
ANALYSIS OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN OHIO'S FOUR LARGEST CITIES - 2011

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This document analyzes the high schools in the four largest Ohio cities' public school districts. The districts included are: Cincinnati Public Schools, Cleveland Municipal Schools¹, Columbus City Schools, and Toledo City Schools. The data used in the analysis is from the March 2009, March 2010, and March 2011 Ohio Graduation Tests (OGT).

Executive Summary

The high schools in the Cincinnati Public School District are significantly better than what the Cleveland, Columbus, and Toledo districts offer, and they are improving faster than the high schools in the other districts.

What Was Included?

Similar to previous analyses, the primary data fields include: the Performance Index Score (Adjusted), the percentage of tenth grade students who successfully passed all five subject portions of the OGT test, and the number of tenth grade students who took the test. The Performance Index Score (Adjusted) field mimics the calculation that the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) uses for its Performance Index Score, and it more accurately reflects the overall performance of a school. The difference between the ODE value and this document's Performance Index Score (Adjusted) is that this document calculates the number for only the tenth graders who took the tests. It excludes those who took the test in the 11th and 12th grades. Click [here](#) to go to the Appendix to view the calculation.

This analysis includes 69 schools. Schools that had data in the Ohio Department of Education's Report Card power user database were included, except for the special or satellite schools. Examples of the excluded schools include such schools as Options Complex (Cleveland) and Juvenile Detention (Cincinnati). The goal was to include only those schools that were "selectable" rather than a school that may have been assigned to a student for disciplinary or special requirement reasons.

There were a few new schools and those schools, of course, do not have year-to-year comparisons.

Please contact me if other schools should be included. If they materially affect the results, the totals will be recalculated.

Methodology Used

Simple averages can be misleading, so a weighted average was used when comparing the school districts with each other. A factor was used to increase the weight of the larger schools in the computation. Below is an example of how the weighted Performance Index Score (PIS) (Adjusted) was calculated for a school district. Had the schools been equal in size, the weighted average would have equaled the simple average (100.0), rather than the weighted average of 97.5. Since the weaker school had more students, it decreased the weighted average.

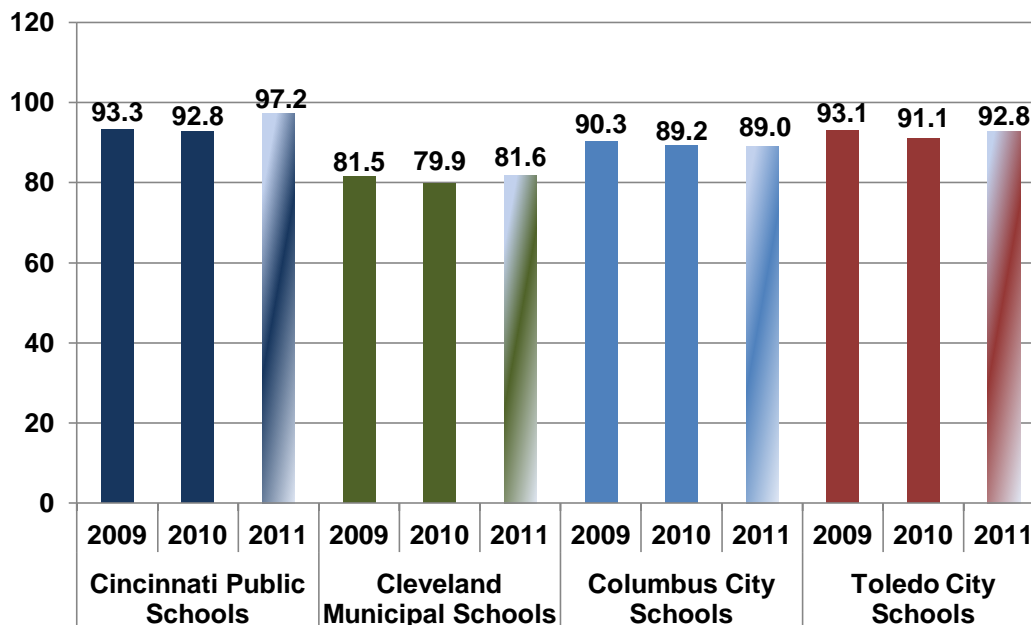
SAMPLE HIGH SCHOOLS	# STUDENTS	FACTOR	PIS (ADJUSTED)	CALCULATION
School A	100	(0.25	* 110.0)	27.5
School B	100	(0.25	* 100.0)	25.0
School C	200	(0.50	* 90.0)	45.0
Total	400			97.5
District PIS (Adjusted)				97.5
Simple Average				100.0

Weighting was used in all of the averages.

