

THE NYC ASPIRING PRINCIPALS PROGRAM: A SCHOOL-LEVEL EVALUATION

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The Aspiring Principals Program

- ❖ 14 month pre-service principal preparation program
 - Summer intensive
 - Residency
 - Planning summer
- ❖ APP graduates are currently responsible for 15% of the city's schools

Bottom line



APP principals have...

- ❖ *Different backgrounds*
- ❖ *Different placements*
- ❖ *Comparable or better outcomes*

Bottom line

- ❖ After adjusting for differences in student background, schools with APP principals have comparable test scores relative to other new, non-APP principals
- ❖ Schools with APP principals had better trends in ELA after the installation of their new principal
- ❖ In ELA, APP principals did not experience a “first-year penalty” common to new principals

Data



- ❖ Data on all active principals as of October 2008
- ❖ Student demographic and outcome data

Samples of APP and comparison principals and schools

	APP Principals	Comparison Principals	Total
<u>A. Principal data</u>			
Combined sample	86	334	420
Elementary/middle school sample	69	244	313
High school sample	22	106	128
<u>B. Principals matchable to schools</u>			
Elementary/middle school sample	69	230	299
High school sample	22	105	127

Different backgrounds

APP principals...

- ❖ Are younger (age 40.9 vs. 44.4)
- ❖ Have fewer years of teaching experience (7.3 vs. 10.3 years)
- ❖ Are much less likely to have been an assistant principal

Different placements

APP schools...

- ❖ Were demographically distinct
 - A greater share of black students (43% vs. 31%) and fewer white and Asian students
 - A slightly greater share of students eligible for free lunch

Mean characteristics of APP and comparison elementary/middle schools in the initial year

	APP	Mean Comparison	<i>p</i>	
Enrollment	403.3	439.2	0.467	
Percent white enrollment	4.9	14.3	0.038	**
Percent black enrollment	42.9	31.4	0.079	*
Percent Hispanic enrollment	44.9	40.8	0.547	
Percent Asian/other enrollment	7.0	13.3	0.156	
Percent recent immigrants	6.5	6.5	0.998	
Percent native born	85.1	85.1	0.994	
Percent female	50.2	50.7	0.942	
Percent free lunch eligible	66.7	59.5	0.289	
Percent limited English proficient	9.9	9.7	0.949	
Percent special education	9.5	9.9	0.936	

Different placements

APP schools...

