

Online Appendix for “Overcoming Racial Gaps in School Preferences: The Effect of Peer Diversity on School Choice”

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A Appendix Tables

Table A1: OLS Estimates of Peer Effects on Students' Top 3 High School Choices

	% Black (1)	% Hispanic (2)	% White&Asian (3)	Peer Math (4)	Popularity (5)	Screened (6)	Math VA (7)	Length of rol (8)
Panel A: Black & Hispanic Applicants								
Majority white & Asian MS	-6.355*** (0.161)	-4.519*** (0.168)	10.899*** (0.217)	0.141*** (0.004)	0.502*** (0.038)	-0.024*** (0.006)	0.034*** (0.002)	-0.300*** (0.050)
Share white & Asian (10 pp)	-1.728*** (0.031)	-0.995*** (0.033)	2.688*** (0.039)	0.034*** (0.001)	0.112*** (0.007)	0.006*** (0.001)	0.007*** (0.000)	-0.131*** (0.009)
Mean	23.24	45.89	29.02	0.05	3.53	0.60	0.08	8.22
N	70,337	70,337	70,337	70,337	69,939	70,337	70,324	70,337
Panel B: White & Asian Applicants								
Majority Black & Hispanic MS	4.114*** (0.120)	4.067*** (0.153)	-8.357*** (0.203)	-0.096*** (0.005)	-0.007 (0.037)	0.048*** (0.005)	-0.035*** (0.002)	0.557*** (0.047)
Share Black & Hispanic (10pp)	1.354*** (0.029)	1.389*** (0.034)	-2.772*** (0.046)	-0.037*** (0.001)	-0.021** (0.008)	0.008*** (0.001)	-0.013*** (0.000)	0.181*** (0.011)
Mean	12.82	27.67	57.40	0.45	5.16	0.81	0.19	7.51
N	45,739	45,739	45,739	45,739	45,623	45,737	45,716	45,739
Race gap	10.11	17.97	-27.78	-0.39	-1.61	-0.21	-0.10	0.68
Race gap 7 th gr scores	7.46	13.60	-20.90	-0.20	-0.38	-0.07	-0.04	1.08
Race gap 7 th gr scores & district	3.46	5.99	-9.24	-0.16	-0.55	-0.07	-0.04	0.33

Notes: This table reports OLS estimates of middle school demographic composition effects on the characteristics of top 3 high school choices. Panel A restricts the sample to Black and Hispanic applicants, while panel B to white and Asian applicants. The sample and controls are as defined in the notes of Table 2. Robust standard errors in parenthesis.

Table A2: Sample Construction

	N
General education 6th grade applicants	336,083
Enrolls in 6th grade in NYC public schools, with demographics	303,299
Applies to 9th grade NYC public schools	268,446
Has non-degenerate risk of middle school assignment	145,101
Are offered a 6th grade seat	127,104
Have baseline (4th grade) test scores	118,078

Notes: This table illustrates the construction of the experimental sample. The sample starts from students applying to enroll in 6th grade general education seats through the middle school match in the school years from 2015-2016 to 2020-2021. We restrict this sample to students who later enroll in NYC public middle schools, and later apply to the 9th grade NYC public high school match. We exclude students with missing

demographic information (race, ell status, gender, poverty status, district of residence), who did not have risk of assignment in the middle school match, who were not matched in the first round, and who did not take 4th grade state test scores.

Table A3: Attrition and Covariate Balance - Discrete Treatment

Dependent variable	Offered majority white&Asian MS				
	All (1)	White (2)	Minority (3)	Black (4)	Hispanic (5)
Panel A: Attrition					
Has 9th grade application	0.004 (0.008)	-0.008 (0.012)	0.016 (0.011)	0.013 (0.020)	0.022 (0.013)
mean	0.89	0.90	0.88	0.86	0.89
N	132,592	50,686	79,391	25,393	53,998
Panel B: Covariates balance					
Black	0.006 (0.010)		0.007 (0.016)		
mean	0.19		0.31		
Hispanic	0.016 (0.012)		-0.007 (0.016)		
mean	0.41		0.69		
White&Asian	-0.027** (0.013)				
mean	0.39				
Female	-0.001 (0.013)	-0.021 (0.019)	0.013 (0.018)	0.010 (0.031)	0.016 (0.023)
mean	0.51	0.50	0.53	0.53	0.52
English Language Learner	-0.007 (0.006)	-0.007 (0.008)	-0.009 (0.008)	-0.004 (0.005)	-0.011 (0.013)
mean	0.09	0.07	0.10	0.02	0.14
Low-income	0.004 (0.012)	-0.004 (0.019)	0.008 (0.016)	0.020 (0.029)	0.002 (0.020)
mean	0.72	0.58	0.82	0.79	0.84
Baseline English	0.035* (0.020)	0.043 (0.029)	0.036 (0.028)	-0.038 (0.046)	0.083** (0.037)
mean	0.19	0.54	-0.05	-0.05	-0.05
Baseline Math	0.008 (0.020)	0.040 (0.027)	-0.008 (0.028)	-0.044 (0.046)	0.018 (0.037)
mean	0.19	0.66	-0.12	-0.21	-0.09
N	118,078	45,649	70,219	21,944	48,275

Notes: This table reports coefficients from regressions of the variables listed to the left on an indicator for being offered a seat at a majority white and Asian middle school. Column heading labels refer to different

estimation samples. The sample is always limited to applicants with non-degenerate risk of middle school assignment.

Table A4: Attrition and Covariate Balance - Continuous Treatment

Dependent variable	Offered % white&Asian (10 p.p.)				
	All (1)	White (2)	Minority (3)	Black (4)	Hispanic (5)
Panel A: Attrition					
Has 9th grade application	0.003* (0.002)	0.002 (0.003)	0.003 (0.002)	0.003 (0.004)	0.004 (0.003)
mean	0.89	0.90	0.88	0.86	0.89
N	132,592	50,686	79,391	25,393	53,998
Panel B: Covariates balance					
Black	-0.001 (0.002)		-0.001 (0.003)		
mean	0.19		0.31		
Hispanic	0.000 (0.002)		0.001 (0.003)		
mean	0.41		0.69		
White&Asian	0.000 (0.002)				
mean	0.39				
Female	0.003 (0.003)	-0.001 (0.005)	0.005 (0.004)	-0.003 (0.006)	0.009** (0.004)
mean	0.51	0.50	0.53	0.53	0.52
English Language Learner	-0.001 (0.002)	-0.003 (0.002)	0.000 (0.002)	-0.002 (0.002)	0.001 (0.003)
mean	0.09	0.07	0.10	0.02	0.14
Low-income	-0.003 (0.002)	-0.004 (0.004)	-0.002 (0.003)	-0.007 (0.005)	-0.002 (0.003)
mean	0.72	0.58	0.82	0.79	0.84
Baseline English	0.007 (0.004)	0.013* (0.007)	0.001 (0.006)	-0.012 (0.009)	0.010 (0.007)
mean	0.19	0.54	-0.05	-0.05	-0.05
Baseline Math	-0.001 (0.004)	0.008 (0.007)	-0.007 (0.005)	-0.011 (0.009)	-0.003 (0.007)
mean	0.19	0.66	-0.12	-0.21	-0.09
N	118,078	45,649	70,219	21,944	48,275

Notes: This table reports coefficients from regressions of the variables listed to the left on the continuous version of our instrument for exposure to white and Asian peers, as defined by the potential share of white and Asian peers in the offered middle school. Column heading labels refer to different estimation samples.

The sample is always limited to applicants with non-degenerate risk of middle school assignment.

Table A5: 2SLS Estimates of Peer Effects on Top 3 High School Choices - Multiple Treatment

Model:		% Black (1)	% Hispanic (2)	% White&Asian (3)	Peer Math (4)	Popularity (5)	Screened (6)	Math VA (7)	Length of rol (8)
Panel A: Black applicants									
Univariate	Share white & Asian (10pp)	-1.553*** (0.351)	0.026 (0.231)	1.528*** (0.354)	0.019** (0.007)	0.145** (0.053)	0.009 (0.009)	0.006* (0.003)	-0.014 (0.073)
Bivariate	Share white & Asian (10pp)	-1.648*** (0.353)	0.143 (0.224)	1.509*** (0.357)	0.018** (0.007)	0.147** (0.053)	0.006 (0.009)	0.006* (0.003)	-0.008 (0.073)
	Share Hispanic (10pp)	-1.354*** (0.409)	1.675*** (0.309)	-0.255 (0.390)	-0.009 (0.009)	0.037 (0.077)	-0.029** (0.011)	-0.006 (0.005)	0.087 (0.094)
	Mean	33.75	37.19	26.96	0.02	3.14	0.62	0.05	8.43
	N	21,984	21,984	21,984	21,984	21,888	21,984	21,980	21,984
Panel B: Hispanic applicants									
Univariate	Share white & Asian (10pp)	-0.574*** (0.150)	-0.650** (0.209)	1.199*** (0.230)	0.023*** (0.005)	0.103** (0.045)	0.011 (0.007)	0.009*** (0.003)	0.014 (0.053)
Bivariate	Share white & Asian (10pp)	0.155 (0.118)	-1.109*** (0.172)	0.921*** (0.187)	0.014** (0.004)	-0.031 (0.038)	0.023*** (0.006)	0.002 (0.002)	0.141** (0.058)
	Share Black (10pp)	1.984*** (0.223)	-2.297*** (0.245)	0.253 (0.261)	-0.006 (0.007)	-0.282*** (0.068)	0.058*** (0.009)	-0.022*** (0.003)	0.474*** (0.088)
	Mean	34.30	38.57	25.07	-0.04	2.77	0.81	0.04	8.43
	N	48,353	48,353	48,353	48,353	48,062	48,353	48,346	48,353
Panel C: White & Asian applicants									
Bivariate	Share Black (10pp)	0.724** (0.275)	0.049 (0.268)	-0.864** (0.371)	-0.013 (0.010)	0.048 (0.079)	0.010 (0.010)	0.005 (0.004)	-0.279** (0.095)
	Share Hispanic (10pp)	-0.242 (0.154)	0.705** (0.217)	-0.487* (0.261)	-0.014** (0.007)	0.036 (0.058)	0.002 (0.007)	-0.007** (0.003)	0.036 (0.069)
	Mean	33.75	37.19	26.96	0.02	3.14	0.62	0.05	8.43
	N	45,739	45,739	45,739	45,739	45,623	45,737	45,716	45,739

Notes: This table reports 2SLS estimates of middle school demographic composition effects on the characteristics of high school choices for models with two endogenous regressors (bivariate), one for each race share different from own, or for models with one endogenous regressor (univariate). Panel A focuses on Black applicants, panel B on Hispanic applicants, while panel C on white and Asian applicants. The sample and controls are defined in the notes of Table 2. Robust standard errors in parenthesis.

Table A6: Different School Characteristics for the Vignette Experiment

School characteristic	Description	Percentage			
		Asian	Black	Hispanic	White
Demographics	Racially-balanced	15%	29%	38%	16%
	Majority Black	7%	68%	16%	8%
	Majority Hispanic	5%	13%	73%	7%
	Majority white and Asian	17%	15%	21%	45%
Safety	Percentage of students who feel safe on school	Low		High	
		77%		93%	
<i>Treatment 1: Precise information about school academic performance</i>					
Academics	Percentage of students who graduate in 4 years	Low		High	
		75%		93%	
	Percentage of students who enroll in College/career programs	51%		79%	
<i>Treatment 2: Imprecise information about school academic performance</i>					
Academics	Percentage of students who earned enough credits in ninth grade to be on track for graduation	83%			

Notes: This table reports the characteristics of the school cards presented to respondents in the vignette experiments (questions [Q17](#) and [Q18](#)).

