



engage^{ny}

Our Students. Their Moment.

A New Beginning:
A Report on the East Ramapo
Central School District

March 13, 2017

Key Findings

- Parents care strongly about their children getting a quality education
- Chapter 89 of the Laws of 2016 is making a difference
- Improved instructional leadership is in place
 - Formative assessments and data analysis
 - Professional development strengthened
 - Academic performance varies across subjects and student subgroups
- Balanced budget but on a thin cushion
 - Improved fiscal stress status
 - Better financial controls and systems are in place
- \$59 million capital project a first step on renovating facilities
- Students are poorer, more ELL, but enrollment is growing – for now.
- Significant work remains to be done by the board to gain the trust of the community and rebuild the academic, student support and extracurricular programs

Chapter 89 Laws of 2016

- Long-term (2016-2020) strategic academic plan;
- Long-term fiscal improvement plan; and
- Expenditure plan outlining the use of the \$3 million in legislative grants

\$3 Million in Legislative Grants

- Full-day kindergarten classes for all students
 - Adds both monolingual and bilingual Kindergarten teachers
- Partial restoration elementary arts programs:
 - Dance Preps for grades K and 1
 - General Music Preps for grades 2 and 3
 - Theatre Prep for grade 4
 - Art Preps for grades 4, 5 and 6
 - Enrichment periods for grades 4, 5 and 6 in the orchestra, instrumental music, band, and chorus

Academic Accountability

(14 schools plus Early Childhood Center)

| | Focus | Priority |
|------------------------------|-------|----------|
| GRANDVIEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL | ✓ | |
| MARGETTS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL | ✓ | |
| CHESTNUT RIDGE MIDDLE SCHOOL | | ✓ |
| SPRING VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL | ✓ | |
| POMONA MIDDLE SCHOOL | ✓ | |
| ELMWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL | ✓ | |
| RAMAPO HIGH SCHOOL | ✓ | |
| ELDORADO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL | ✓ | |

Building Academic Systems

- New Director of Bilingual Education and World Languages
- New Interim Assistant Superintendent for Special Education
- STAR-Renaissance formative assessments aligned with the New York tests administered once every six weeks;
- Formative assessment parent reports;
- Increases in professional development opportunities for teachers and principals;
- New collaborative planning time for elementary teachers;
- New high expectations for all students and educators; and
- Continued support for enhanced course offerings.

Fiscal Condition

- Comptroller DiNapoli says the East Ramapo Central School District has gone from "significant" fiscal stress in June 2015 to "moderate" levels in June 2016 (87% to 67% to 57%)¹
- In June 2016, the District had an unassigned fund balance of \$4,150,436
- New systems reduced spending by \$1.3 million without impacting academic programs

Note 1: January 25, 2017 Comptroller's press release

Fiscal Improvement Plan

- Decisions for hiring new staff are made after a thorough assessment of budgeted resources and realistic costs projections;
- Monthly budgetary reports show underspent and overspent amounts for each budgetary account;
- Implements every internal auditor's recommendation this fiscal year;
- Requires written instead of verbal quotations for items not subject to competitive bidding;
- Monitor, analyze and assess on an annual basis the District's long-term liabilities including but not limited to compensated absences;
- Implement during the 2016-17 school year the State Monitors' recommendation to explore longer-term transportation contracts with public approval while a third large-scale busing contractor is also being sought to enhance competition for services; and
- Board of Education adopted a new accounting policy.

\$59 Million: Capital Improvements

- Window replacements at Spring Valley HS, Summit Park, Ramapo HS, Fleetwood, Chestnut Ridge MS, Kakiat and Administration building. Window hardware replacements at Eldorado, Hempstead, Elmwood and Lime Kiln;
- Roof replacements or renovations at the District's 14 schools and Administration Building. Skylight replacement at Chestnut Ridge MS and Kakiat;
- Boiler replacements in Fleetwood, Pomona MS, Summit Park, Chestnut Ridge MS, Grandview, Hempstead, Elmwood, Kakiat, Lime Kiln, Ramapo HS, Eldorado and Administration Building;
- Replacement of heating/ventilation units at Lime Kiln, Eldorado and Chestnut Ridge MS;
- Bleacher replacement at high school athletic fields, broken sidewalk replacements, installation of artificial turf fields at the high schools;
- Upgraded security system, renovations in K-8 classrooms to add science labs and special education classrooms and installation of a Wi-Fi network for every classroom and office; and
- Replace windows and doors at Kakiat and Fleetwood.