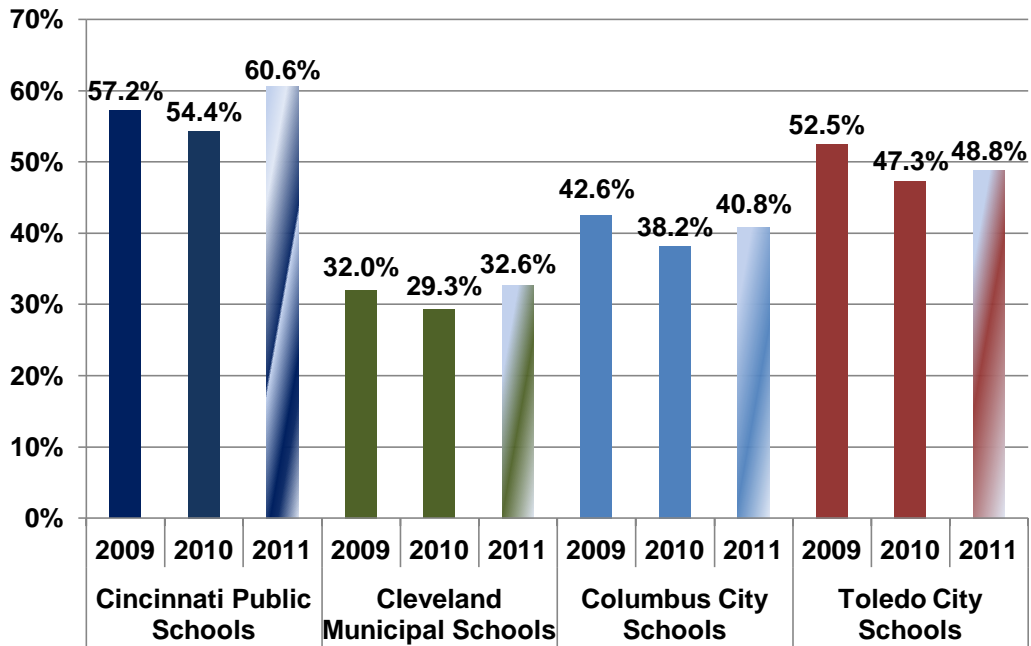
District Performance

The top performing district in the state was Cincinnati, followed by Toledo, then Columbus and Cleveland. Cincinnati had the highest Performance Index Score (Adjusted) as well as the highest percentage of students who passed all five tests.

PERFORMANCE INDEX SCORE (ADJUSTED) MARCH 2009-11



PERFORMANCE PASSING ALL FIVE TESTS MARCH 2009-11



In comparison to 2010, Cincinnati had the largest performance increase with its Performance Index Score (Adjusted), followed by Cleveland.

SCHOOL DISTRICT	PIS (ADJ) CHANGE - 2011 VS 2010
Cincinnati Public Schools	4.7%
Cleveland Municipal Schools	2.1%
Columbus City Schools	-0.2%
Toledo City Schools	1.9%

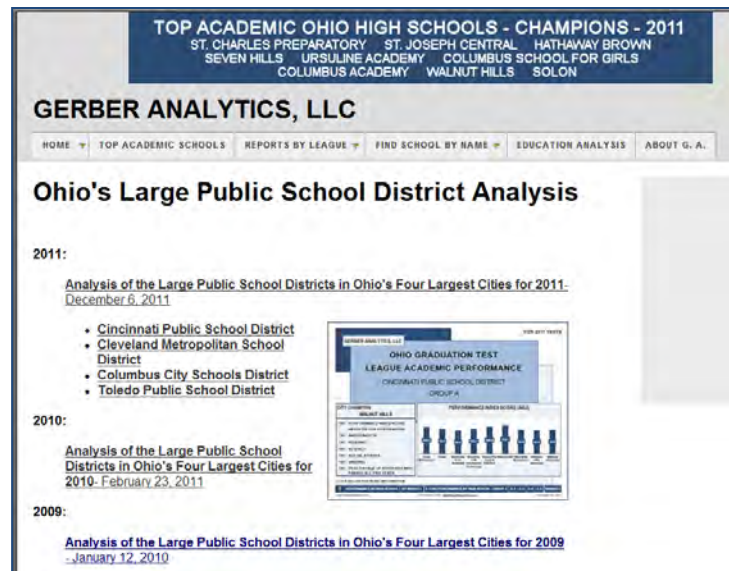
Cincinnati also had the largest increase in its "Passed All Five Tests" percentage, followed closely by Cleveland.