Table A7: Accuracy of Information if School is in Awareness Set

Panel A: Excess $p(\text{correct})$ in pairwise comparisons of School characteristics

School characteristic:	Safety (1)	Value-Added (2)	College/graduation rates (3)	Commuting (4)	AP Classes (5)	Peer Quality (6)
<i>Any pair of schools</i>	0.072*** (0.016)	0.084*** (0.016)	0.098*** (0.016)	0.184*** (0.015)	0.029* (0.016)	0.097*** (0.016)
N	904	916	928	904	905	918
<i>At least one school in pair known</i>	0.087*** (0.030)	0.060** (0.028)	0.174*** (0.028)	0.222*** (0.024)	0.093*** (0.032)	0.109*** (0.029)
N	247	273	273	338	236	274
<i>Both schools in pair known</i>	0.210*** (0.053)	0.011 (0.075)	0.173** (0.066)	0.304*** (0.058)	-0.016 (0.083)	0.278** (0.108)
N	31	47	52	56	31	18

Panel B: Correlation between school characteristics quartile and answer

<i>Any school</i>	0.090*** (0.025)	0.021 (0.029)	0.191*** (0.042)	0.274*** (0.030)	0.009 (0.028)	0.114*** (0.034)
N	863	849	840	894	830	830
<i>School is known</i>	0.073 (0.069)	-0.086 (0.067)	0.173* (0.091)	0.490*** (0.076)	0.067 (0.063)	0.217*** (0.083)
N	176	211	169	163	208	192

Notes: This table reports measures of accuracy of information about school characteristics and how these vary for schools that we are certain belong to respondents' awareness sets. Panel (a) reports the percentage of respondents (in excess of 50%) who correctly ranked two schools, for different school characteristics. Panel (b) reports the correlation of respondents' rankings with the true ranking of the school, for different school characteristics, as measured by a regression of respondent answers on school true quartile rankings. The first row of Panel (a) considers all schools, the second row restricts the sample to pairs in which one school is for sure known by the respondent and the third row to school pairs in which both schools are for sure known. The first row in Panel (b) considers all answers, while the second row restricts the sample to those in which the school is for sure known. This figure uses data from survey questions [Q10a-g](#). Robust standard errors in parenthesis.

Table A8: Peer Effects on Perceived Discrimination

	Peer discrimination		Teacher discrimination		Act on fear discrimination		Fit well other races	
	OLS (1)	IV (2)	OLS (3)	IV (4)	OLS (5)	IV (6)	OLS (7)	IV (8)
Asian × (High Other-Race MS)	-0.05 (0.05)	-0.22 (0.18)	-0.03 (0.04)	-0.35** (0.15)	-0.15*** (0.05)	-0.29** (0.13)	0.10* (0.05)	-0.11 (0.14)
Black × (High Other-Race MS)	0.03 (0.07)	0.00 (0.15)	0.08 (0.08)	0.20 (0.14)	0.03 (0.07)	0.32** (0.16)	0.08 (0.08)	0.19 (0.15)
Hispanic × (High Other-Race MS)	-0.00 (0.04)	-0.38** (0.17)	0.05 (0.04)	-0.11 (0.29)	0.04 (0.04)	0.03 (0.27)	-0.00 (0.05)	0.08 (0.21)
White × (High Other-Race MS)	-0.00 (0.04)	-0.13 (0.08)	-0.00 (0.03)	-0.07 (0.06)	-0.05 (0.04)	-0.07 (0.08)	0.07 (0.05)	0.01 (0.11)
Asian	0.12*** (0.03)	0.09** (0.04)	0.09*** (0.03)	0.10*** (0.03)	0.22*** (0.03)	0.22*** (0.04)	-0.05 (0.04)	-0.06 (0.05)
Black	0.06 (0.04)	0.04 (0.05)	0.11*** (0.04)	0.10** (0.04)	0.07* (0.04)	0.05 (0.05)	0.03 (0.05)	0.03 (0.06)
Hispanic	0.04 (0.03)	0.04 (0.04)	0.04 (0.03)	0.06 (0.04)	0.01 (0.03)	-0.01 (0.04)	0.06 (0.04)	0.08 (0.06)
White mean	0.12	0.12	0.05	0.05	0.12	0.12	0.65	0.65
N	1,871	1,871	1,874	1,874	1,874	1,874	1,869	1,869

Notes: This table reports OLS and 2SLS estimates of the effect of enrolling in middle schools where the majority of peers are from a different race, relative to attending schools enrolling a majority of same-race peers, on measures of perceived discrimination. The effect of exposure to other-race peers is allowed to vary across student race, as capture by the interaction of the exposure dummy “High other race MS” with a dummy indicating respondent race. Column headings summarize the survey measures of perceived discrimination, which use survey questions Q19c, Q20a - Q20c. From left to right, they indicate agreement with the following statements: “My student is likely to be treated negatively by their classmates based on their race” (columns 1-2) , “My student is likely to be treated negatively by their teachers based on their race” (columns 3-4), “My student would feel like they belong in a school where the majority of peers are from a different race” (columns 7-8). The remaining outcome indicates responding positively to the question “Did the fear of negative treatment based on race influence the schools you listed on your student’s application?” (columns 5-6).

Table A9: 2SLS Estimates of Peer Effects on Test Score Taking

	<i>Student took:</i>					
	6th grade test (1)	7th grade test (2)	8th grade test (3)	Regents Math in MS (4)	Regents Math in HS (5)	SAT (6)
<i>Panel A: Black & Hispanic students</i>						
Majority white&Asian MS	-0.006 (0.010)	0.018 (0.017)	-0.017 (0.026)	-0.037 (0.038)	-0.031 (0.044)	-0.025 (0.040)
Share white&Asian (10pp)	-0.002 (0.002)	0.004 (0.003)	-0.007 (0.004)	-0.022** (0.007)	0.011 (0.009)	0.003 (0.008)
Mean	0.99	0.96	0.91	0.56	0.52	0.62
N	51,532	48,222	45,727	28,727	35,357	39,148
<i>Panel B: White & Asian Students</i>						
Majority Black&Hispanic MS	-0.011 (0.014)	-0.019 (0.019)	0.009 (0.030)	0.002 (0.038)	-0.039 (0.060)	0.036 (0.050)
Share Black&Hispanic (10pp)	0.000 (0.003)	-0.004 (0.004)	-0.001 (0.006)	0.004 (0.008)	-0.010 (0.011)	-0.006 (0.012)
Mean	0.99	0.98	0.93	0.79	0.34	0.75
N	32,857	31,363	29,010	22,037	22,699	24,169

Notes: This table reports 2SLS estimates of middle school demographic composition effects on binary outcomes indicating taking 6th, 7th, and 8th grade state tests, taking the Regents Math exam in middle school or taking it in high school, and taking the SAT. Panel A restricts the experimental sample to Black and Hispanic students, while Panel B restricts the sample to white and Asian students. Due to COVID-related interruptions or the timing of test administration, certain test scores are unavailable for some cohorts. Column 1 excludes from the experimental sample cohorts enrolling in middle school in 2019 and 2020, column 2 the 2018 and 2019 cohorts, column 3 and 4 the 2018 and 2018, column 5 the 2016, 2017 and 2020 cohorts and column 6 excludes the 2018, 2019 and 2020 cohorts. The initial experimental sample and control variables are as those defined in the notes of Table 2. Robust standard errors in parenthesis.

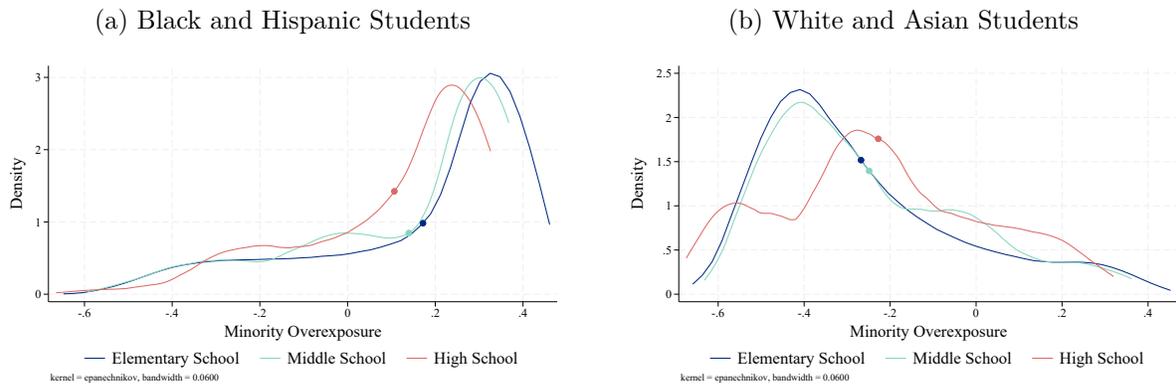
Table A10: 2SLS Estimates of Peer Effects on Test Score Ranking and Beliefs

	<i>Actual Performance and Chances</i>				<i>Beliefs about Performance and Chances</i>		
	7th grade Math (1)	Tercile in City (2)	Tercile in High-Demand schools (3)	Admission Probability (4)	Tercile in City (5)	Tercile in High-Demand schools (6)	Admission Belief (7)
<i>Panel A: Black & Hispanic Respondents</i>							
Majority white&Asian MS	0.77** (0.31)	0.62** (0.30)	0.22 (0.24)	0.04 (0.05)	1.13* (0.62)	0.88 (0.63)	-0.06 (0.19)
Share white&Asian (10pp)	0.08 (0.06)	0.10* (0.05)	0.05 (0.04)	0.00 (0.01)	0.11* (0.06)	0.10* (0.06)	0.01 (0.03)
Mean	0.09	1.92	1.27	0.51	2.40	2.33	0.60
N	1,518	1,699	1,699	2,608	582	410	1,310
<i>Panel B: White & Asian Respondents</i>							
Majority Black%&Hispanic MS	-0.09 (0.22)	0.01 (0.21)	0.06 (0.25)	0.04 (0.04)	-0.32 (0.24)	-0.34 (0.31)	-0.08 (0.10)
Share Black&Hispanic (10pp)	-0.03 (0.04)	0.02 (0.04)	-0.02 (0.06)	0.00 (0.01)	-0.07 (0.07)	-0.14 (0.09)	-0.03 (0.03)
Mean	0.96	2.62	1.85	0.59	2.63	2.43	0.53
N	1,723	1,823	1,823	3,058	721	595	1,822

Notes: This table reports 2SLS estimates of middle school demographic composition effects on students' test scores, relative academic performance and chances of admission to high-demand or dream programs (columns 1-4) and respondents' beliefs about these (columns 5-7). Panel A restricts the survey sample to Black and Hispanic respondents, while Panel B restricts the sample to white and Asian respondents. The sample and control variables are as defined in the notes of Table 2. Standard errors are clustered at the student level in columns 4 and 7 and robust in the remaining columns.

