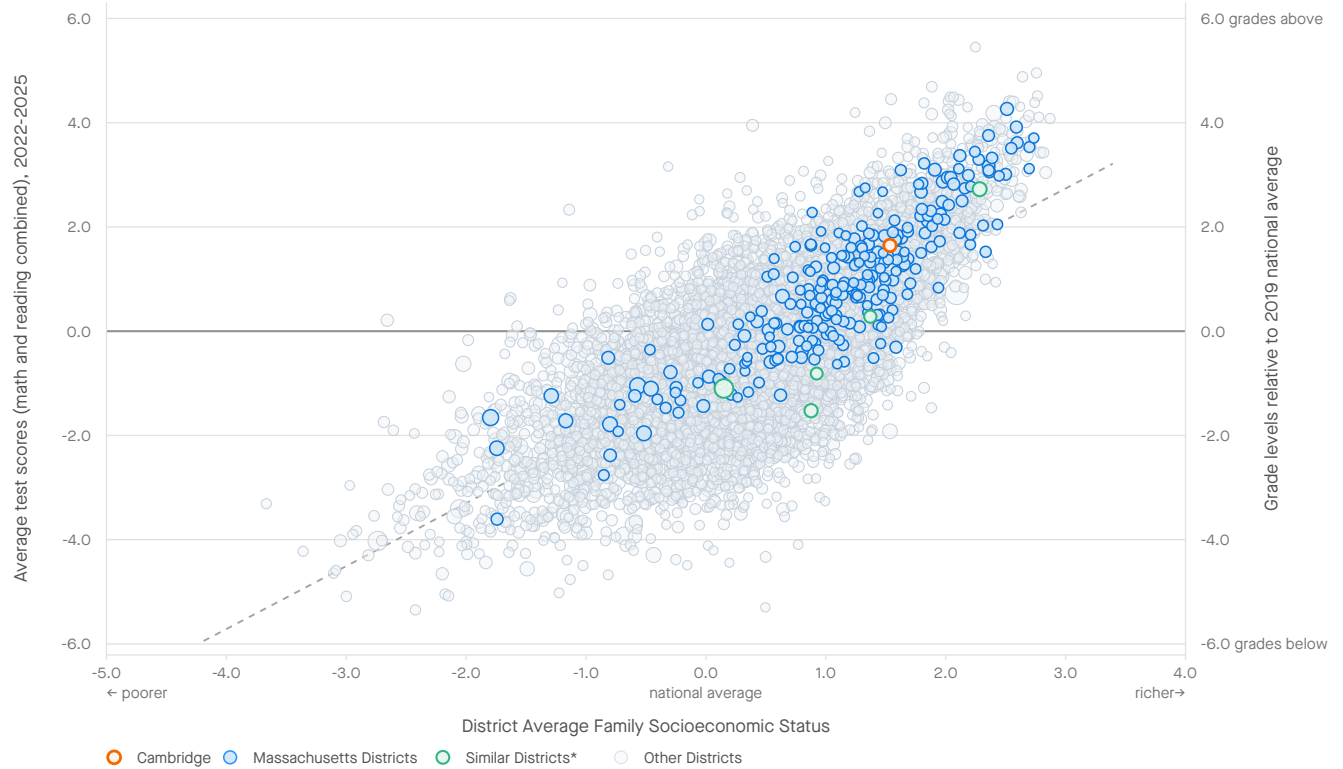


Cambridge, Massachusetts



Average Grade 3-8 Test Scores, 2022-2025, by District Socioeconomic Status

Average test scores in grades 3-8 reflect the set of educational opportunities available to students in the district, including those provided by their families, preschools, neighborhoods, and elementary and middle schools.



Note: each bubble is a U.S. school district, with size proportional to district enrollment. Districts in Massachusetts are highlighted. District socioeconomic status is a composite measure of a district's average family income, parental education, poverty rate, SNAP eligibility rate, unemployment rate, and female-headed household rate. Test scores are measured in grade levels relative to the 2019 national average.

Average Test Scores and Trends, 2022-2025

ALL STUDENTS

	2022-2025 Average Scores	2022-2025 Trend in Test Scores
Cambridge	1.65	0.25
Similar Districts Avg.*	-0.39	0.01
Massachusetts	0.47	0.01

Test scores are reported in grade level units, relative to the 2019 national average. For example, the first row above reads: "Students in Cambridge performed 1.65 grade levels above the 2019 national average. Test scores in Cambridge have been changing at a rate of +0.25 grade levels/year since 2022."