SCHOOL DISTRICT	PASSED ALL FIVE TESTS 2011 VS 2010
Cincinnati Public Schools	11.4%
Cleveland Municipal Schools	11.3%
Columbus City Schools	6.8%
Toledo City Schools	3.2%

Detailed Information for All Schools

Detailed, three-year trend charts are available for each school in the analysis as they relate to the other schools in each district.

These reports provide far more detail and they give readers an opportunity to see how the high schools are performing in each subject.



Summary of All Schools

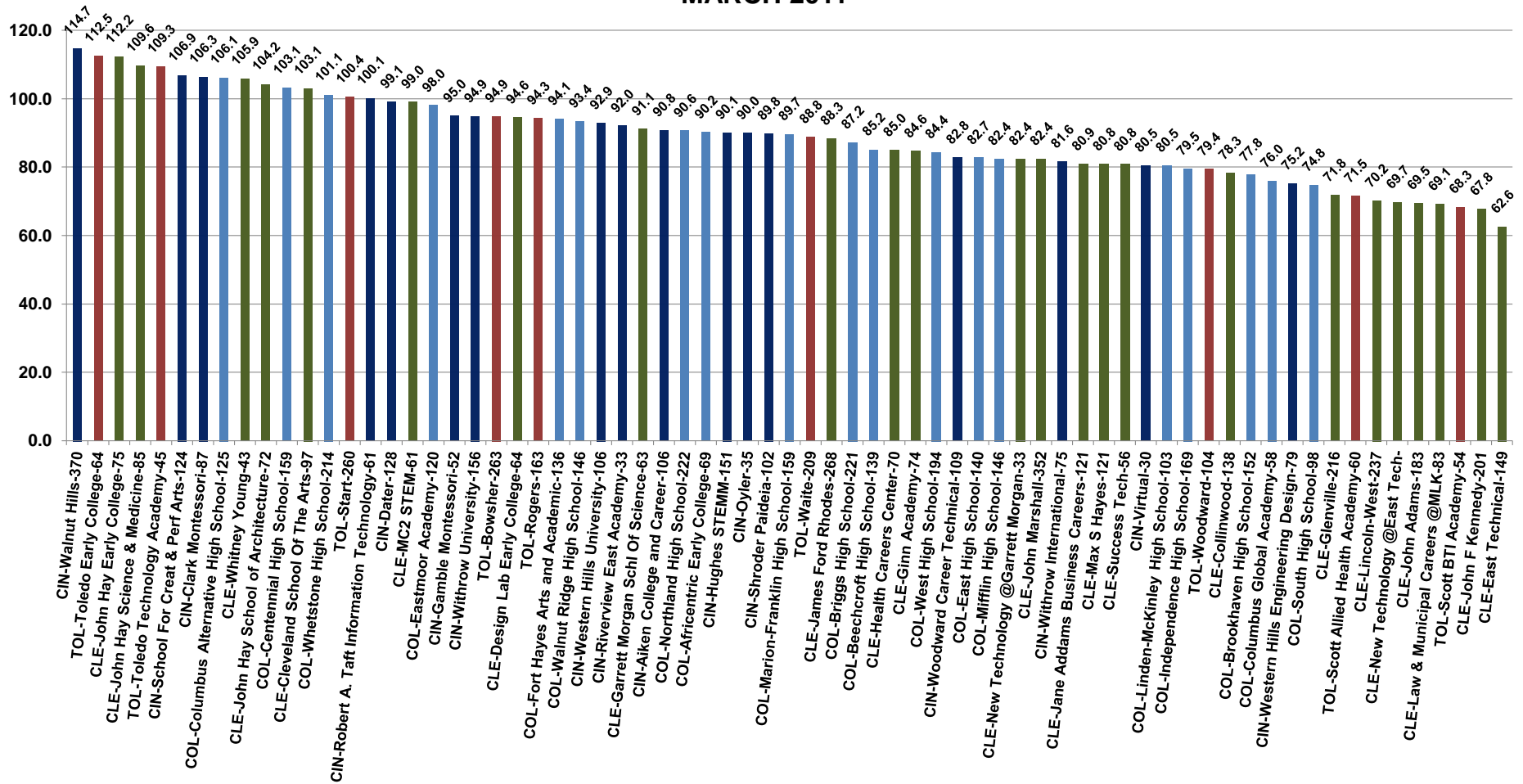
The following five charts provide a detailed view of all of the schools in each district. Please note that the schools are color-coded by district. The colors used for each school district are the same as for the previous charts, for example, Cincinnati is dark blue. Also note that in the charts, the number of tenth grade students who took the test is included with the school name in the horizontal axis.