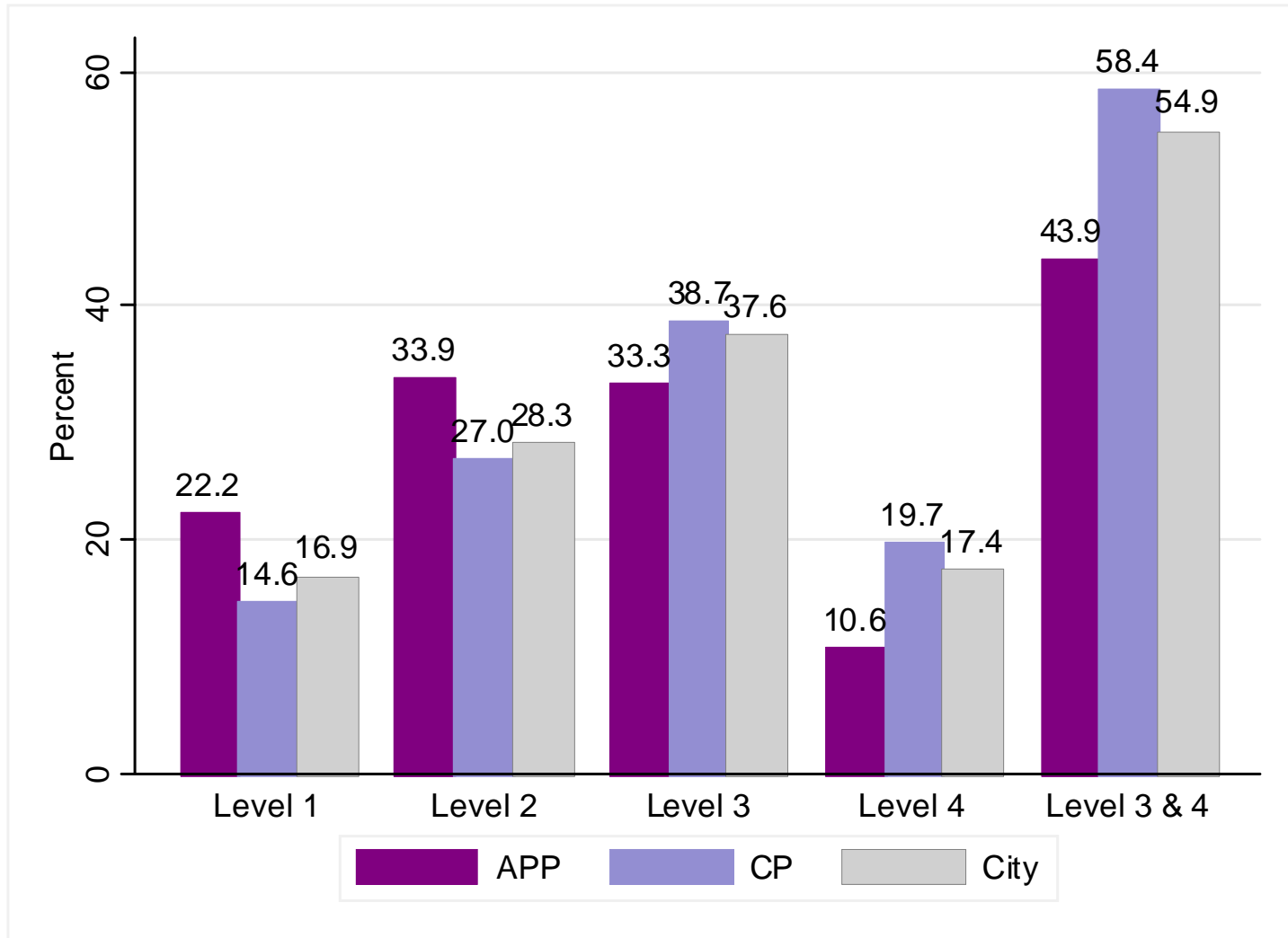
- ❖ Were much lower performing when their new principal was installed
- ❖ Were on a downward trajectory in the years prior to the new principal