Challenges

- Rebuilding trust in the school board and healing community divisions
- Undesignated fund balance less than 2% of the budget
- Rebuilding adequate local financial support
- Rapidly expanding ELL population and need for quality teachers and programs
- Providing supplemental educational services to prepare all students for enriched coursework

Ongoing Work

1. Review curriculum and instructional practices
2. Develop the 2017-18 School Budget and a sustainable five-year fiscal plan
3. Review textbook purchase orders and inventory
4. Focus on the performance of English Language Learners and Special Education Students
5. Identify resources for providing supplementary educational services
6. Improve the efficiency of the student transportation system
7. Study options for the weighting of nonpublic students in state aid formulas
8. Monitor the school renovation work, ensure the District maximizes state building aid and addresses concerns from the public
9. Review of all major contracts and have begun reviewing the contracts and the request for proposals to procure the contracts

Recommendations

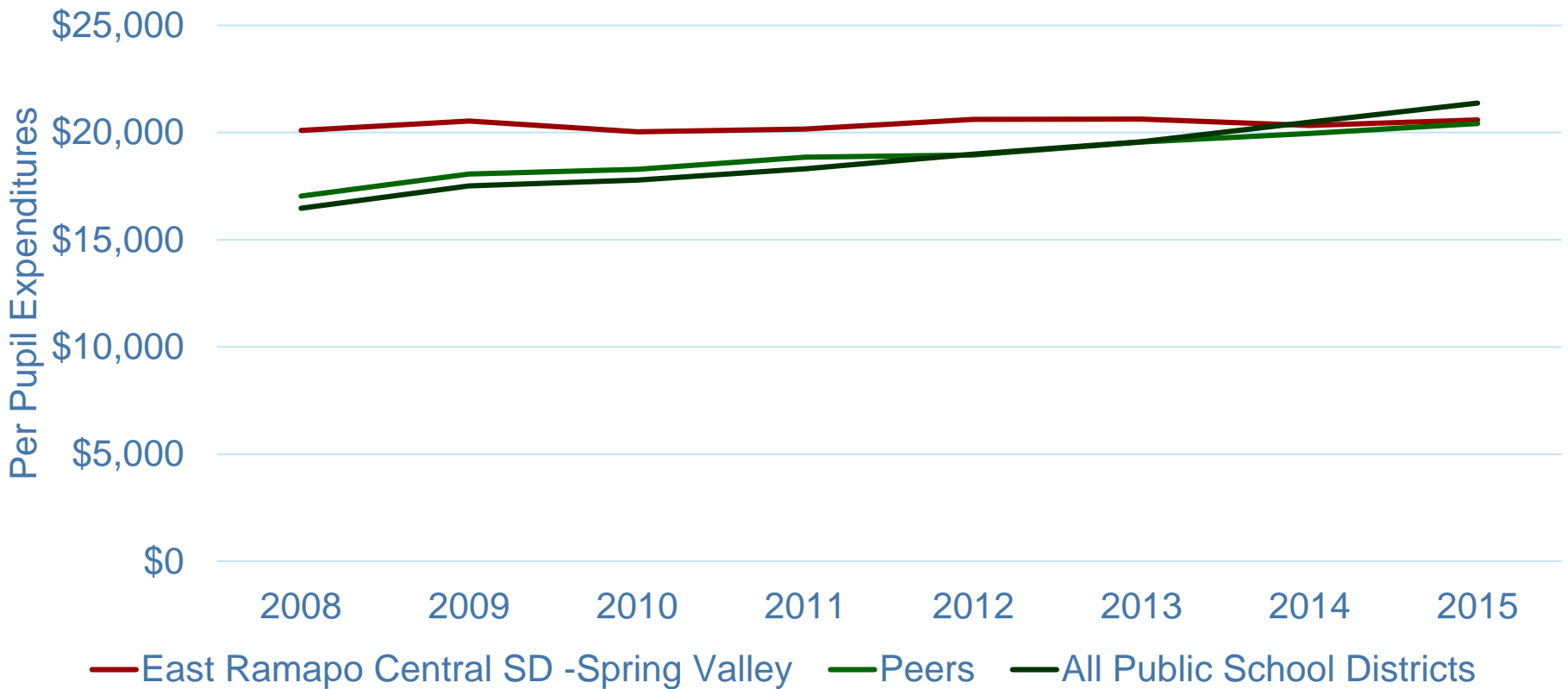
- Continuation of state monitors with emphasis on improving teaching and learning for all students, increasing transparency and communication with the community
- Continuation of \$3 million in legislative grants
 - Kindergarten students will generate additional foundation aid as the formula is phased-in
 - Additional aid and savings due to systems improvements should be directed towards new programs