The schools are in the same order in each graph and they are sorted based on their performance as indicated by the Performance Index Score (Adjusted).

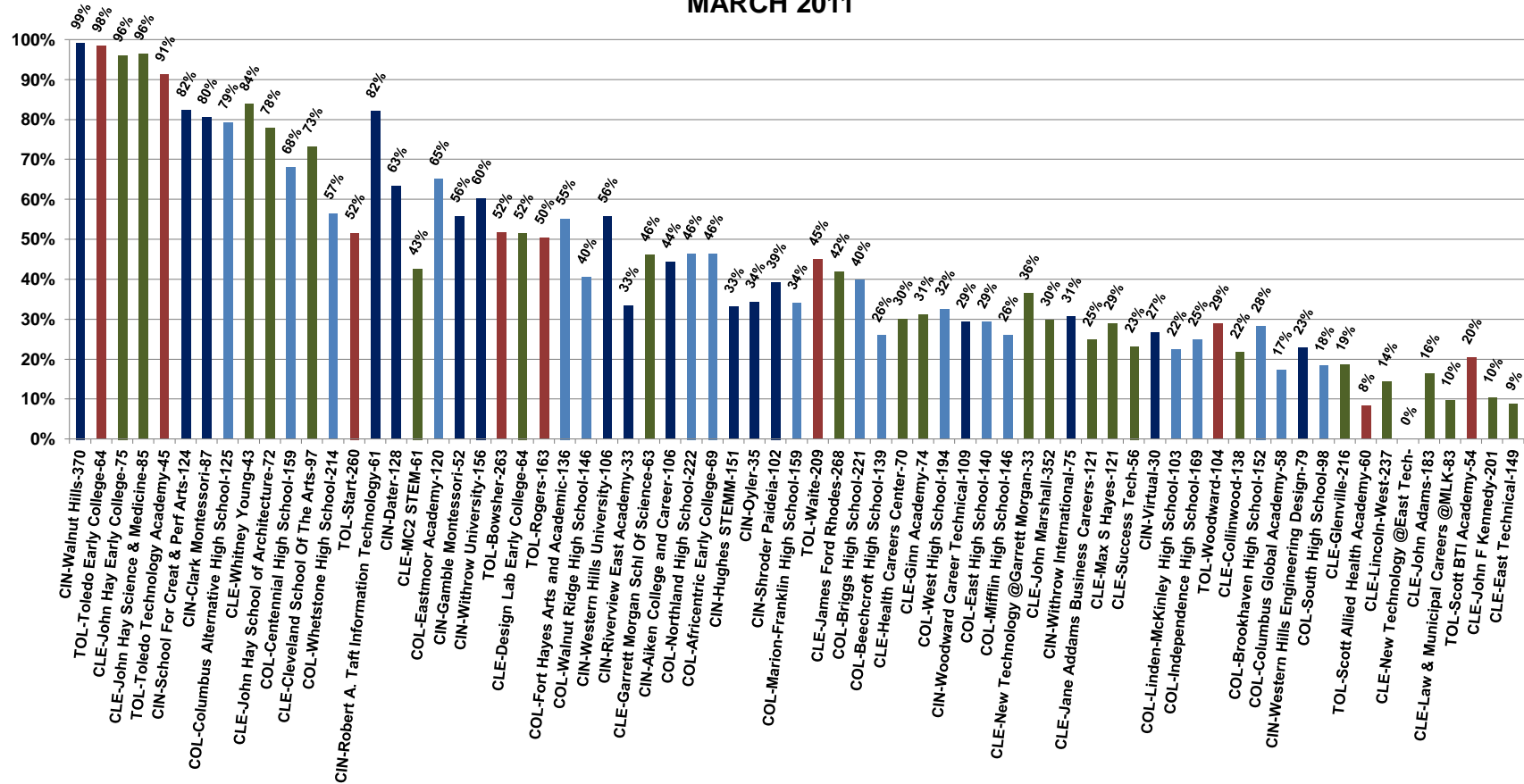
The important take-a-ways from the graphs are:

- Columbus lacks a solution for parents who want their children to attend an extremely high quality school in its school district. Cincinnati has Walnut Hills; Cleveland has John Hay School Early College and John Hay Science & Medicine; and Toledo has Toledo Early College and Toledo Technology Academy.
- Size does not matter. Great schools can be large or small in size. The best school, Walnut Hills, is also the largest in this study.
- All four districts have great schools and all have weak ones. The number of schools that each school district has in the top ten of Performance Index Scores are: Cincinnati with three schools (two in 2010); Cleveland with four (three in 2010); Toledo with two (three in 2010); and Columbus with one (two in 2010). In the bottom ten, Cincinnati has no schools (one in 2010); Cleveland has seven (seven in 2010); Toledo has two (one in 2010); and Columbus has one (one in 2010).
- Unlike many other schools, Columbus' South and Cincinnati's Oyerl both had solid performance gains in 2010. In last year's report, I stated that it would be interesting to see how both performed this year. Oyerl had another great year. Columbus South did not do well in 2011.

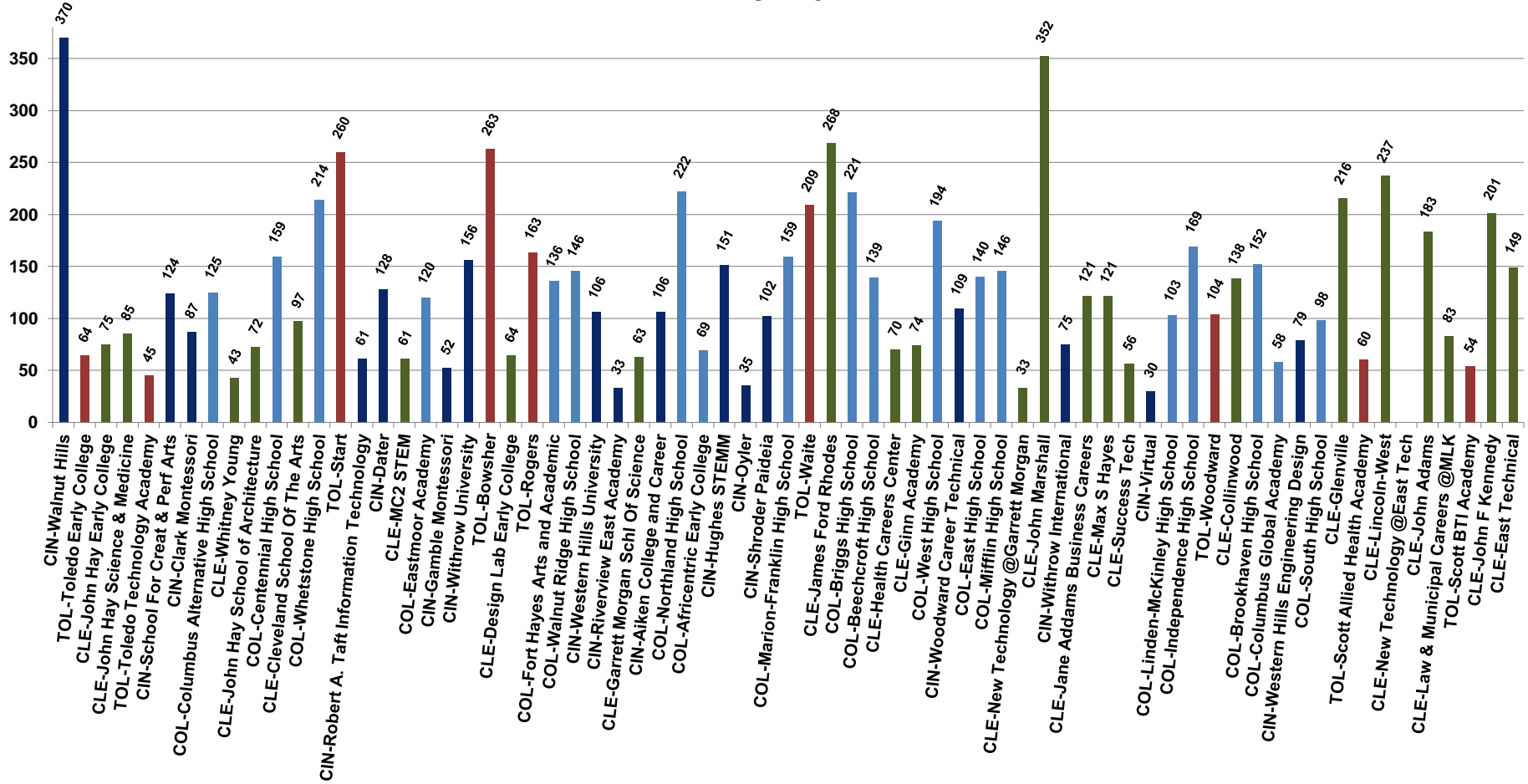
OHIO'S LARGEST PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS PERFORMANCE INDEX SCORE (ADJ) BY SCHOOL MARCH 2011