B Appendix Figures

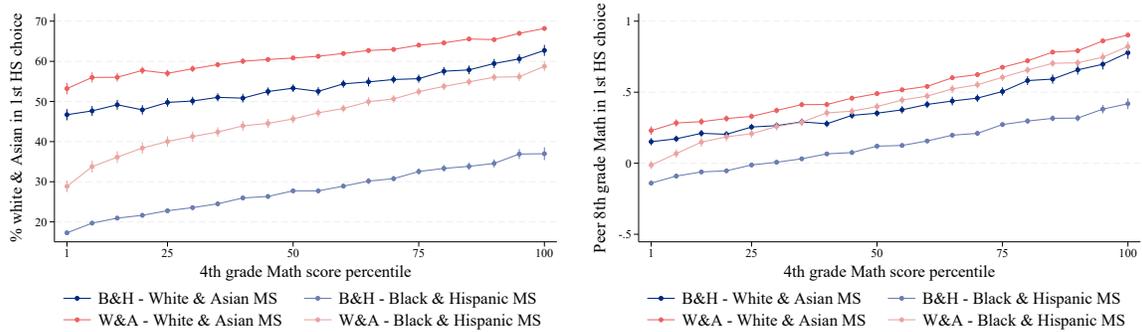
Figure B1: Differences in Exposure to Black & Hispanic Peers by Race and School-Level



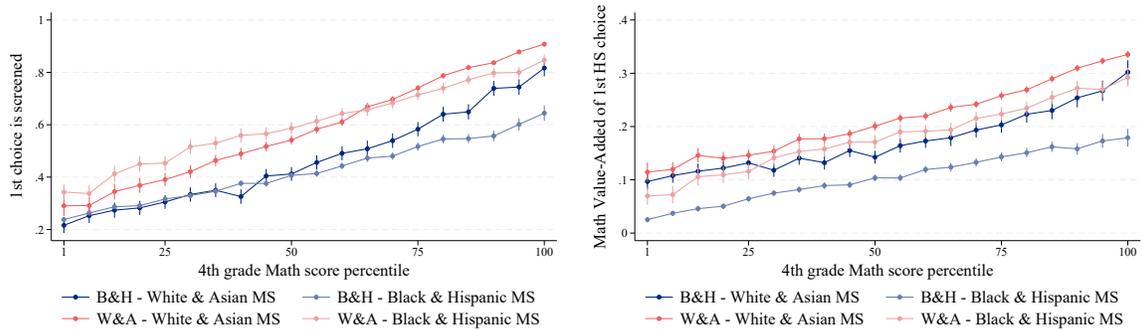
Notes: These figures show the distribution of own-race overexposure, a measure of school segregation, for Black and Hispanic students (panel a) and white and Asian students (panel b) in different grade levels (elementary, middle and high school).

Figure B2: Differences in High School Choices Depending on Percentage of white Peers in Middle School, Based on 4th Grade Percentile

(a) Differences in peer composition



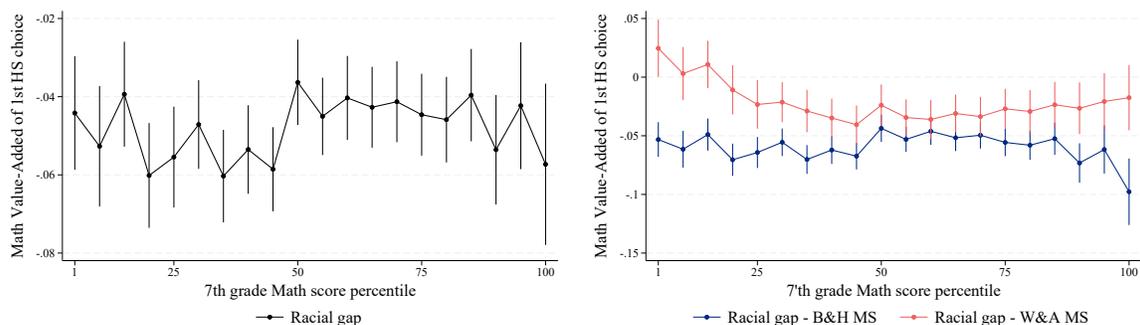
(b) Differences in school selectivity and quality



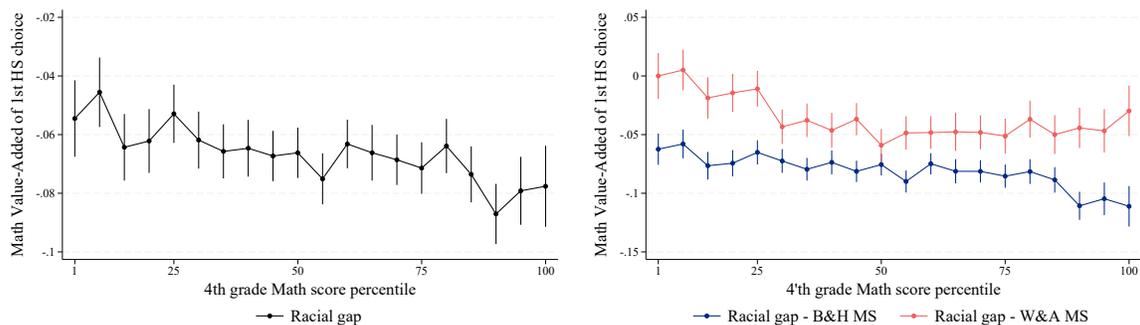
Notes: This figure plots the average characteristics of the high school ranked first by applicants' race, elementary school (4th grade) test score percentile, and the racial composition of the middle school attended. High school choice characteristics are shown in lighter shades for students attending majority-white and Asian middle schools (50% white and Asian enrollment) and in darker shades for those enrolled in majority-Black and Hispanic middle schools. The sample and high school characteristics considered are the same as in Figure 1.

Figure B3: Differences in Value-Added of High School Choices by Race, Controlling for District

(a) Choice gap by 7th grade percentile

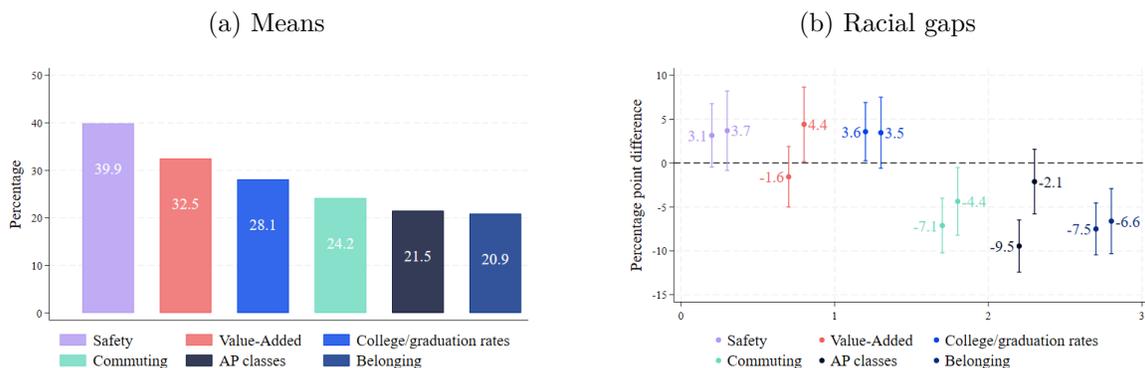


(b) Choice gap by 4th grade percentile



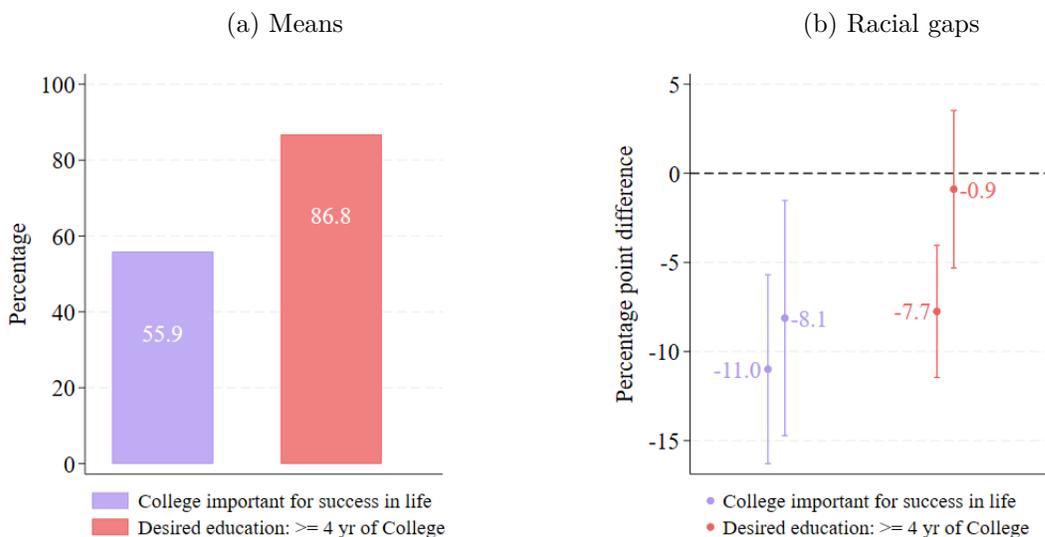
Notes: This figure shows how the racial gap unexplained by differences in residential location varies across student baseline achievement for all students (left), and separately for students enrolled in majority Black and Hispanic middle schools and majority white and Asian middle schools (right). Panel (a) uses 7th grade Math test scores as measures of baseline achievement, while Panel (b) uses 4th grade test scores. The graphs plot the coefficient on a dummy indicating Black and Hispanic applicants in regressions of school value-added in first choices on race, controlling for district of residence. Each dot corresponds to a separate regression restricting to applicants with baseline achievement in a different vingtile. Vertical bars indicate 95% confidence intervals.

Figure B4: Differences in Most Important School Features



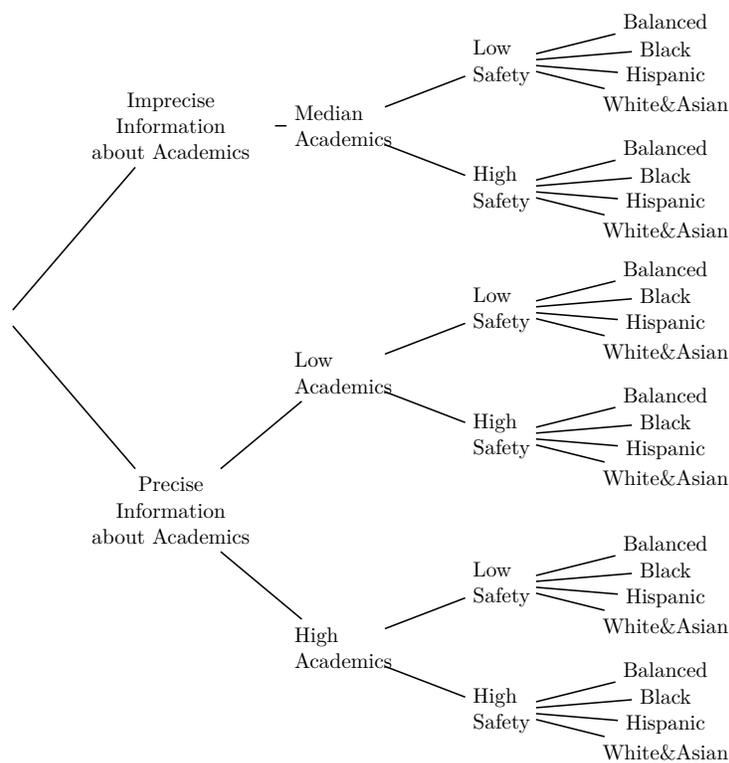
Notes: This figure reports differences in stated preference for school characteristics. Panel (a) reports the percentage of respondents who mentioned each school feature among their three most important when deciding which school to include in their list. Panel (b) reports the differences in the percentage of respondents who mentioned each school feature among Black and Hispanic respondents compared to white and Asian respondents. For each feature, the first bar presents the raw percentage point difference while the second bar presents the percentage point difference controlling for district of residence and middle school baseline test score. The capped lines display 95% confidence intervals. This figure uses data from survey question Q8.