Differences in achievement

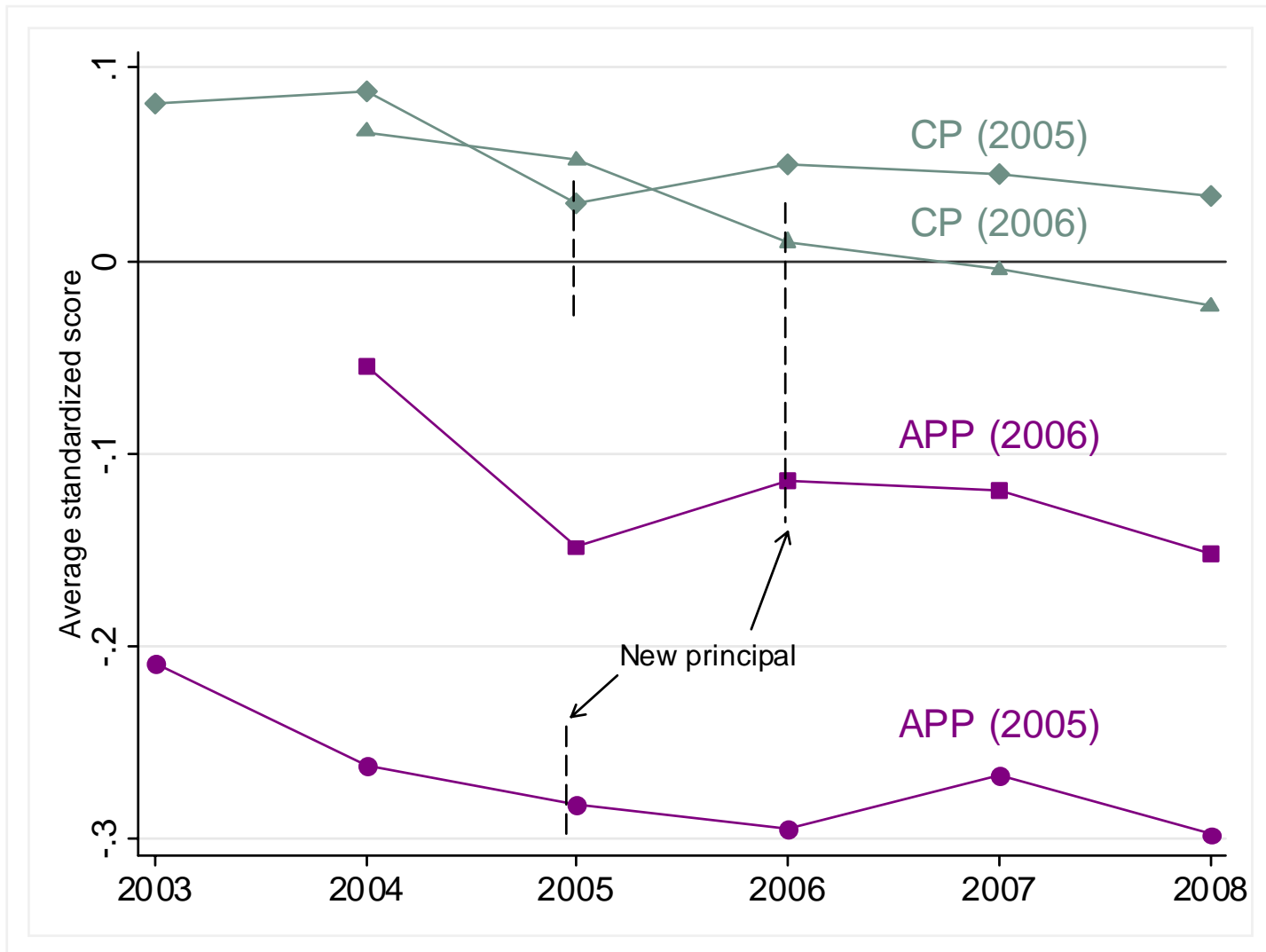


- ❖ In elementary and middle schools, average achievement in ELA and math was 0.29 standard deviations lower in APP schools when their new principal was installed
- ❖ In high schools, Regents passing rates were lower in APP schools, but differences were statistically insignificant

Math proficiency: principals' initial year



Trends in relative ELA scores



Comparable or better outcomes

- ❖ We conducted a formal test for differences in outcomes that *controlled* for both past performance and student characteristics between APP and comparison schools
- ❖ By and large, APP schools performed as well as comparison schools, and experienced better trends in ELA

Comparable or better outcomes

ELA

- ❖ APP schools performed marginally better than comparison schools during their principal's first years on the job
- ❖ Achievement trend in APP schools is better than that in comparison schools – e.g. no “first-year penalty”