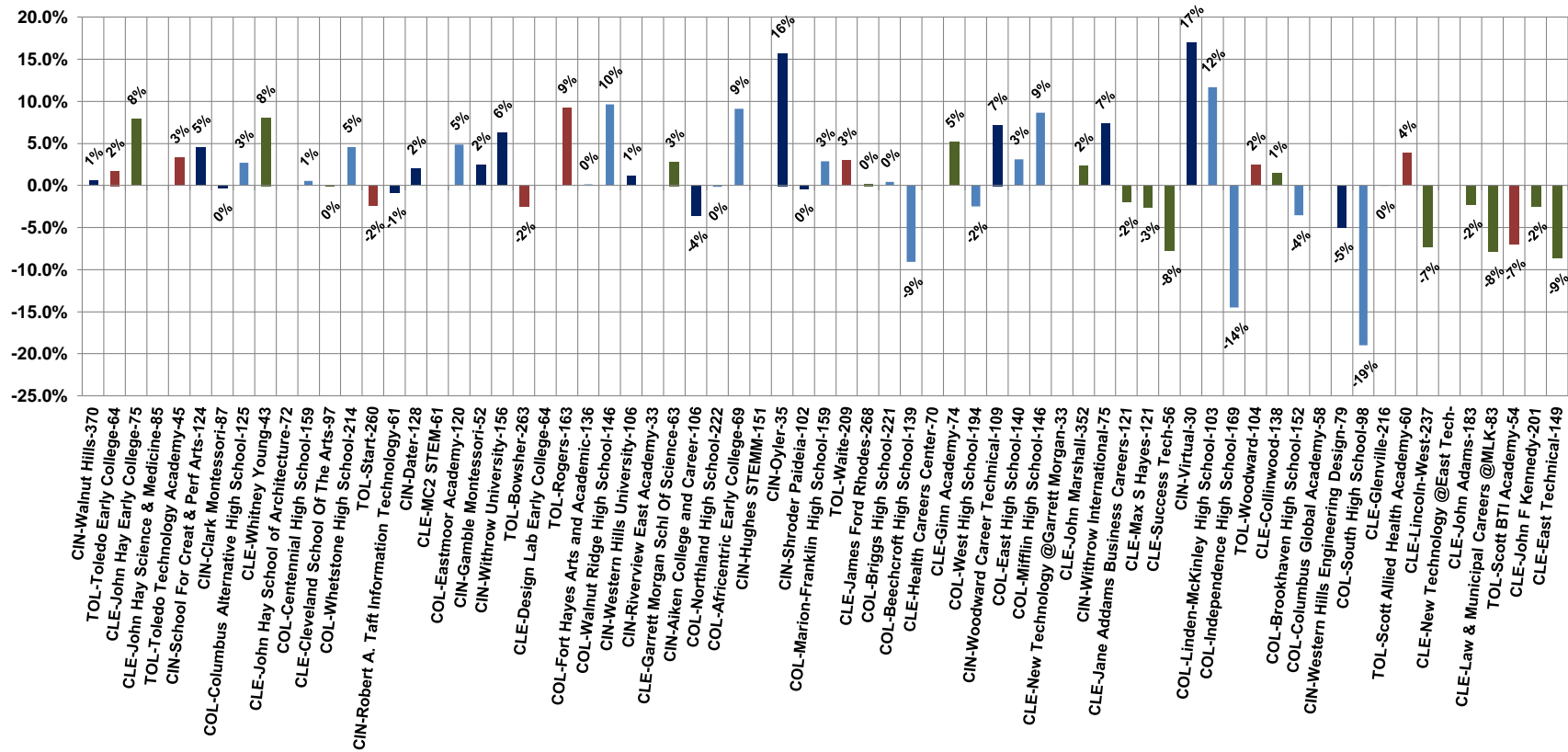
OHIO'S LARGEST PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS PERCENTAGE WHO PASSED ALL FIVE TESTS BY SCHOOL MARCH 2011