Figure B5: Differences in Aspirations



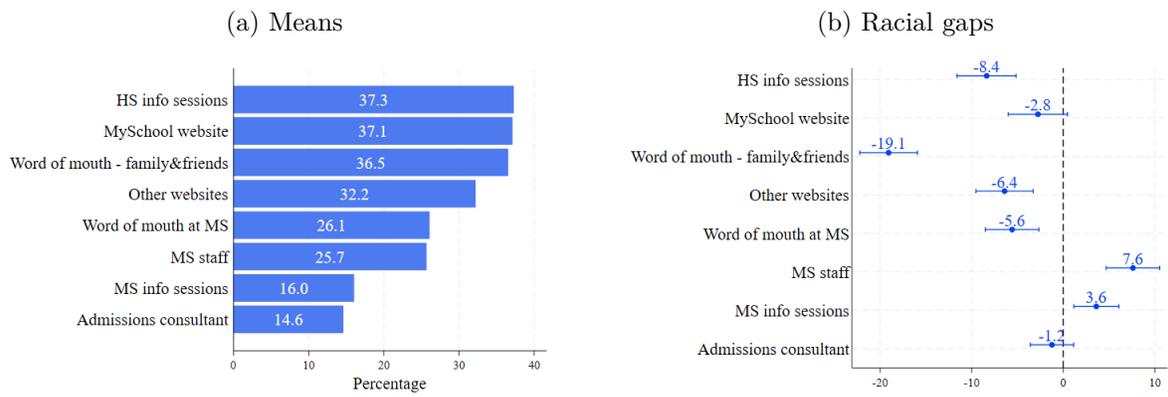
Notes: This figure reports differences respondents' aspirations for their students' future academic pursuits. Panel (a) reports the percentage of respondents who view college as important for success in life and who would like their kids to pursue at least 4 years of college. Panel (b) compares the academic aspirations of Black and Hispanic respondents to those of white and Asian respondents. For each answer, the first bar depicts the raw percentage point difference while the second bar depicts the percentage point difference controlling for district of residence and middle school baseline test score. The capped lines display 95% confidence intervals. This figure uses data from survey questions Q14 and Q15.

Figure B6: Treatment Arms for the Vignette Experiment



Notes: This figure describes the treatment arms in the school card vignette experiments. 60% of target survey participants were assigned to receive precise information about school academics, while the remaining 40% received imprecise information. Within the Precise Information treatment arm, school cards were equally likely to display either low or high academic ratings. Safety ratings (high or low) and school racial composition (balanced, majority Black, majority Hispanic, or majority white&Asian) were additionally cross-randomized with equal probabilities.

Figure B7: Information Sources



Notes: This figure presents the average use and racial differences in the use of various information sources about high schools, listed on the left. Panel (a) shows the proportion of respondents identifying each source as one of their three most important in making high school decisions. Panel (b) displays the regression coefficient for a Black and Hispanic respondent indicator, from separate regressions of indicators for mentioning each source as one of the three most important on respondent race, with controls for district of residence and baseline achievement.

C Survey appendix

This appendix provides comprehensive details on the content and implementation of the post-application survey conducted in partnership with the New York City Department of Education during the 2023-2024 high school admission cycle. This appendix is organized as follows. Section [C.1](#) explains the survey logistics, including timeline, the emails sent to participants, and the Qualtrics design. Section [C.2](#) describes the selection of potential participants. Section [C.3](#) describes the survey blocks and the randomization of participants to survey versions. Section [C.4](#) explains the selection of randomized schools in the survey. Finally, section [C.5](#) includes all survey questions as shown to participants.

C.1 Survey logistics

C.1.1 Survey timeline

High school applications in NYC closed on December 5th, 2023. The survey was designed to be sent after families applied to high school but before the offers were sent out on March 9th, 2023. The timeline allowed parents to have at least two weeks to complete it, and the survey had no time constraints beyond the March 6th deadline. Incomplete surveys were automatically submitted by the deadline. Participants who answered at least one question by the deadline received a \$10 Amazon gift card.

The survey was sent electronically using the email addresses of families used in the high school application process. It was conducted in two waves between February 17th and March 6th, 2023. The first wave, including 11,415 families, was sent on Friday, February 17th. A week later, on Friday, February 24th, the second wave was sent out to 9,986 families. Wave one participants received three reminders: one on February 21st, the second on March 3rd, and the last on March 6th, 2023 (the last day to respond to the survey). Wave two participants received two reminders: one on March 3rd, and the second on March 6th. All gift cards were sent out on March 14th. Figure [C1](#) illustrates the survey timeline.

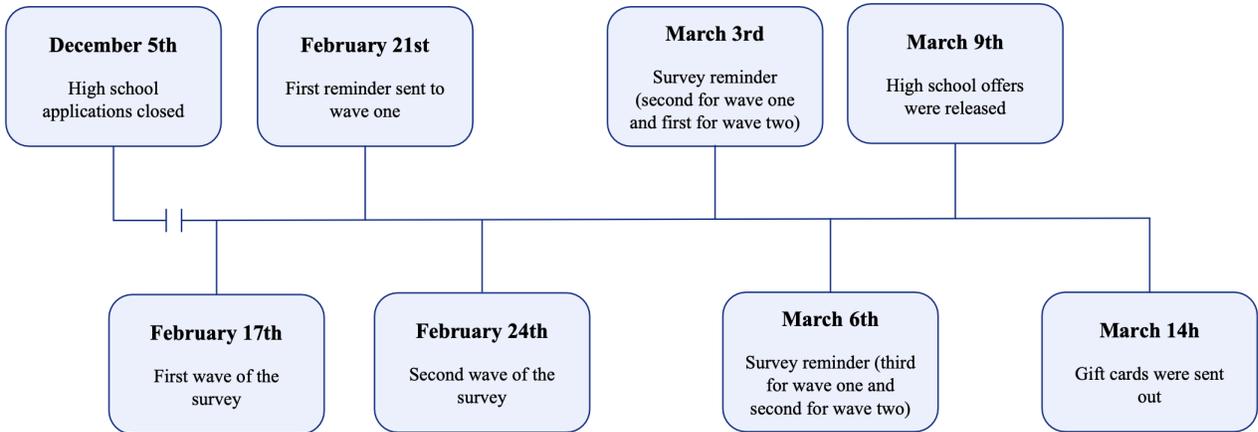
C.1.2 Survey emails

The survey was sent by email in the top three most spoken languages in NYC³⁵: English, Spanish, and Simplified Chinese. Figures [C2](#), [C3](#), and [C4](#) show the first email sent to the

³⁵Among all of the students enrolled in any NYC public school between SY 2012-13 and 2016-17, the top three home languages were divided as follows: 59.13% English speakers, 22.88% Spanish speakers, and 4.36% Chinese speakers.

potential participants. Figures C5, C6, and C7 show the survey reminder email.

Figure C1: Survey Timeline



Notes: This figure illustrates the timeline from the distribution of the first survey wave to the delivery of gift cards, all within the year 2023.

Figure C2: Invitation to Participate. English Version

MIT Economics



Dear parent/guardian,

You are receiving this email because you recently applied to NYC high schools.

We would like to invite you to **complete a 10-minute survey about the deciding factors in your high school choice**. This survey is part of a research study conducted by researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in partnership with the New York City Department of Education.

This study is independent from the high school choice placement process and the survey is **confidential** and **voluntary**. You must be **at least 18 years old** to participate in this study.

For more information about the study and to participate in the survey, please **Follow this link:**

[Take the survey](#)

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:

https://mit.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/preview/previewId/5d4b996c-9d20-432c-a2b2-f3b5d98d7f2/SV_0JoXfRC5AI0ew0C?Q_CHL=preview&Q_lang=EN

The first 5,000 respondents will receive a **\$10 Amazon gift card as compensation for their time**.

Your participation is very important to us! By taking this survey, you'll help us better understand how families choose high schools. Our goal is to use the insights gained to help future families make informed decisions about school choices.

Please note: the survey will close on March 6th before midnight Eastern Time and the gift cards will be sent out then.

Thank you very much!

The research team

If you have any questions, you may contact the principal investigator, Clemence Idoux at cidoux@mit.edu

Figure C3: Invitation to Participate. Spanish Version

Estimado Padre/Tutor,

Está recibiendo este correo electrónico porque recientemente solicitó el ingreso a escuelas secundarias de la Ciudad de Nueva York.

Nos gustaría invitarlo a **completar una encuesta de 10 minutos sobre los factores decisivos en su elección de escuela secundaria**. Esta encuesta es parte de un estudio de investigación realizado por el Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) con el Departamento de Educación de la Ciudad de Nueva York.

El estudio es **independiente del proceso de asignación a escuelas secundarias** y la encuesta es **confidencial** y **voluntaria**. Debe tener **al menos 18 años** para participar en este estudio.

Para obtener más información sobre el estudio y participar en la encuesta, **siga este enlace**:

[Tome la encuesta](#)

O copie y pegue el siguiente enlace (URL) en su navegador de Internet:

https://mit.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/preview/previewId/5d4b996c-9d20-432c-a2b2-f3b5d98d7ff2/SV_0JoXfRC5AlOew0C?Q_CHL=preview&Q_lang=ES

Los primeros 5,000 encuestados recibirán **una tarjeta de regalo de Amazon de \$10 dólares como pago por su tiempo**.

¡Su participación es muy importante para nosotros! Al completar esta encuesta, usted nos ayudará a entender mejor cómo las familias eligen escuelas secundarias. Nuestro objetivo es usar los conocimientos adquiridos para ayudar a futuras familias a tomar decisiones informadas sobre sus opciones de escuelas.

Tenga en cuenta que la encuesta cerrará el 6 de Marzo antes de la media noche, hora del este.

¡Muchas gracias!

El equipo de investigación

Si usted tiene alguna pregunta, puede contactar a la investigadora principal, Clemence Idoux en el correo electrónico cidoux@mit.edu

Figure C4: Invitation to Participate. Simplified Chinese Version

尊敬的家长和监护人:

您收到此调查问卷是因为您最近申请了纽约市的高中。

我们想请您填写一份10分钟的有关您高中选择的决定因素的调查问卷。这份调查问卷是麻省理工学院与纽约市教育部开展的调研的一部分。

本调研独立于高中择校流程。本调查问卷为自愿参加并且您通过本调查问卷向我们提供的信息将予以保密。您必须年满18岁来参与本次调研。

了解有关本调研的更多信息和填写调查问卷, 请使用以下链接:

[填写问卷](#)

或复制粘贴以下链接至您的网络浏览器:

https://mit.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/preview/previewId/5d4b996c-9d20-432c-a2b2-f3b5d98d7ff2/SV_0JoXfRC5AlOew0C?Q_CHL=preview&Q_lang=ZH-T

调查问卷的前 5,000位回答者将会获得一张价值10美元的亚马逊礼品卡, 为感谢您为此付出的时间。

您的参与对我们非常重要! 通过填写这份调查, 您将会帮助我们更好地了解家庭如何选择高中。我们的目标是用我们获得的了解来帮助未来的家庭在择校中做出明智的决定。

请注意: 调查问卷会在美东时间3月6日午夜前关闭并且礼品卡会届时发出。

谢谢!