*Similar districts are the nearest matches within the same state based on socioeconomic status, demographics, and size. Similar districts for Cambridge are Newton, Waltham, Barnstable, Framingham, and Boston.

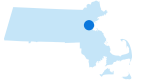
STUDENT SUBGROUPS

	2022-2025 Average Scores	2022-2025 Trend in Test Scores
White	3.17	0.32
Black	-1.09	0.16
Hispanic	0.19	0.13
Asian	2.75	0.27
Poor	-1.00	0.13
Non-Poor	3.39	0.29
Female	1.99	0.27
Male	1.32	0.23



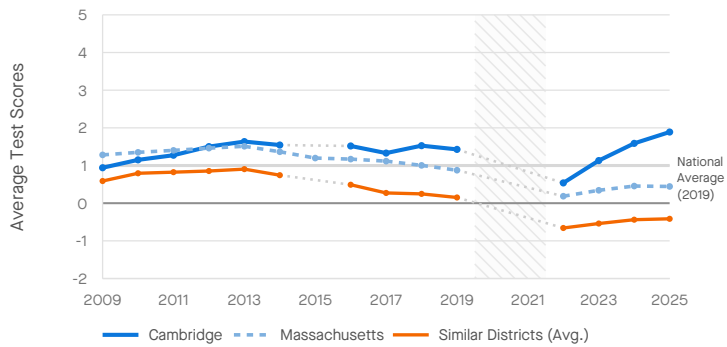
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Trends in Average Grade 3-8 Test Scores, 2009-2025, by Subject and Student Subgroup

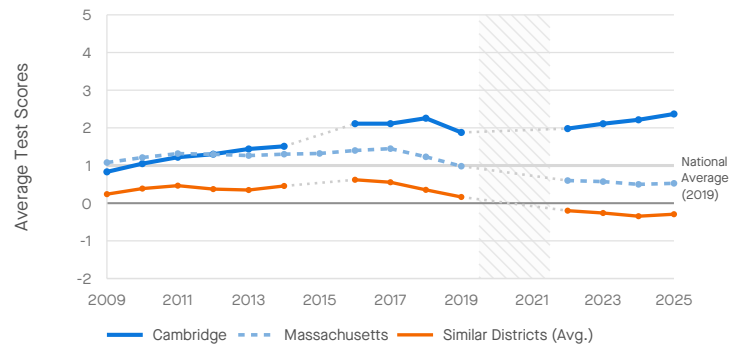


Trends in test scores may reflect changes in school quality, changes in demographics, and/or changes in out-of-school educational opportunities.

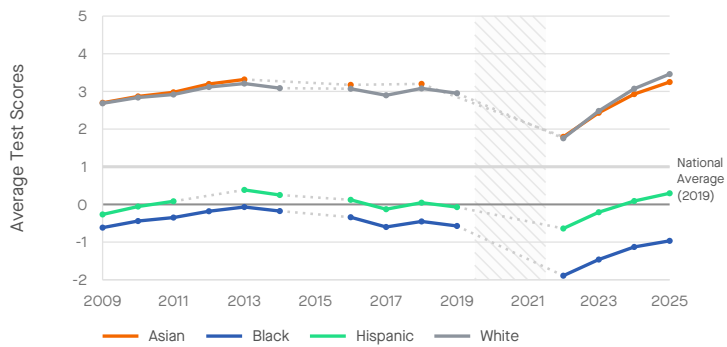
Trend in Math Scores (All Students)



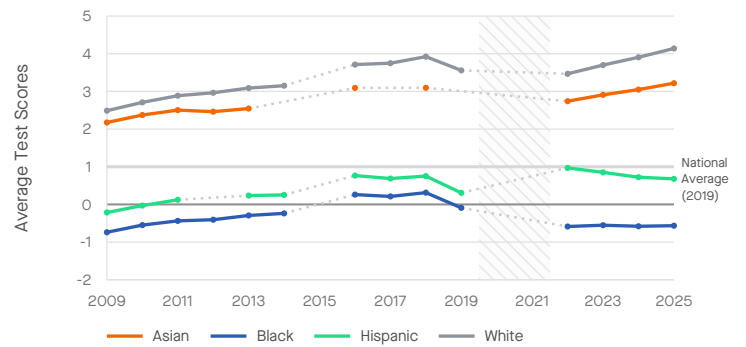
Trend in Reading Scores (All Students)



