New Jersey Students Using Benchmark Advance Show NJSLA-ELA Gains
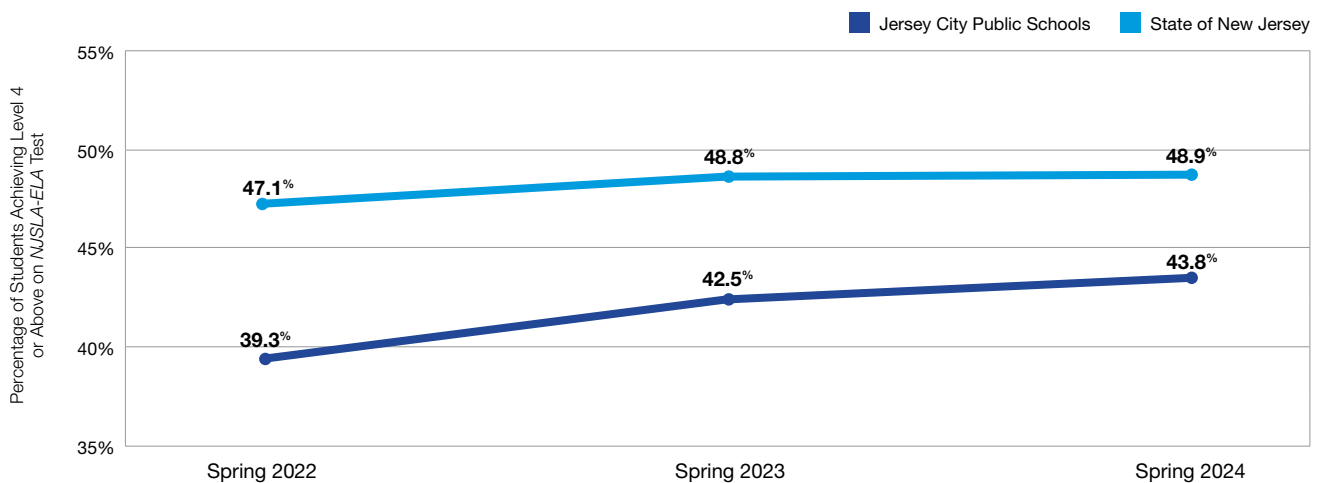
Implementation

During the 2021–2022 school year, Jersey City Public Schools implemented *Benchmark Advance* as its core English Language Arts (ELA) program for all K–5 students. Benchmark Education Company analyzed Grades 3–5 performance on the Spring 2022, 2023, and 2024 *New Jersey Student Learning Assessments for English Language Arts*® (NJSLA-ELA), which are scored on a scale from Level 1 to Level 5, with Level 4 indicating proficiency.
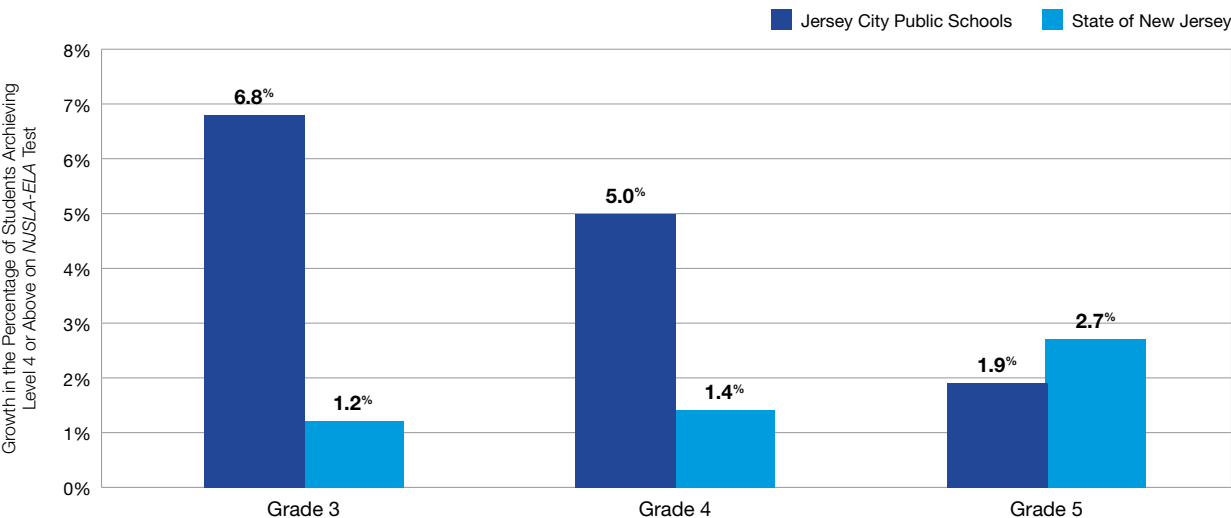
Impact

From 2022 to 2024, the percentage of *Benchmark Advance* students scoring at or above proficiency on the *NJSLA-ELA* test increased; students consistently outperformed the statewide average (see Figure 1). Over this period, *Benchmark Advance* students saw a 4.6% percentage point gain in proficiency compared to a modest 1.8% increase statewide.

FIGURE 1. Jersey City Public Schools *Benchmark Advance* Students, Grades 3–5 Proficiency on the *NJSLA-ELA* Test from Spring 2022 to Spring 2024

Legend: Jersey City Public Schools — State of New Jersey

Y-axis: Percentage of Students Achieving Level 4 or Above on *NJSLA-ELA* Test

State of New Jersey: Spring 2022: 47.1%; Spring 2023: 48.8%; Spring 2024: 48.9%

Jersey City Public Schools: Spring 2022: 39.3%; Spring 2023: 42.5%; Spring 2024: 43.8%

Grades 3 and 4 Benchmark Advance Students Outperform Peers Statewide

FIGURE 2. Jersey City Public Schools *Benchmark Advance* Students, Grades 3–5
Growth in Proficiency on the *NJSLA-ELA* Test from Spring 2022 to Spring 2024

Jersey City Public School students in Grades 3 and 4 outperformed their statewide peers in reading proficiency. Grade 3 students using *Benchmark Advance* achieved a 6.8% percentage-point increase in the number of students reaching proficiency, compared to just 1.2% percentage points statewide. In Grade 4, *Benchmark Advance* students also outpaced the state, with proficiency rising 5.0% percentage points, compared to the state's 1.4% percentage-point increase. Grade 5 students using *Benchmark Advance* posted a 1.9% percentage-point increase in the percentage of students reaching proficiency, below the state's 2.7% percentage-point gain.

Conclusion

Preliminary findings in Jersey City Public Schools showed that Grade 3–5 students demonstrated greater proficiency growth on the *NJSLA-ELA* test than their peers statewide. From 2022 to 2024, Jersey City Public School students using *Benchmark Advance* saw a 4.6% percentage point gain in proficiency compared to a modest 1.8% increase statewide. These results highlight promising early trends in literacy development during the first and second years of *Benchmark Advance* implementation.