研究团队

如果您有任何问题, 您可以通过邮箱cidoux@mit.edu 联系项目负责人Clemence Idoux。

Follow the link to opt out of future emails:

[Click here to unsubscribe](#)

Figure C5: Survey Reminder. English Version

MIT Economics



Dear parent/guardian,

You have 3 days left to **complete a 10-minute survey about the deciding factors in your high school choice.**

Your opinion matters! By taking this survey, you'll help us better understand how families choose high schools and improve the application experience for future families.

To compensate you for your time, **you will receive a \$10 Amazon gift card**, after the survey is closed on March 6th.

For more information about the study and to participate in the survey, please **follow this link**:

[Take the survey](#)

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:

https://mit.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/preview/previewId/81e99fbf-5fc8-43f4-a64b-fa87bf0f6fb4/SV_4OysVkOlp8xjaZM?Q_CHL=preview&Q_lang=EN

This survey is part of a research study conducted by researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in partnership with the New York City Department of Education. **This study is independent from the high school choice placement process** and the survey is **confidential** and **voluntary**. You must be **at least 18 years old** to participate in this study.

Thank you very much! Your participation is very important to us.

The research team

If you have any questions, you may contact the principal investigator, Clemence Idoux at cidoux@mit.edu

Figure C6: Survey Reminder. Spanish Version

Estimado Padre/Tutor,

Le quedan 3 días para completar **una encuesta de 10 minutos sobre los factores decisivos en su elección de escuela secundaria.**

¡Su participación es muy importante! Al completar esta encuesta, usted nos ayudará a entender mejor cómo las familias eligen escuelas secundarias y a mejorar la experiencia de solicitud de ingreso de futuras familias.

Como compensación por su tiempo, **usted recibirá una tarjeta de regalo de Amazon de \$10 dólares** después de que la encuesta cierre el 6 de Marzo.

Para obtener más información sobre el estudio y participar en la encuesta, **siga este enlace**:

[Tome la encuesta](#)

O copie y pegue el siguiente enlace (URL) en su navegador de Internet:

https://mit.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/preview/previewId/81e99fbf-5fc8-43f4-a64b-fa87bf0f6fb4/SV_4OysVkOlp8xjaZM?Q_CHL=preview&Q_lang=ES

Esta encuesta es parte de un estudio de investigación realizado por el Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) con el Departamento de Educación de la Ciudad de Nueva York. El estudio es **independiente del proceso de asignación a escuelas secundarias** y la encuesta es **confidencial** y **voluntaria**. Debe tener **al menos 18 años** para participar en este estudio.

¡Muchas gracias! Su participación es muy importante para nosotros.

El equipo de investigación

Si usted tiene alguna pregunta, puede contactar a la investigadora principal, Clemence Idoux en el correo electrónico cidoux@mit.edu

Figure C7: Survey Reminder. Simplified Chinese Version

尊敬的家长和监护人:

您还有3天时间填写一份10分钟的有关您高中选择的决定因素的调查问卷。

您的意见很重要! 通过填写这份调查,您将会帮助我们更好地了解家庭如何选择高中并改善未来家庭的择校体验。

为感谢您为此付出的时间,您将会获得一张价值10美元的亚马逊礼品卡,在三月六日调查问卷关闭之后。

了解有关本调研的更多信息和填写调查问卷,请使用以下链接:
[填写问卷](#)

或复制粘贴以下链接至您的网络浏览器:
https://mit.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/preview/previewld/81e99fbf-5fc8-43f4-a64b-fa87bf0f6fb4/SV_4OysVkOlp8xjaZM?Q_CHL=preview&Q_lang=ZH-T

这份调查问卷是麻省理工学院与纽约市教育部开展的调研的一部分。本调研独立于高中择校流程。本调查问卷为自愿参加并且您通过本调查问卷向我们提供的信息将予以保密。您必须年满18岁来参与本次调研。

谢谢! 您的参与对我们非常重要。

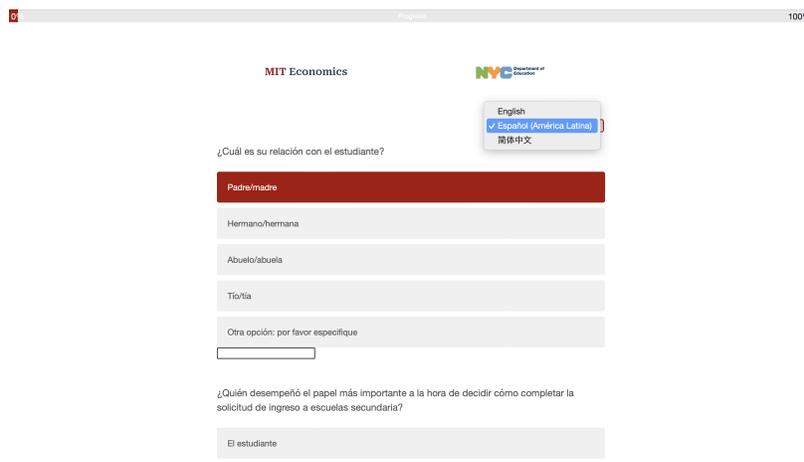
研究团队

如果您有任何问题,您可以通过邮箱cidoux@mit.edu 联系项目负责人Clemence Idoux。

C.1.3 Qualtrics design

The survey was designed on Qualtrics and it was available in English, Spanish, and Simplified Chinese (see Figure C8). All questions were marked as optional, except the consent to participate one: to access the survey, participants had to check a box stating that they were over 18 years old.

Figure C8: Language Selection in the Survey

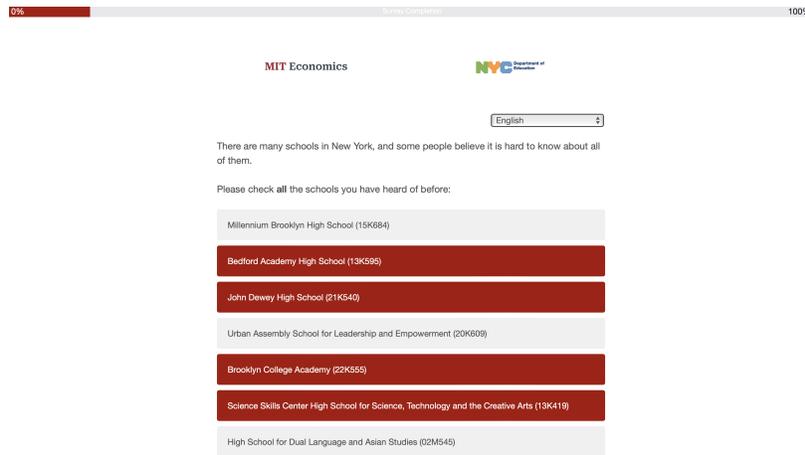


Notes: This figure illustrates how survey participants could change the survey language at any point when filling it out.

We personalized the survey by using JavaScript to present participants with different sets of schools. For instance, question 9 displayed a distinct set of high-demand and popular

schools based on the participant’s borough. See Figure C9 and section C.4 of the main text for more details.

Figure C9: Question 9. Variation in Schools Presented to Respondents Based on Their Characteristics



Notes: This figure shows one of the possible school sets presented to respondents in Q9. The set of schools in this question was tailored to each respondent, as explained in detail in section C.4.

C.2 Selection of participants

C.2.1 Assignment of participants to survey waves

The sample of all eligible participants consisted of parents or guardians of students applying to start 9th grade in fall 2023. Participant population data was selected as described in Section 2 of the paper. Summary statistics can be found in Table 1. We categorized participants into survey waves based on their informativeness by assigning each participant a priority, which sorted them into different waves. We only sent the survey to some of the waves. Eligible participants’ priorities range from one to six and were determined as follows:

1. Survey priority is 1 if the student was enrolled in a DOE school in 6th grade, has all demographic information, has all baseline scores, and is at risk of middle school assignment.
2. Survey priority is 2 if the student was enrolled in a DOE school in 6th grade, has all demographic information, and has all baseline scores.

3. Survey priority is 3 if the student was enrolled in a DOE school in 6th grade, is at risk of middle school assignment, and is missing some demographic information or baseline scores.
4. Survey priority is 4 if any of the following is true:
 - The student was enrolled in a DOE school in 6th grade and is missing some demographic information or baseline scores.
 - The student has disabilities, was enrolled in a DOE school in 6th grade, and has any risk of middle school assignment.
5. Survey priority is 5 if any of the following is true:
 - The student was enrolled in a DOE school in 6th grade and does not have risk of middle school assignment.
 - The student has disabilities, was enrolled in a DOE school in 6th grade, and is missing risk of middle school assignment.
6. Survey priority is 6 if the student was not enrolled in a DOE school in 6th grade.

The first wave of the survey included all families of students with a survey priority of 1. The second wave included the first 10,000 priority 2 students, sorted by their scrambled ID. Additional waves of participants were created for potential expansion of the survey, although they were not used. The final sample of potential participants comprised 21,401 parents or guardians.

C.3 Survey block design and randomization to survey version

C.3.1 Description of survey blocks

The complete survey had a total of 47 questions, including the consent question and the end-of-survey comment box. We grouped all the questions by type and created five different blocks (1a, 1b, 2, 3a, 3b), which are shown in Table C1. Block 1 consists of the information questions. Block 2 includes questions about student aspirations, beliefs about student academic performance, and knowledge of tiebreakers and how they affect application decisions. Block 3 is the vignette experiment described further in Section 5.1.2 of the paper. It consists of questions about school preferences and perceptions of discrimination and has

two versions: 3a and 3b. The version 3a includes precise academic information, while 3b presents imprecise academic information.

C.3.2 Randomization of participants to survey version

To reduce the time it takes to complete the survey and increase participation, we devised eight different survey versions by creating different combinations of the five question blocks. Each survey version consisted of between 31-35 questions (see Table C2). All survey versions included the consent to participate, general questions, and the end-of-survey comment box. All potential participants had an equal probability of receiving any of the eight survey versions (12.5% each). The marginal probability for each block was thus 75% for block 1 (37.5% for 1a and 37.5% for 1b), 50% for block 2, and 75% for block 3 (37.5% for 3a and 37.5% for 3b). The detailed distribution of blocks to survey version is shown in Table C2).

Table C3 evaluates the covariate balance and attrition rates by survey version. Among all the balance regressions conducted, the majority show no statistically significant relationship between survey version assignment and the covariates. Similarly, in most of the response attrition regressions, the coefficients do not show statistical significance. These attrition findings remain consistent for all participants and when segmenting the sample by white and Asian as well as by Black and Hispanic (minority). The results confirm that the survey randomization successfully achieved the expected balance across the covariates. Regarding attrition, there is no statistically significant difference in the response rate observed by survey version among all potential participants. Two small differences are evident when dividing the sample by race. In survey version 8, white and Asian potential participants are slightly more likely to respond. Similarly, in survey version 3, Black and Hispanic potential participants show a slightly higher likelihood of responding.