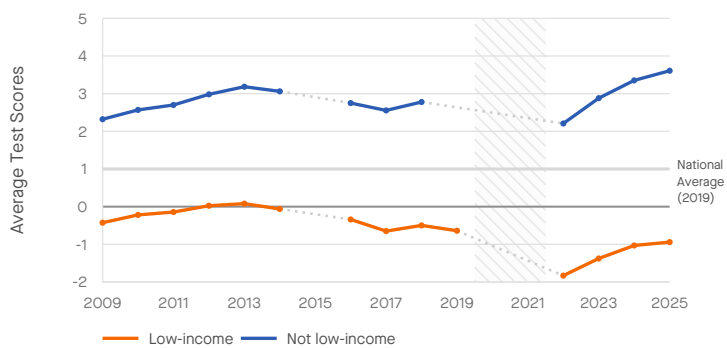
Trend in Math Scores, by Student Race/Ethnicity



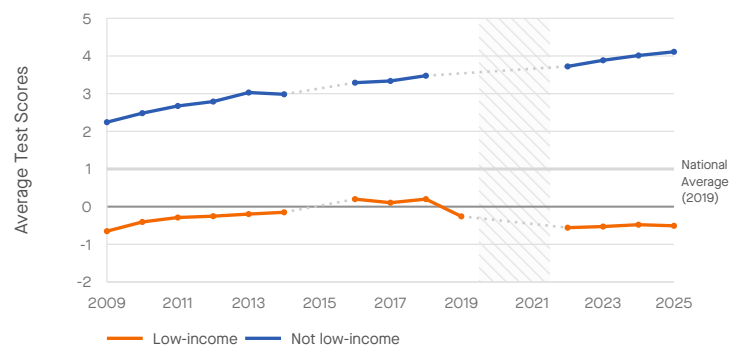
Trend in Reading Scores, by Student Race/Ethnicity



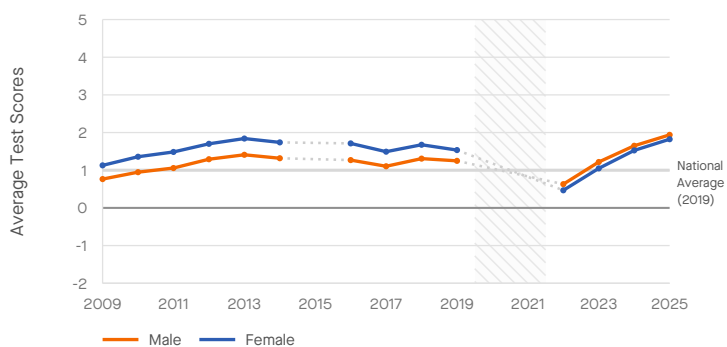
Trend in Math Scores, by Student Income Level



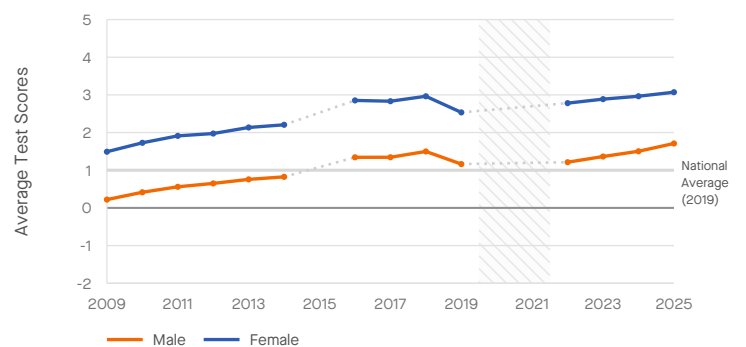
Trend in Reading Scores, by Student Income Level



Trend in Math Scores, by Student Gender

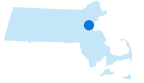


Trend in Reading Scores, by Student Gender

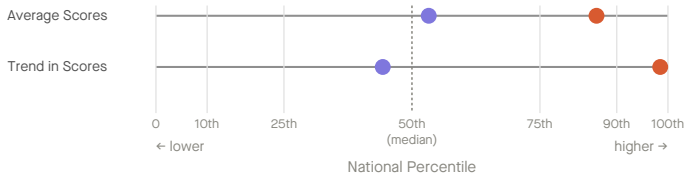


Cambridge, Massachusetts

Academic Performance Rankings, 2022-2025, Relative to Other Districts in the U.S.