Appendix

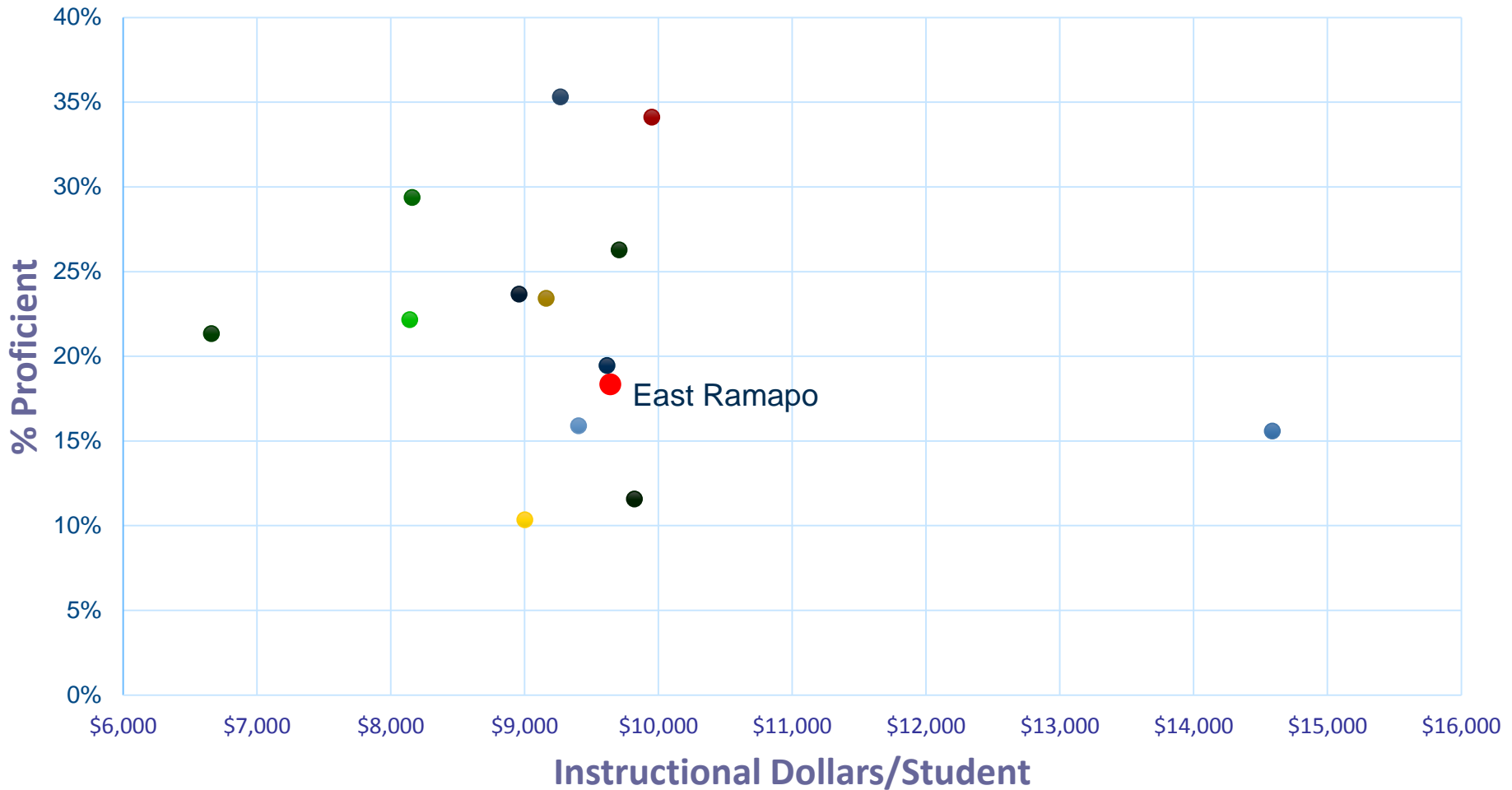
- Benchmarking
 - Spending
 - Academic Proficiency
 - Dropout Rate
- Demographic Changes
- Enrollment
- Budget votes and tax rates
- Fund balance and local effort