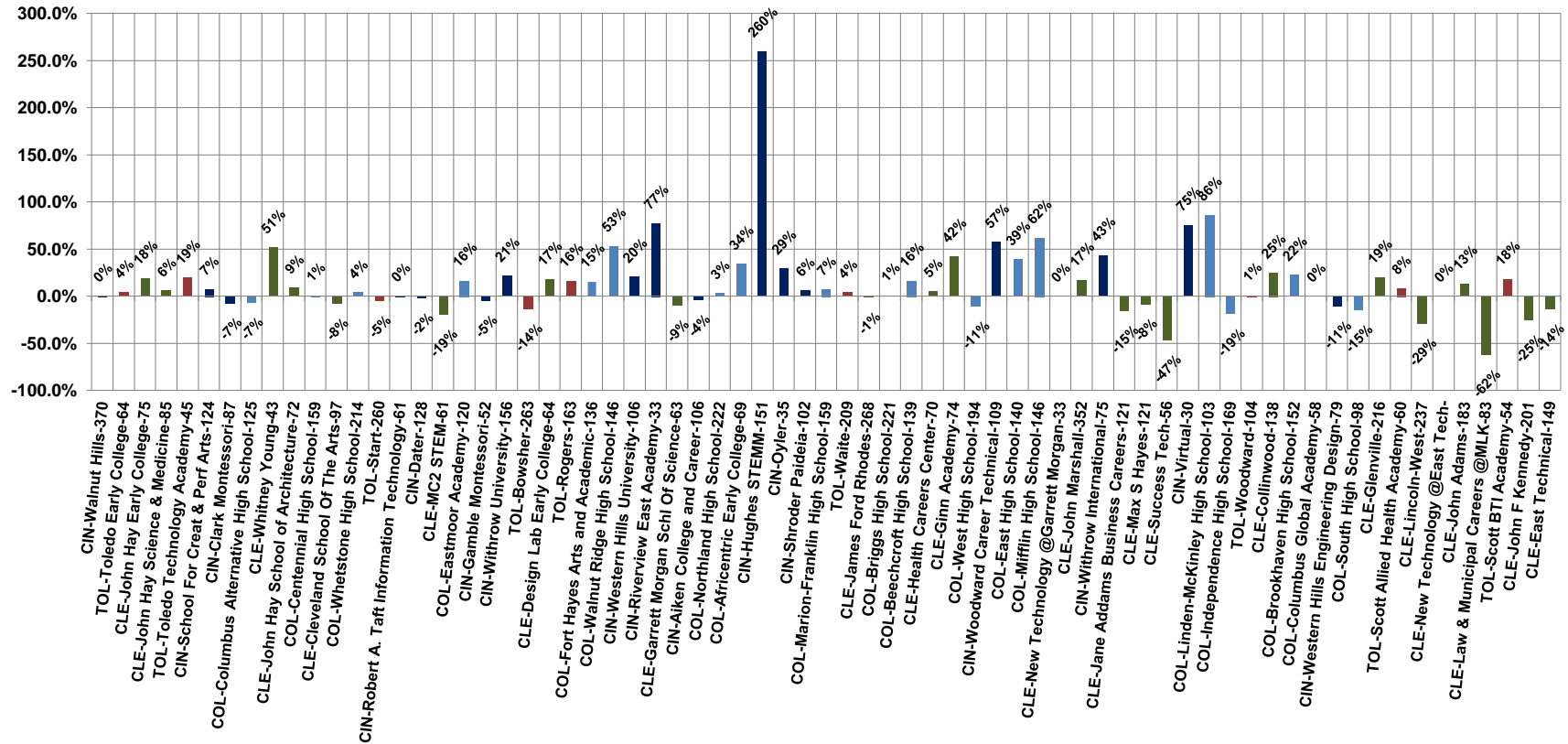
OHIO'S LARGEST PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS NUMBER OF 10TH GRADERS TAKING TEST BY SCHOOL MARCH 2011



OHIO'S LARGEST PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS PERFORMANCE INDEX SCORE (ADJ) PERCENTAGE CHANGE 2011 vs 2010 BY SCHOOL MARCH 2011



**OHIO'S LARGEST PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS
PERCENTAGE WHO PASSED ALL FIVE TESTS
PERCENTAGE CHANGE 2011 vs 2010
BY SCHOOL
MARCH 2011**



Editorial

Cincinnati

Cincinnati is a *great* education city. The Cincinnati Public School District offers the best high schools of the large public school districts in Ohio. It also widened the distance between itself and the other districts.