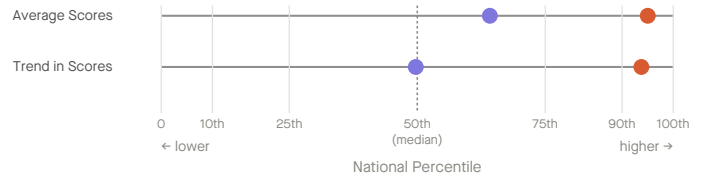
Math Ranks



	Average	Trend
Cambridge	1,425 / 10,205 (86th pct)	84 / 5,468 (98th pct)
Similar Districts Avg.	4,769 / 10,205 (53rd pct)	3,046 / 5,468 (44th pct)

Cambridge ranked higher than 86% of districts nationwide in average math performance during the 2022-25 school years (1,425th of 10,205 districts with available data).

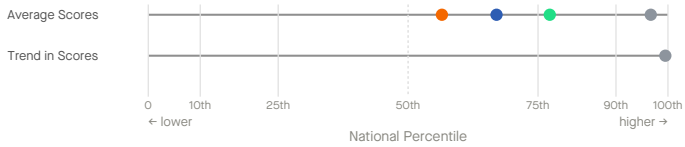
Reading Ranks



	Average	Trend
Cambridge	503 / 10,076 (95th pct)	355 / 5,673 (94th pct)
Similar Districts Avg.	3,610 / 10,076 (64th pct)	2,854 / 5,673 (50th pct)

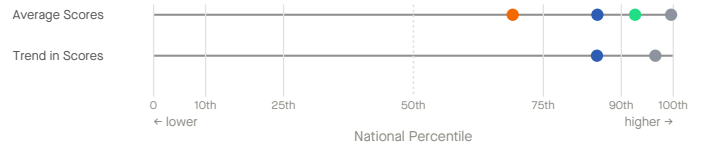
Cambridge ranked higher than 95% of districts nationwide in average reading performance during the 2022-25 school years (503rd of 10,076 districts with available data).

Math Ranks by Race/Ethnicity



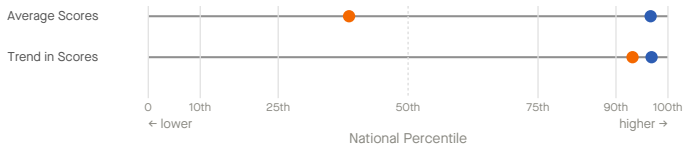
	Average	Trend
White	289 / 8,707 (97th pct)	19 / 3,582 (99th pct)
Black	828 / 2,508 (67th pct)	N/A
Hispanic	1,043 / 4,583 (77th pct)	N/A
Asian	700 / 1,608 (57th pct)	N/A

Reading Ranks by Race/Ethnicity



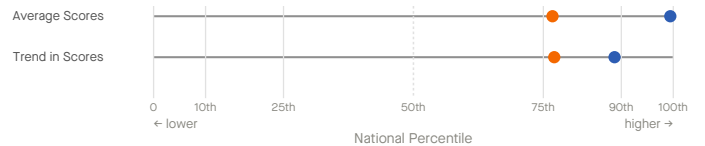
	Average	Trend
White	38 / 8,785 (100th pct)	137 / 3,941 (97th pct)
Black	387 / 2,644 (85th pct)	109 / 733 (85th pct)
Hispanic	344 / 4,662 (93rd pct)	N/A
Asian	508 / 1,642 (69th pct)	N/A

Math Ranks by Income



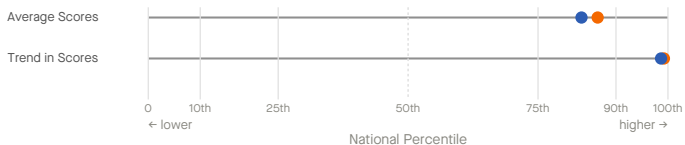
	Average	Trend
Low-income	5,447 / 8,875 (39th pct)	196 / 2,855 (93rd pct)
Not low-income	284 / 8,489 (97th pct)	100 / 3,127 (97th pct)

Reading Ranks by Income



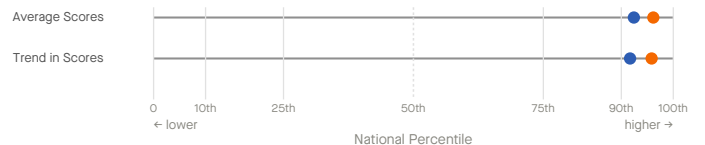
	Average	Trend
Low-income	2,090 / 8,987 (77th pct)	731 / 3,186 (77th pct)
Not low-income	50 / 8,596 (99th pct)	375 / 3,311 (89th pct)