Table C1: Survey Questions by Block and Type

Type	Description	Number of questions and type
General Block		
Age verification	Question to ensure participant is old enough.	1 checkbox question (Q0)
General questions	Questions about the relationship with the student, who played the most important role in the application, sources of information, the importance of going to school with friends, attention check, dream school, important aspects when choosing a school.	15 possible questions: - 9 multiple choice (Q1, Q2, Q3, Q3b, Q4, Q5, Q6, Q8a, Q9) - 2 open-ended (Q8a.2, Q3b.2) - 1 Yes/No question (Q7a): If "Yes," 1 extra multiple choice question (Q7c); if "No," 2 extra multiple choice questions (Q7b, Q7c.2)
End of survey	Question to leave any comments.	1 open-ended question (Q21)
Block 1a		
Information (version 1)	Questions comparing two high schools in terms of commuting time by public transportation, academically focused students, college enrollment, Regents preparation, safe environment, and AP courses.	6 multiple choice questions with two options each (Q10a, Q10b, Q10c, Q10d, Q10f, Q10g)
Block 1b		
Information (version 2)	Questions comparing a high school to the ones in the borough of residence in terms of commuting time by public transportation, academically focused students, college enrollment, Regents preparation, safe environment, and AP courses.	6 multiple choice questions following 1-4 Likert scale (Q10a_v2, Q10b_v2, Q10c_v2, Q10d_v2, Q10f_v2, Q10g_v2)
Block 2		
Beliefs on academic performance and admission probability	Questions about beliefs on student 7th grade grades compared to all students in the middle school and the city, and about likelihood to admission to a school.	3 multiple choice questions (Q11a, Q12, Q13)
Aspirations for the student	Questions about the importance of going to college, and aspirations for the highest level of education.	2 multiple choice questions (Q14a, Q15)
Tiebreaker knowledge	Questions about knowledge of the tiebreaker number and how that affected the application.	3 possible multiple choice questions: - 1 Yes/No question (Q16a): If "Yes," 1 extra Yes/No question (Q16b); if "No," 1 extra Yes/No question (Q16c)
Block 3a		
Preferences for attributes (experiment, version 1)	Two types of questions, the first belongs to a vignette experiment with hypothetical schools that varied by safety rating, academic performance ratings, and racial composition (read more on Section 5.1.2). The second type of question is about perceived race-based discrimination.	10 possible questions: - 9 multiple choice (Q17a, Q17b, Q18a, Q18b, Q19a, Q19b, Q19c, Q20a, Q20b) - 1 extra multiple choice if the response to any of the race-related questions was neutral or some degree of agreement (Q20c).
Block 3b		
Preferences for attributes (experiment, version 2)	Two types of questions, the first belongs to a vignette experiment with hypothetical schools that varied by safety rating, academic performance ratings, and racial composition (read more on Section 5.1.2). The second type of question is about perceived race-based discrimination.	10 possible questions: - 9 multiple choice (Q17a, Q17b, Q18a, Q18b, Q19a, Q19b, Q19c, Q20a, Q20b) - 1 extra multiple choice if the response to any of the race-related questions was neutral or some degree of agreement (Q20c).

Notes: This table presents the five distinct question blocks in the survey, including a general one. Each block groups different types of questions, as shown in the first column. The last column provides a breakdown of each question type, including the total number of questions, the questions format (checkbox, open-ended, or multiple choice), and the question numbers in the survey.

Table C2: Eight Survey Versions and Their Respective Block Combinations

Survey version	Blocks included	Number of possible questions (from blocks + general)
1	1a, 2	$14 + 17 = 31$
2	1b, 2	$14 + 17 = 31$
3	1a, 3a	$16 + 17 = 33$
4	1a, 3b	$16 + 17 = 33$
5	1b, 3a	$16 + 17 = 33$
6	1b, 3b	$16 + 17 = 33$
7	2, 3a	$18 + 17 = 35$
8	2, 3b	$18 + 17 = 35$

Notes: This table shows the survey blocks included in each of the eight survey versions. Specific questions within each block are detailed in Table C1. The third column provides the total number of questions for each survey version.

C.4 School Selection for Randomized Survey Questions

C.4.1 Definition of school attributes

We consider the following school-level characteristics to select the schools that populate the embedded data of the survey.

Attributes:

- **Demographics:** Ethnic/racial composition of students enrolled in school during the 2021-2022 school year, using all grades 9-12. In particular, we care about the share of white and Asian students (or the share of Black and Hispanic students) in the school.
- **Baseline scores:** Average (standardized) 7th grade test scores of the students enrolling in 9th grade in 2020-2021, by school. This means the test scores are typically measured in 2018-19 SY.
- **Popularity:** Popularity is the share of applicants rejected to applicants accepted for each program at each school in the 2022 admission cycle. We aggregate at the school level using a weighted average across programs at the school, with weights proportional to program capacities. The data used includes schools from any of the five NYC boroughs: Bronx (X), Brooklyn (K), Manhattan (M), Queens (Q), Staten Island (R).
- **Admission method:** We consider as screened schools those that in the 2022-2023 program crosswalk had at least one program that screened students on the basis of academics or both language and academics. These are the high school programs available for the 2023-2024 school year.
- **Language and AP stem classes:** Number of language classes and AP classes in STEM subjects offered by each school.
- **College attendance:** Share of students enrolling in college within 6 months of (on time) graduation per school for 2020-21 SY.
- **Safety:** Percent of students that felt safe in the hallways, bathrooms, locker rooms, and cafeteria by school during the 2019-20 SY.
- **Size:** Total enrollment count at school for grades 9-12 in the 2021-22 SY.

- **Applicants per seat:** Total number of applicants at the school (regardless of whether they got in a preferred school or not) per seat in 2022 admission cycle. This is a school-level measure.
- **Regents VA:** OLS VA on Algebra 1 and ELA Regents using test scores from years 2013 to 2017 cohorts (cohort = fall of 9th grade) and 7th grade baselines.
- **College VA:** OLS VA on a dummy for whether a student enrolls in any type of college using data from 2013 to 2016 cohorts and 7th grade baselines.

C.4.2 Districts' school choice set construction based on school characteristics

The set of high schools eligible for inclusion in certain survey questions was determined as follows:

1. Start from schools in the 2021-2022 high school directory and keep only those in the 2022-2023 program crosswalk.
2. Drop specialized schools, special districts (75 and 79), and home schools.
3. For each district, take a subset of schools that:
 - are in the same borough, or
 - are out of borough but to which at least 1% of students in the district applies in the 2022 cycle.

This returns, on average, 143 schools per district. The average share of students in the district applying to a school in this choice set is 5%.

C.4.3 Selection of high-demand high schools: Questions 12, 13, and part of 9

We selected a few high-demand schools per borough: seven for Manhattan, two for Staten Island, and six for Queens, the Bronx, and Brooklyn. The high-demand schools were determined using the following criteria:

- In the top 20 schools per popularity (share of applicants rejected to applicants accepted) among students residing in the borough.
- In the top 20 schools in terms of applicants per seat among students residing in the borough.

- In the top quintile of average baseline (7th grade) Math test scores across schools in the city.

We then ranked the selected schools based on popularity, applicants per set, and baseline Math. We chose the highest-ranked schools while ensuring some variation in the demographic composition of the schools selected per borough. Specifically, we ensure that at least one school selected per borough had a high share of white and Asian students (>50%) and at least two schools had at least 26% white and Asian students. If none of the top six highest-ranked schools had these characteristics, we replaced the lowest-ranked school among the top six with the highest-ranked school with enough demographic variation in the student body composition.

C.4.4 Selection of 10 "known" schools: Choice question (Q9)

We assign each student a list of 10 schools, based on their district of residence. We start with the district-specific choice set of schools (on average 105 schools) and we select 10 schools as follows:

- **Schools 1 and 2:** Randomly chosen among the high-demand schools of the district borough. Randomization at the student level.
- **School 3:** A school with a high share of white and Asian students. That is, a school with a share above 26% of white and Asian students, which corresponds to the top 25% of schools in the city-wide distribution. For each district, we randomly selected two such schools from the district choice set as follows: one with high baseline Math test scores and one with low baseline Math test scores. High baseline Math test scores are the top 25% of schools city-wide, while low baseline Math are the bottom 50% of schools city-wide. If the restrictions returned an empty set, we selected the school with the highest share of white students from high (low) Math baseline schools. If empty again, we selected the school with the highest (lowest) baselines among schools with a high share of white students. Finally, we randomized at the student level between these two white schools.
- **School 4:** A school with a high share of Black and Hispanic (minority) students. That is, a school with a share above 94% of minority students, which corresponds to the top 25% of schools in the city-wide distribution. For each district, we randomly selected two such schools from the district choice set as follows: one with high baseline Math

test scores and one with low baseline Math test scores. We followed the same procedure as for school 3. If the restrictions returned an empty set, we selected the school with the highest share of minority students, among high (low) Math baseline schools. If empty again, we selected the school with the highest (lowest) baselines among schools with a high share of minority students. Finally, we randomized at the student level between these two minority schools.

- **School 5:** A school with a high share of Black students. That is, a school with a share above 41% Black students, which corresponds to the top 25% of schools in the city-wide distribution. For each district, we randomly selected two such schools from the district choice set as follows: one with high baseline Math test scores, and one with low baseline Math test scores. We followed the same procedure as for schools 3 and 4. Finally, we randomized at the student level between these two Black schools.
- **School 6:** A school with high SAT Math VA. That is, above 0.35 standard deviation, which corresponds to the top 25% of schools in the city-wide distribution. For each district, we randomly selected two such schools from the district choice set as follows: one with a high share of white and Asian students, and one with a lower share of white and Asian students. A high share of white and Asian is above 26%, or top 25% of schools. The low share of white and Asian is below 26%. If the restrictions returned an empty set, we selected the school with the highest value-added among high-white (low-white) schools. If empty again, we selected the school with the highest (lowest) share of white students among high-VA schools. Finally, we randomized at the student level between these two high VA schools.
- **School 7:** A school with low SAT Math VA. That is, a school corresponding to the bottom 25% of schools in the city-wide distribution. We use the exact same procedure described for school 6, but for low-VA schools to select two schools per district. Then, we randomized at the student level between these two low VA schools.
- **School 8:** A school that screens students on the basis of academics. For each district, we randomly selected two such schools from the district choice set as follows: one with a high share of white and Asian students, and one with a lower share of white and Asian students. A high share of white and Asian students is above 26%, or top 25% of schools. The low share of white and Asian students is below 26%. If the restrictions returned an empty set, we selected the school with the highest (lowest) share of white

students among screened schools. Finally, we randomized at the student level between these two screened schools.

- **School 9:** A school that does not screen students on the basis of academics. For each district, we randomly selected two such schools from the district choice set as follows: one with a high share of white and Asian students, and one with a lower share of white and Asian students. If the restrictions returned an empty set, we selected the school with the highest (lowest) share of white students among unscreened schools. Finally, we randomized at the student level between these two unscreened schools.
- **School 10:** A large school. That is, a school with more than 622 students, which corresponds to the top 25% of schools in the city-wide distribution. For each district, we randomly selected two such schools from the district choice set as follows: one with a high share of white and Asian students, and one with a lower share of white and Asian students. If the restrictions returned an empty set, we selected the school with the largest size among high-white (low-white) schools. If empty again, we selected the school with the highest (lowest) share of white students among large-size schools. Finally, we randomized at the student level between these two large schools.