Walnut Hills is an exceptional school and as it grows in size, it keeps lifting the overall performance of the entire Cincinnati Public School District. When I initiated this research with 2007 data, Walnut Hills had 305 students in their tenth grade, now it has 370. During this timeframe, 1,614 students have taken the tenth grade OGT and 1,592 (98.6%) have passed the test on their first try. This means that 1,592 students were (and are) able to focus on courses to prepare them for college during their junior and senior years.

Walnut Hills is also included in the [Top Academic Ohio High Schools](#) document. This document is available via the above link. It has been summarized by the *Cincinnati Enquirer* for the past three years. The most recent article is available [here](#).

Lottery

Educated people do not regularly play the lottery. It is ironic that the Columbus City School District requires its citizens to "play the lottery" when it comes to one of the most important decisions parents can make for their children -- selecting an exceptional high school. The Columbus leadership needs to understand that educated parents are not going to "play the lottery" to get their children into Columbus' best school. Columbus needs to provide its citizens, who care about education, with a definite, high quality choice for education. Other Ohio cities have this option.

Columbus leaders do not need to look very far for insight on what they could do to correct this problem. There is great urgency to correct this.

Incoming Companies

As Ohio becomes business friendly again, companies outside of the state will look to re-locate in Ohio. While school districts are always in the mode of improving, parents who work for these companies largely do not care if a school district is improving -- they want schools that are great *now*. Cities that have great education alternatives will attract more attention as companies move into Ohio.

Reading versus Writing

It is interesting to examine the academic performance among various schools. It is also interesting to examine the relative performance between subjects in the *same* school. Take a closer look at the relative performance between Reading and Writing. Obviously the correlation between Reading and Writing should be high, but

CLEVELAND SCHOOL	% Proficient or Better in Writing	% Proficient or Better in Reading	Difference
Ginn Academy	93.8%	67.2%	26.6%
New Technology @East Tech	69.2%	46.2%	23.0%
New Technology @Garrett Morgan	90.7%	69.7%	21.0%

take a closer look at the Cleveland schools. Note that several Cleveland schools have Writing scores that are significantly better than their Reading results. Does Cleveland have a better solution that it could share with the other districts or are the test graders more lenient in that area of Ohio?

Social Studies versus Reading

The first step that I take as I review the performance of any school is to quickly review the relative performance between Social Studies and Reading. The better schools quickly fine-tuned their Social Studies curriculum to perform well on the test. If a student can read, then he can do fine with the Social Studies test. Out of the top 100 schools, 65% did better in Social Studies. Out of the 69 schools in this analysis, only 10 (15%) did better in Social Studies. Why aren't the large school districts making the necessary changes to their curriculum?

Background

Please note that I perform these types of analyses to offer another perspective. Prior to semi-retirement, my background was in investing, and I enjoy presenting material in ways that provide interested parties with greater insight.

In a small way, I am also hoping that I can move the needle on education by making communities more aware of their school's academic performance by recognizing the best schools. Hopefully through community pride, there will then be more focus and attention paid toward academics.

Please note that I have a "one-of-a-kind" database that is substantial. I am also open to new analysis projects. If you have an education-related analysis project in mind that you think would benefit all Ohio schools, please contact me.

Please let me know if you have any questions or comments.

Regards,

D. Scott Gerber

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PERFORMANCE INDEX SCORE (ADJUSTED)

The Performance Index Score (Adjusted) is the same as what is done for the Ohio Department of Education's Report Card, except that it is **only** for the **tenth grade students** who took the test. It was calculated as follows:

Ada High School

Subject	Below Basic	Basic	Proficient	Accelerated	Advanced	
Mathematics	9.4%	9.4%	24.5%	20.8%	35.8%	
Reading	3.8%	5.7%	43.4%	35.8%	11.3%	
Science	3.8%	18.9%	26.4%	22.6%	28.3%	
Social Studies	15.1%	9.4%	24.5%	22.6%	28.3%	
Writing	5.7%	5.7%	39.6%	47.2%	1.9%	
Total of Above	37.8%	49.1%	158.4%	149.0%	105.6%	
Average of 5	7.6%	9.8%	31.7%	29.8%	21.1%	
Factor	0.3	0.6	1	1.1	1.2	
Average * Factor	2.3	5.9	31.7	32.8	25.3	Summation 98

It was necessary to create this tenth grade only version of a Performance Index Score for a better "apples to apples" comparison of all schools (both private and public).

[Return to main document.](#)

¹ Also referred to as the Cleveland Metropolitan School District.