Math Ranks by Gender



	Average	Trend
Female	1,152 / 8,509 (86th pct)	26 / 3,219 (99th pct)
Male	1,415 / 8,497 (83rd pct)	41 / 2,971 (99th pct)

Reading Ranks by Gender



	Average	Trend
Female	334 / 8,670 (96th pct)	146 / 3,483 (96th pct)
Male	657 / 8,652 (92nd pct)	285 / 3,418 (92nd pct)

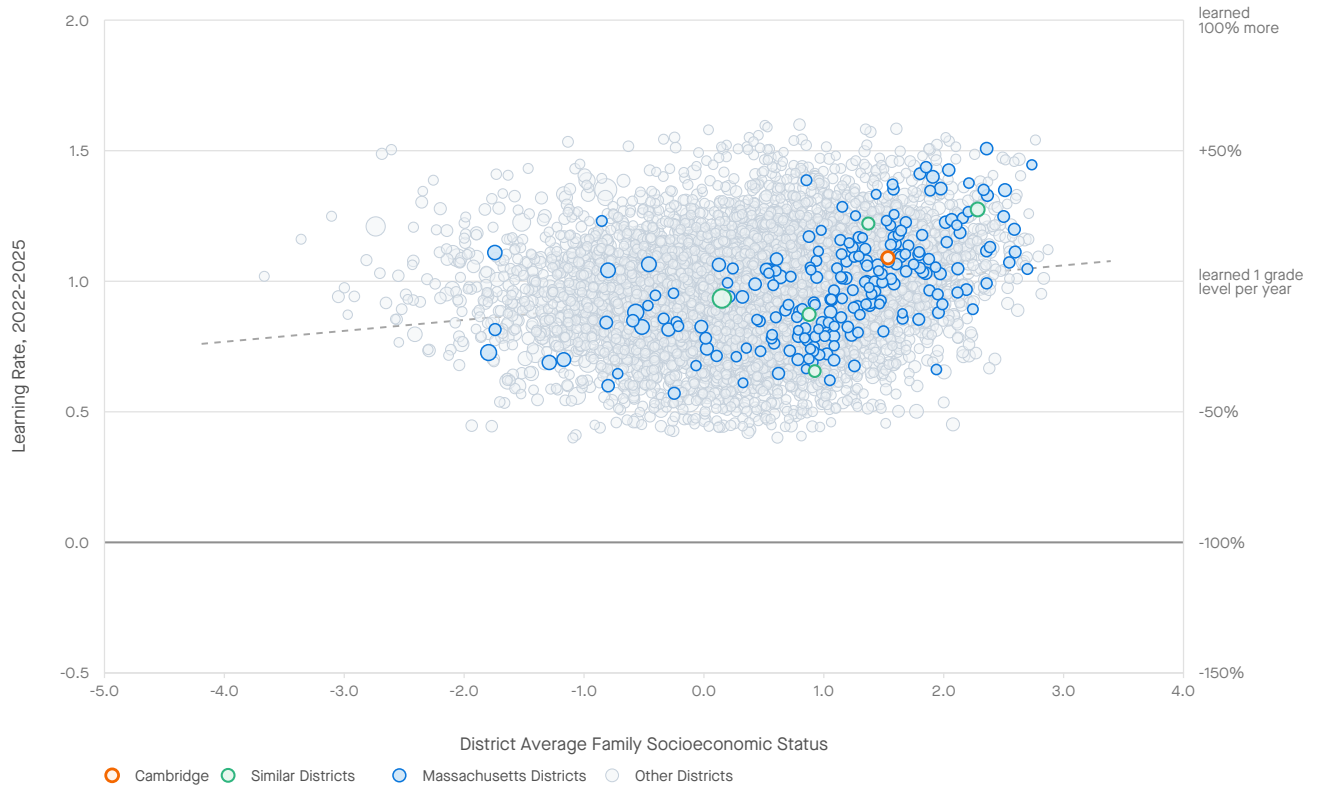


Cambridge, Massachusetts



Average Grades 3-8 Learning Rates, 2022-2025, by District Socioeconomic Status

Learning rates measure how much students' scores improve as they progress from grade to grade. They are a better indicator of school quality than average test scores, which are influenced by a range of experiences outside of school.



Note: each bubble is a U.S. school district, with size proportional to district enrollment. Districts in Massachusetts are highlighted. District socioeconomic status is a composite measure of a district's average family income, parental education, poverty rate, SNAP eligibility rate, unemployment rate, and female-headed household rate.