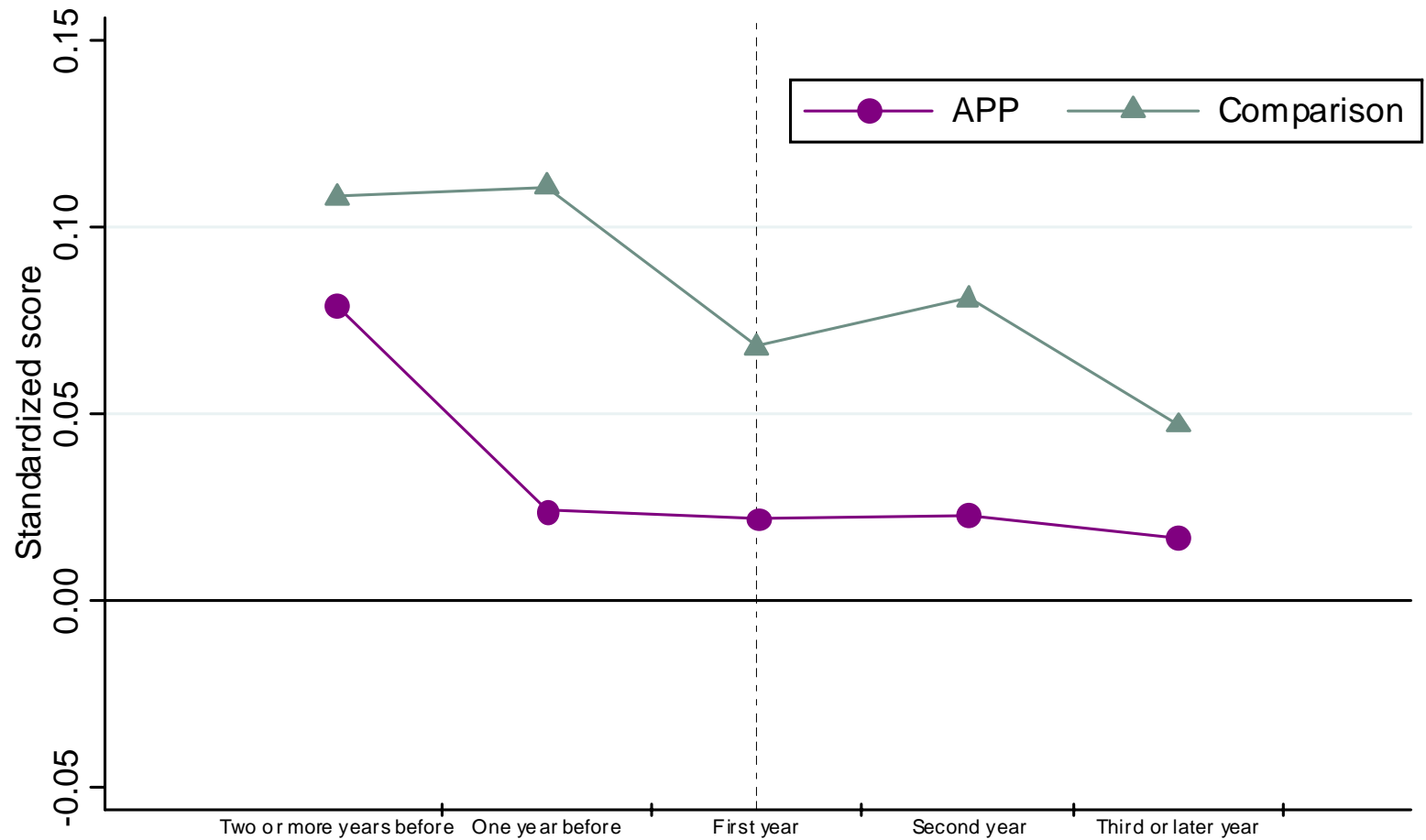
Math

- ❖ APP schools performed marginally worse during their principal's first years on the job, though differences are not statistically significant

Regression results – pre and post trajectory with fixed effects

	Math	ELA
Prior year standardized score	0.366*** (0.055)	0.323*** (0.047)
2 nd or more years before new principal	0.008 (0.013)	0.007 (0.011)
APP * 2nd or more years before new principal	-0.002 (0.030)	0.058* (0.024)
1 st year new principal	-0.008 (0.015)	-0.038** (0.012)
APP * 1st year new principal	-0.045 (0.034)	0.049 (0.025)
2 nd year new principal	-0.035* (0.015)	-0.012 (0.013)
APP * 2nd year new principal	-0.025 (0.030)	0.041 (0.023)
3 rd or later year new principal	-0.062*** (0.017)	-0.031* (0.014)
APP * 3rd or later year new principal	-0.032 (0.027)	0.059** (0.020)

Regression-adjusted ELA scores



Caveats and limitations

- ❖ Not a randomized experiment
- ❖ *School-level* analysis, based on *student-level* data
- ❖ Narrow range of outcomes
- ❖ Small high school sample
- ❖ High school performance is difficult to measure

Conclusions and next steps

- ❖ Though APP principals took charge of schools that lagged behind other schools, performance on state tests appears to have stabilized under their leadership
- ❖ Need for continued monitoring and follow-up
- ❖ Subgroup analysis
- ❖ Inside the black box



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