C.4.5 Selection of two schools to compare: Information question (Q10, version 1)

We measure information about schools by asking to compare two schools along the following school characteristics: baseline test scores, college enrollment rates, Regents VA, college VA, language and ap stem classes. For each district and each school characteristic, we selected four pairs of schools:

1. Both are high-white-share
2. Both are non-high-white share
3. The first is high-white and the second is not
4. The second is high-white and the first is not

In each pair, the first school is the one with the highest value of the school characteristics of interest. With high-white we mean schools with a share of white and Asian students above 26%, corresponding to the 25% of schools with the highest share of white and Asian students in the city.

We selected the schools among the ones in the district choice set, further restricting to schools ranked by at least 2% of students in the district. This limits the choice set for each district to 77 schools per district, on average. A school in this subset is ranked on average by 9% of students residing in the district.

For each school pair, we randomly selected the first school from the restricted choice set, conditional on the demographic constraint of the pair. Subsequently, we randomly selected a (different) second school from the same restricted set, ensuring it satisfies the demographic constraint of the pair and has a characteristic value that is "different enough" from the first school in the pair.

"Different enough" by school characteristic is defined as follows:

- **Baseline test scores:** Different by at least 0.33σ in the average baseline test score means of incoming students. We use an average of mean Math and mean ELA test scores for each school.
- **College enrollment rates:** Different by at least 5pp.
- **Regents VA:** Different by at least 0.3σ in the average Regents VA. We use an average of Regents Algebra VA and Regents ELA VA for each school.
- **College VA:** Different by at least 5pp.
- **Language classes:** Discrete difference (at least 1 more/less class).
- **AP stem classes:** Discrete difference (at least 1 more/less class).

Sometimes these restrictions yield an empty set, so not all pairs have two schools, meaning not all pairs are valid. However, most district-questions have three or four valid pairs. To randomly assign each student a valid pair for each question, we use their district of residence. The randomization probability is uniform across valid pairs within each district-question.

C.4.6 Selection of schools to compare within borough: Information question (Q10, version 2)

We measure information about schools by asking to compare one school to the borough distribution of the following school characteristics: baseline test scores, college enrollment rates, Regents VA, college VA, language and AP STEM classes.

For each characteristic (question), we selected four schools per district to include all combinations of high and low white share schools that are above or below the median characteristic value. The median value is calculated based on the borough median.

We selected schools at random among the ones in the district choice set, further restricting to 1) schools in the same borough, and 2) schools ranked by at least 5% of students in the district. This reduces the choice set for each district to 55 schools per district, on average. A school in this subset is ranked, on average, by 11% of students residing in the district.

If the intersection of high-white and above (below) median characteristic returned an empty set, we selected the school with the highest share of white students, conditional on being above (below) the median characteristic. If this also resulted in an empty set, we chose the school with the highest (lowest) value of the characteristic, conditional on being a high white school.

Similarly, if the intersection of non-high-white and above (below) median characteristic returned an empty set, we selected the school with the lowest share of white students, conditional on being above (below) median characteristic. If this also returned an empty set, we selected the school with the highest (lowest) value of the characteristic, conditional on being a non-high white school.

While defining above or below the median for most school characteristics in the borough is trivial, further clarification is needed for how we determine above and below median baseline scores and Regents VA. We consider a school to be above (below) median baseline scores if it is above (below) the median for both average Math and average ELA 7th grade test scores. Similarly, we classify a school as above (below) the median Regents VA if it is above (below) the median for both Regents Algebra 1 VA and Regents ELA VA.

C.4.7 Selection of school characteristics for vignette experiment: Racial preferences question (Q17 and Q18)

The description of the vignette experiment is on Section 5.1.2 of the paper. The experiment includes a total of 24 possible vignettes, also referred to as school cards. First, 16 school cards show 3 school characteristics (called the "3-factor list"): academics (x2), safety (x2), and racial composition (x4). Second, we have 8 school cards that show 2 school characteristics (called the "2-factor list"): safety (x2) and racial composition (x4). Regarding academics and safety, hypothetical schools had either high-safety or low-safety ratings. In terms of student demographics, hypothetical schools had either a balanced racial composition representative of the school district, a majority of Black students, a majority of Hispanic students, or a

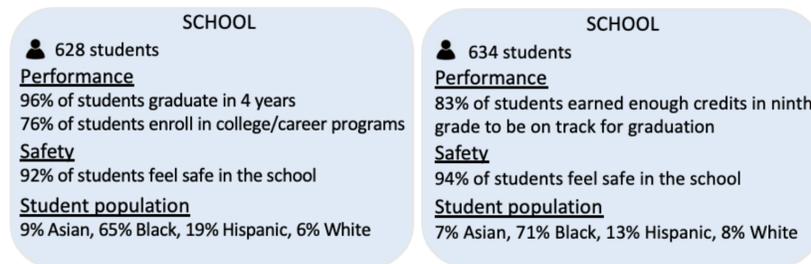
majority of white or Asian students. The average school characteristics are in Table [A6](#). Examples of the 2- and 3-factor cards are in Figure [C10](#).

For question 17, we randomly selected one school from the 3 factor list and one school from the 2 factor list for each student. In question 18 (relative scale, ranking of 3 schools), we randomly selected three schools from the 3 factor list and three schools from the 2 factor list, without replacement, for each student.

Finally, we randomized at the student level whether the student would receive the vignette with three or with two factors. We assigned 60% of students to the 3 factor version of the questions.

C.5 Survey images

Figure C10: School Cards for Vignette Experiment



Notes: This figure displays an example of two cards used in the vignette experiment. The left card displays precise academic information (Treatment 1, received by around 60% of the experiment participants). The right card shows imprecise academic information (Treatment 2, received by around 40% of the experiment participants).

Figure C11: Consent Question

MIT Economics



English

Researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology are conducting a research study in partnership with the New York City Department of Education (DOE) about the New York City public high school application process. You are receiving this survey because you recently applied to high school.

We are conducting this research study to **learn more about how families choose schools**. We are also interested in understanding whether families make different choices based on the middle school that their student attends. We hope that our results will generate new understanding about school choice and help the DOE improve the application process in the future.

This study is **separate from the high school application process**. The information you provide to us through this survey will be kept **completely confidential**. Your decision to participate and any answers you provide will **not** influence your offer in any way, nor will your answers be provided to anyone at your student's current or future school.

If you participate in this study, you will be asked to answer a **10-minute survey about your experience with the application process**. We are interested in hearing your **perspective as a parent or guardian**. There are no known risks associated with your participation in this research beyond those of everyday life. The **deadline** for filling the survey is **March 6th**.

The first 5,000 respondents will receive a **\$10 Amazon gift card as compensation for their time**. The gift card will be sent to this same email address after the survey is closed.

Participation in this study is **voluntary**. You may choose not to participate or stop at any time. **Please read the rest of [this consent form](#) for more information about the study**. If you have any questions about this study, you may contact the investigator, Clemence Idoux at cidoux@mit.edu

By checking this box and completing the survey, you are consenting to participate in this study and certifying to be at least 18 years old.



Figure C12: Question 1

0%

Survey Completion

100%

MIT Economics

NYC Department of Education

English

What is your relationship to the student?

- Parent
- Brother/Sister
- Grandparent
- Uncle/Aunt
- Other: please specify

Figure C13: Question 2

Who played the most important role in deciding how to fill out the high school application?

- The student
- The parents/guardians
- Both the parents/guardians and the student
- School staff
- Other: please specify



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Figure C14: Question 3

0%

Survey Completion

100%

MIT Economics



English

In the past year, how many times did you talk to **other parents/guardians** from your student's middle school about which high schools to apply to?

Never

1-5 times

More than 5 times

Figure C15: Question 3b

What were the **most important sources of information** for deciding which schools to include in your student's application? **Rank** up to three (1 should be the most important to you).

	1	2	3
Word-of-mouth from other parents/guardians at your student's middle school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Word-of-mouth from family and friends	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
School-admissions consultant	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attending information sessions at your student's middle school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attending high school information sessions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other websites (InsideSchools, GreatSchools etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
MySchools' high school directory	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Staff at your student's middle school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Figure C16: Question 3b.2

If you think of an important source of information that is not mentioned, please add it here:



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Figure C17: Question 4

0%

Survey Completion

100%

MIT Economics



English

How important is it to you that your student goes to the same high school as their friends from middle school?

Not important at all

Not very important

Somewhat important

Very important



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Figure C18: Question 5

0%

Survey Completion

100%

MIT Economics



English

Which school was ranked **first** on your student's application?

School

Program



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Figure C19: Question 6

0%

Survey Completion

100%

MIT Economics



English

Please select your **"dream school"** —the school that you would pick if your student could attend any high school in the city— from the drop down below (note that this list does **not** include the Specialized High Schools). This might be a school that was on your student's application, but it doesn't have to be.

School

Program



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Figure C20: Question 7a

0%

Survey Completion

100%

MIT Economics



English

Did you list the dream school on your student's application? (The New Explorations into Science, Technology and Math High School (NEST+m) (01M539))

Yes

No



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Figure C21: Question 7b

0%

Survey Completion

100%

MIT Economics



English

Why not? [Check all that apply]

We thought our student's chances to get in were too low

Our student was not eligible to apply to the program

We realized too late that the program required an admission test/audition/assessment

We knew the program required an admission test/audition/assessment, but our student did not want to complete it

Other: please specify



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Figure C22: Question 7c

MIT Economics



English

How likely do you think your student is to get into The East Side Community School (01M450)?

Impossible (0% chance)

Almost impossible (1-10% chance)

Somewhat unlikely (11-33% chance)

Somewhat likely (34-66% chance)

Very likely (67-89% chance)

Almost certain (90-100% chance)



Figure C23: Question 7c.2

0%
Survey Completion
100%





English

How likely do you think your student would be to get into The New Explorations into Science, Technology and Math High School (NEST+m) (01M539) if you had listed it first on your application?

Impossible (0% chance)

Almost impossible (1-10% chance)

Somewhat unlikely (11-33% chance)

Somewhat likely (34-66% chance)

Very likely (67-89% chance)

Almost certain (90-100% chance)

Figure C24: Question 8a

0%
Survey Completion
100%





English

What is **most important** to you when you choose a school? **Rank** up to three (1 should be the most important to you).

	1	2	3
Career and Technical education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Whether I think my student would feel like they belong	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Graduation and/or college enrollment rate(s)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Demographics of the school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
School interest areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Advanced classes (for instance AP classes) offered	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Extracurricular activities offered	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Safe school environment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
School campus and facilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other incoming students are academically-focused	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ease of commute	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
School's neighborhood	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Academic progress of students at the school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Figure C25: Question 8a.2

If you think something important that influenced your decision is not mentioned, please add it here:

Figure C26: Question 9

0%

Survey Completion

100%

MIT Economics



English

There are many schools in New York, and some people believe it is hard to know about all of them.

Please check **all** the schools you have heard of before:

Millennium Brooklyn High School (15K684)

Bedford Academy High School (13K595)

John Dewey High School (21K540)

Urban Assembly School for Leadership and Empowerment (20K609)

Brooklyn College Academy (22K555)

Science Skills Center High School for Science, Technology and the Creative Arts (13K419)

High School for Dual Language and Asian Studies (02M545)

Figure C27: Question 10

0%

Survey Completion

100%

MIT Economics



English

Now we would like to ask some questions about how you think different high schools compare.

Please fill out based on what you already know about these schools – you do **not** need to do any additional research. If you're unsure, **it is okay to take a guess**. The survey will automatically move on to the next question after one minute.