Learning Rates and Trends, 2022-2025

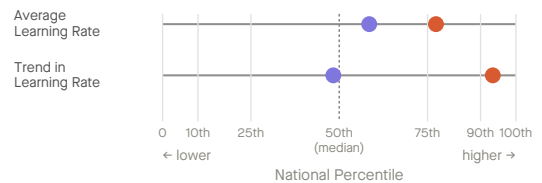
ALL STUDENTS

	2022-2025 Learning Rate	2022-2025 Trend in Learning Rates
Cambridge	1.09	0.07
Similar Districts Avg.*	0.99	-0.01
Massachusetts	0.99	0.01

Learning rates are measured in grade levels of skills gained per year and are averaged over math and reading. The national average learning rate is 1.0. For example, the first row above reads: "Students in Cambridge learned an average of 1.09 grade levels/year during 2022-2025. Learning rates in Cambridge have been changing at a rate of +0.07 grade levels/year since 2022."

*Similar districts are the nearest matches within the same state based on socioeconomic status, demographics, and size. Similar districts for Cambridge are Newton, Waltham, Barnstable, Framingham, and Boston.

Learning Rate Rankings



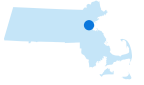
	Average	Trend
Cambridge	1,844 / 8,147 (77th pct)	397 / 6,065 (93rd pct)
Similar Districts Avg.	3,382 / 8,147 (58th pct)	3,134 / 6,065 (48th pct)

Cambridge ranked higher than 77% of districts nationwide in average learning rates during the 2022-25 school years (1,844th of 8,147 districts with available data).



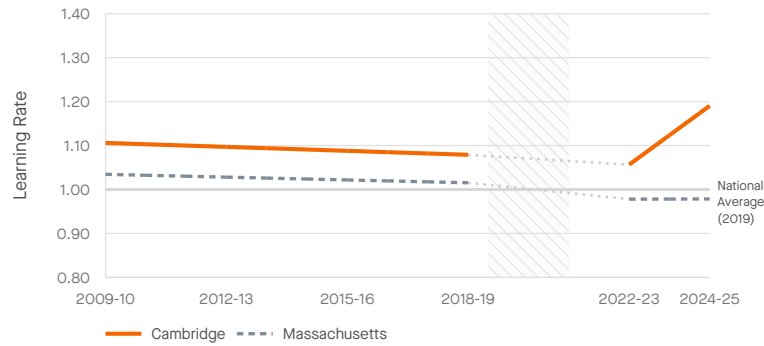
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Trends in Average Grade 3-8 Learning Rates, 2009-2025, by Student Subgroup

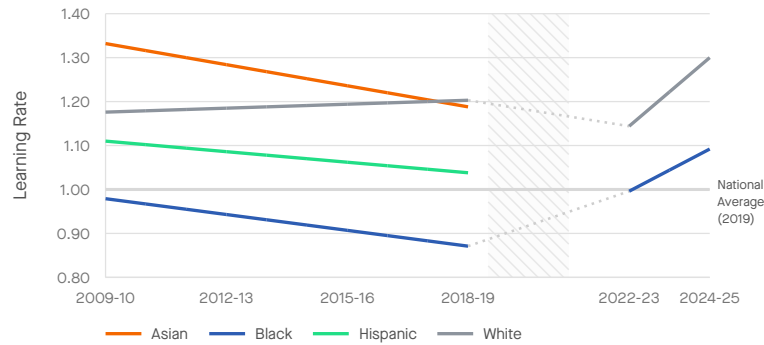


Trends in learning rates measure how annual learning rates change over time. They are a better indicator of changes in school quality than trends in average test scores, which are influenced by a range of experiences outside of school.

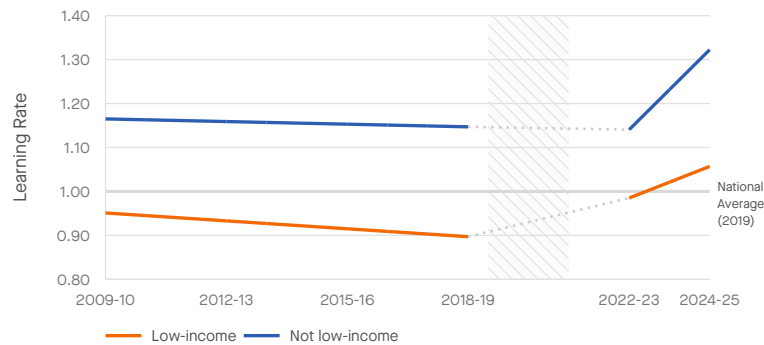
Trend in Learning Rates (All Students)



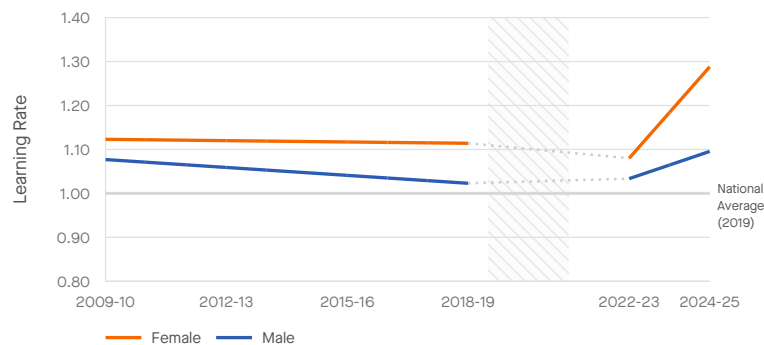
Trend in Learning Rates, by Student Race/Ethnicity



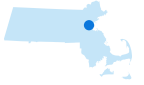
Trend in Learning Rates, by Student Income Level



Trend in Learning Rates, by Student Gender



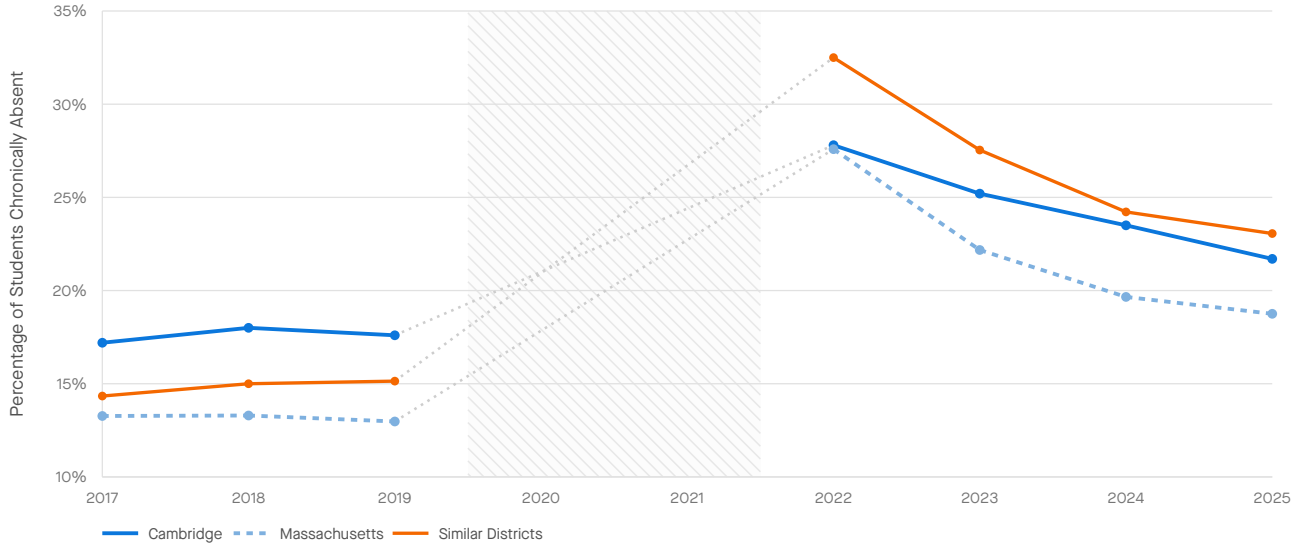
Cambridge, Massachusetts



Trends in Chronic Absenteeism

Chronic absenteeism rates indicate the proportion of students who were absent 10% or more of the school year.

Trends in Chronic Absenteeism



Trends in Chronic Absenteeism

ALL STUDENTS

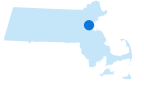
	2017-2019 Avg. Chronic Absenteeism	2022-2025 Avg. Chronic Absenteeism	Change
Cambridge	17.6	24.5	+6.9
Similar Districts Avg.*	14.8	26.8	+12.0
Massachusetts	13.2	22.0	+8.9

*Similar districts are the nearest matches within the same state based on socioeconomic status, demographics, and size. Similar districts for Cambridge are Newton, Waltham, Barnstable, Framingham, and Boston.

Absenteeism data courtesy of [Nat Malkus, American Enterprise Institute](#).