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Figure C28: Question 10a

0%

Survey Completion

100%

MIT Economics



English

Which of these schools would take your student **more time to get to by public transit?**

Brooklyn Studio Secondary School (21K690)

Bedford Academy High School (13K595)



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Figure C29: Question 10b

0%

Survey Completion

100%

MIT Economics



English

Which of these schools attracts **more academically-focused students**?

Townsend Harris High School (25Q525)

Bard High School Early College (01M696)



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Figure C30: Question 10c

0%

Survey Completion

100%

MIT Economics



English

Which of these schools has **more students** that enroll in college?

N.Y.C. Lab School for Collaborative Studies (02M412)

Sunset Park High School (15K667)



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Figure C31: Question 10d

0%

Survey Completion

100%

MIT Economics



English

Which of these schools **better prepares** students for **their Regents** exam?

N.Y.C. Lab School for Collaborative Studies (02M412)

James Madison High School (22K425)



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Figure C32: Question 10f

0%

Survey Completion

100%

MIT Economics



English

Which of these schools offers the **safest environment** for students?

Brooklyn College Academy (22K555)

Midwood High School (22K405)



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Figure C33: Question 10g

0%

Survey Completion

100%

MIT Economics



English

Which of these schools offers **more AP courses**?

Brooklyn Studio Secondary School (21K690)

Fort Hamilton High School (20K490)



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Figure C34: Question 11a

0%

Survey Completion

100%

MIT Economics



English

Now, we would like to ask you questions about your student's academic performance.

How do you think your student's 7th grade final grades compare to other students in the city?

Worse than most students in the city (bottom third)

About average compared to other students in the city (middle third)

Better than most students in the city (top third)



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Figure C35: Question 12

0%

Survey Completion

100%

MIT Economics



English

If your student received an offer to the Technology program (K95A) at the Bedford Academy High School (13K595), how well do you think they would perform compared to the other students in the school? Please skip this question if you don't know the school.

Worse than most students in this school (bottom third)

About average compared to other students in this school (middle third)

Better than most students in this school (top third)



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Figure C36: Question 13

0% Survey Completion 100%

MIT Economics



English

How likely do you think your student would be to get into the Technology program (K95A) at the Bedford Academy High School (13K595) if you had listed it first on your application? Please skip this question if you don't know the school.

Impossible (0% chance)

Almost Impossible (1-10% chance)

Unlikely (11-33% chance)

Somewhat likely (34-66% chance)

Very likely (67-89% chance)

Almost certain (90-100% chance)

Figure C37: Question 14a

0% Survey Completion 100%

MIT Economics



English

Now we would like to ask you questions about your **aspirations** for your student.

Do you believe that it is important to go to college in order to do well in life?

Strongly disagree

Somewhat disagree

Neither agree nor disagree

Somewhat agree

Strongly agree

Figure C38: Question 15

What is the **minimum** level of education that you would like your student to complete?

It does not matter
Complete high school
2 years of college
4 years of college
Graduate school (master, PhD, law or medical school etc.)



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Figure C39: Question 16a

0%

Survey Completion

100%

MIT Economics



English

Did you know that you could see your student's **random number** in MySchools this year?

Yes
No



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Figure C40: Question 16b

0%

Survey Completion

100%

MIT Economics



English

Did knowing the random number impact which schools you included on your student's application?

Yes

No



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Figure C41: Question 16c

0%

Survey Completion

100%

MIT Economics



English

If yes, how? [Please select all that apply]

It made us apply to **more programs**

It made us apply to **fewer programs**

It made us apply to **more high-demand programs**

It made us apply to **fewer high-demand programs**

Other: please specify



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Figure C42: Question 17

0%

Survey Completion

100%

MIT Economics



English

Imagine you set up a meeting with your student's school counselor to discuss high school options. **The counselor would like to know how you feel about some high schools.** All schools have the following characteristics:

- They are within a 20-minute bus ride from your home.
- Students do not wear uniforms.
- The school day is from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm.
- They have many after-school programs and sports teams.
- Your student has very good chances of receiving an offer to any of these schools.

The next questions will ask you about your opinion of these different high schools. These are your opinions and there are **no right or wrong answers**. These are **not real** schools.

How likely are you to list this school on your student's application?

SCHOOL

651 students

Performance

84% of students earned enough credits in ninth grade to be on track for graduation

Figure C43: Question 17a

How likely are you to list this school on your student's application?

SCHOOL

651 students

Performance

84% of students earned enough credits in ninth grade to be on track for graduation

Safety

77% of students feel safe in the school

Student population

7% Asian, 16% Black, 70% Hispanic, 5% White

1 = Very unlikely 2 3 4 5 6 = Very likely



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Figure C44: Question 17b

0% Survey Completion 100%

MIT Economics



English

How likely are you to list this school on your student's application?

SCHOOL

670 students

Performance
82% of students earned enough credits in ninth grade to be on track for graduation

Safety
93% of students feel safe in the hallways

Student population
18% Asian, 17% Black, 18% Hispanic, 44% White

1 = Very unlikely 2 3 4 5 6 = Very likely



Figure C45: Question 18a



MIT Economics



English

Please rank these 3 schools from your most (1) to your least (3) preferred choice

1 2 3

SCHOOL

629 students

Performance
84% of students earned enough credits in ninth grade to be on track for graduation

Safety
92% of students feel safe in the school

Student population
16% Asian, 26% Black, 41% Hispanic, 15% White

SCHOOL

658 students

Performance
85% of students earned enough credits in ninth grade to be on track for graduation

Figure C46: Question 18b

0% Survey Completion 100%

MIT Economics



English

Please rank these 3 schools from your most (1) to your least (3) preferred choice

1 2 3

SCHOOL

624 students

Performance
82% of students earned enough credits in ninth grade to be on track for graduation

Safety
78% of students feel safe in the school

Student population
8% Asian, 69% Black, 15% Hispanic, 7% White

SCHOOL

667 students

Performance
83% of students earned enough credits in ninth grade to be on track for graduation

Figure C47: Question 19a

0%

Survey Completion

100%

MIT Economics



English

Many things can make a student feel comfortable or not comfortable at a school. We would like to ask how important some of these things are to you and whether they played a role when filling out your student's application.

Do you agree with the following statements?

My student would fit in well at a school that places a strong emphasis on grades.

Strongly disagree

Somewhat disagree

Neither agree nor disagree

Somewhat agree

Strongly agree

Figure C48: Question 19b

My student would fit in well at a school where most students have different grades than them.

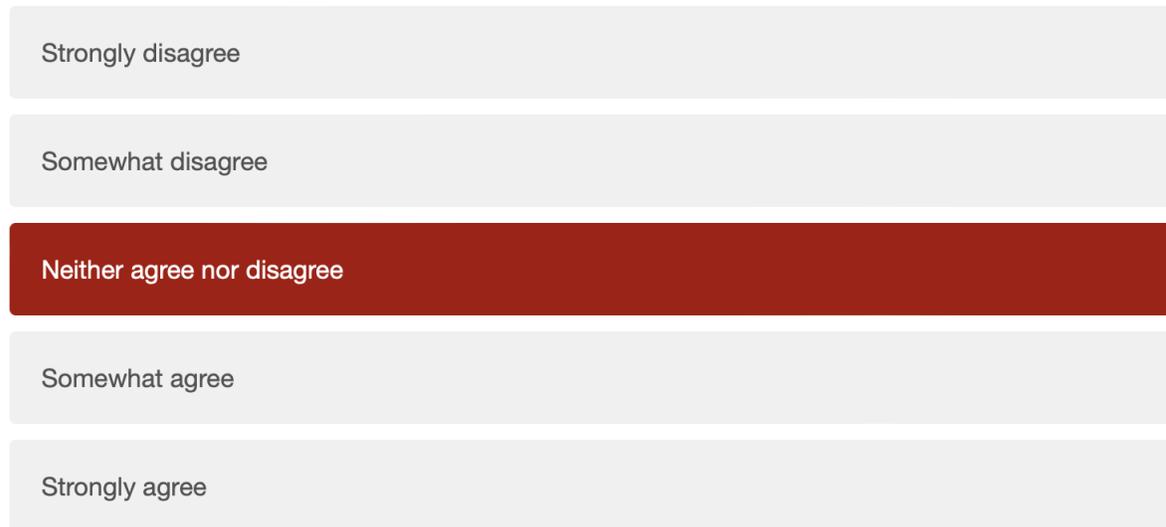


Figure C49: Question 19c

My student would feel like they belong in a school even if most students are from a different race or ethnicity.



Figure C50: Question 20a

My student is likely to be treated negatively by their classmates based on their race.

Strongly disagree
Somewhat disagree
Neither agree nor disagree
Somewhat agree
Strongly agree

Figure C51: Question 20b

My student is likely to be treated negatively by their teachers based on their race.

Strongly disagree
Somewhat disagree
Neither agree nor disagree
Somewhat agree
Strongly agree



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Figure C52: Question 20c

0%

Survey Completion

100%

MIT Economics



English

Did the fear of negative treatment based on race influence the schools you listed on your student's application?

Not at all

Little

Somewhat

A great deal



Figure C53: Question 21

100%

Survey Completion

100%

MIT Economics



English

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your feedback is greatly appreciated. If you have any additional comments, please share them below.

Submit response

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Thank you message

0%

Survey Completion

100%

MIT Economics



We thank you for your time spent taking this survey.
Your response has been recorded.

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Information questions - Version 2

Figure C54: Question Q10 - Version 2



MIT Economics



English

Now we would like to ask some questions about high schools in your borough. Please fill out based on what you already know about these schools – you do **not** need to do any additional research. If you're unsure, **it is okay to take a guess**. The survey will automatically move on to the next question after one minute.



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Figure C55: Question Q10a - Version 2

0% Survey Completion 100%

MIT Economics



English

How far is High School of Telecommunication Arts and Technology (20K485) from your home compared to other schools in your borough, by public transit?

1 = Among the closest schools	2	3	4 = Among the furthest schools
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Figure C56: Question Q10b - Version 2

0%

Survey Completion

100%

MIT Economics



English

Does Brooklyn Studio Secondary School (21K690) **enroll** fewer or more students in **college** than other schools **in your borough**?

1 = Fewer students that enroll in college compared to other schools in my borough

2

3

4 = Many more students that enroll in college compared to other schools in my borough



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Figure C57: Question Q10c - Version 2

0% Survey Completion 100%

MIT Economics



English

Does Brooklyn College Academy (22K555) have fewer or more **academically-focused students** than other schools in your borough?

1 = Fewer academically-focused students compared to other schools in my borough

2

3

4 = Many more academically-focused students compared to other schools in my borough



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Figure C58: Question Q10d - Version 2

0% Survey Completion 100%

MIT Economics



English

How well does John Dewey High School (21K540) prepare students for their Regents exams compared to other schools in your borough?

1 = Among schools with the worst preparation for Regents	2	3	4 = Among schools with the best preparation for Regents
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Figure C59: Question Q10f - Version 2

0%

Survey Completion

100%

MIT Economics



English

Is Kingsborough Early College School (21K468) **safer** than other schools in **your borough**?

1 = Among the least safe schools

2

3

4 = Among the safest schools



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Figure C60: Question Q10g - Version 2

0% Survey Completion 100%

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English

Does Brooklyn Studio Secondary School (21K690) offer fewer or more **AP classes** than other schools **in your borough**?

1 = Among schools that offer the fewest AP classes

2

3

4 = Among schools that offer the most AP classes



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