Cambridge, Massachusetts



Changes in Average Math Scores in Massachusetts Districts, 2019-2025 and 2022-2025, by District Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligibility Rate

Change in Math Scores, 2019-2025



Figure produced by the Center for Education Policy Research at Harvard University

○ Largest Districts ◆ State Average

Change in Math Scores, 2022-2025

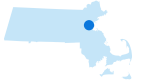


Figure produced by the Center for Education Policy Research at Harvard University

○ Largest Districts ◆ State Average



Cambridge, Massachusetts

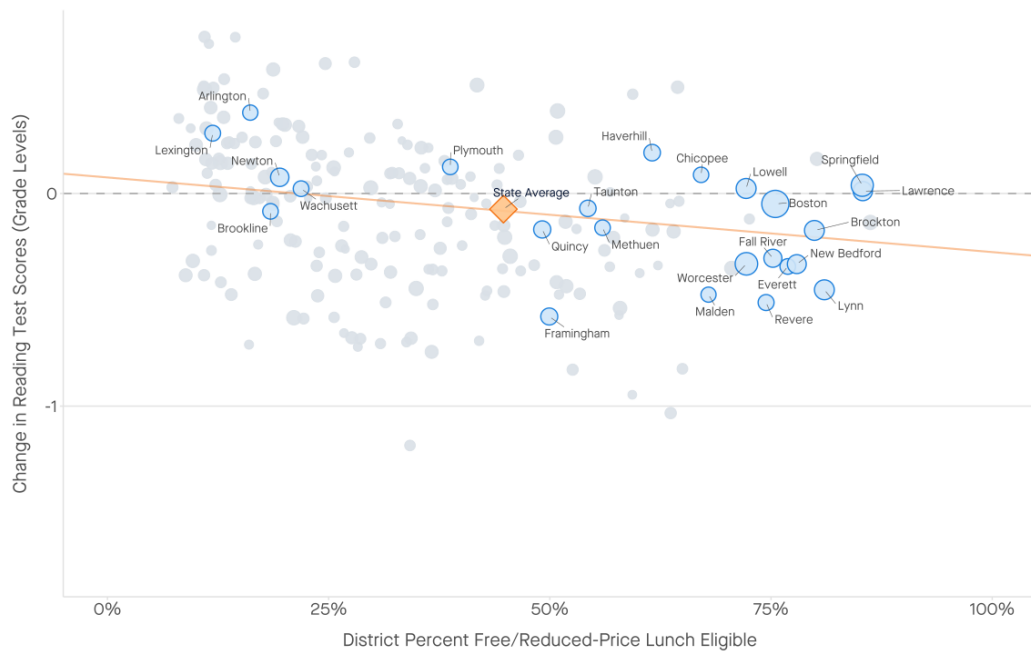


Changes in Average Reading Scores in Massachusetts Districts, 2019-2025 and 2022-2025, by District Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligibility Rate

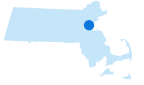
Change in Reading Scores, 2019-2025



Change in Reading Scores, 2022-2025



Cambridge, Massachusetts



Change in Chronic Absenteeism in Massachusetts Districts, 2019-2025, by District Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligibility Rate

Change in Chronic Absenteeism, 2019-2025



Figure produced by the Center for Education Policy Research at Harvard University

○ Largest Districts ◆ State Average





Notes & Acknowledgments

This report summarizes academic performance in Cambridge from 2008-09 through 2024-25, using data from the Stanford Education Data Archive (SEDA). SEDA is a national database of U.S. academic performance produced by the Educational Opportunity Project at Stanford University. The SEDA data are based on the standardized accountability tests in math and reading language arts (RLA) administered by each state to all public-school students in grades 3-8.

The raw test score data used to construct the SEDA 2022-2025 estimates here were graciously provided to us by Emily Oster and Clare Halloran at the [Education Data Center](#). The raw test score data used to construct the SEDA 2009-2019 estimates are available through the [EDFacts](#) data system at the U.S. Department of Education, and were provided to us by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Detailed NAEP data used to harmonize test scores across states was provided by NCES and the National Assessment Governing Board. Chronic absenteeism data were provided by [Nat Malkus at the American Enterprise Institute](#). Funding to construct and analyze SEDA was provided by the Gates Foundation. Funding for the Education Scorecard was provided by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, Bloomberg Philanthropies, Joyce Foundation, Kenneth C. Griffin and Citadel Catalyst. The findings and opinions expressed in our research and reported here are those of the authors alone; they do not represent the views of any of the above organizations.

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