General Fund Expenditures Per Pupil (minus Transportation, Books, Special Education) vs. Peers

- Where once ERCSD outspent peers, they now slightly underspend

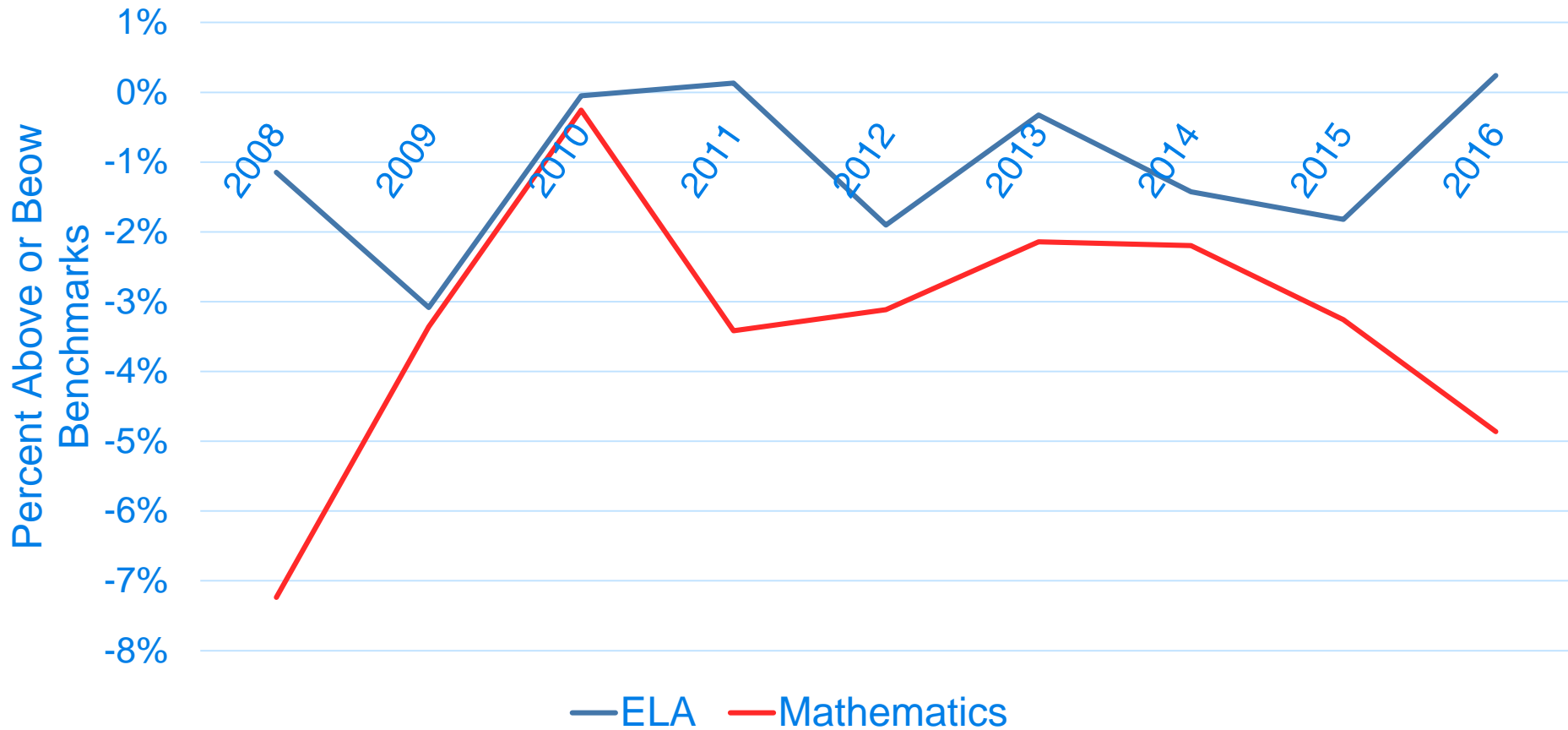


3-8 Proficiency by Regional Cost-Adjusted Expenditures



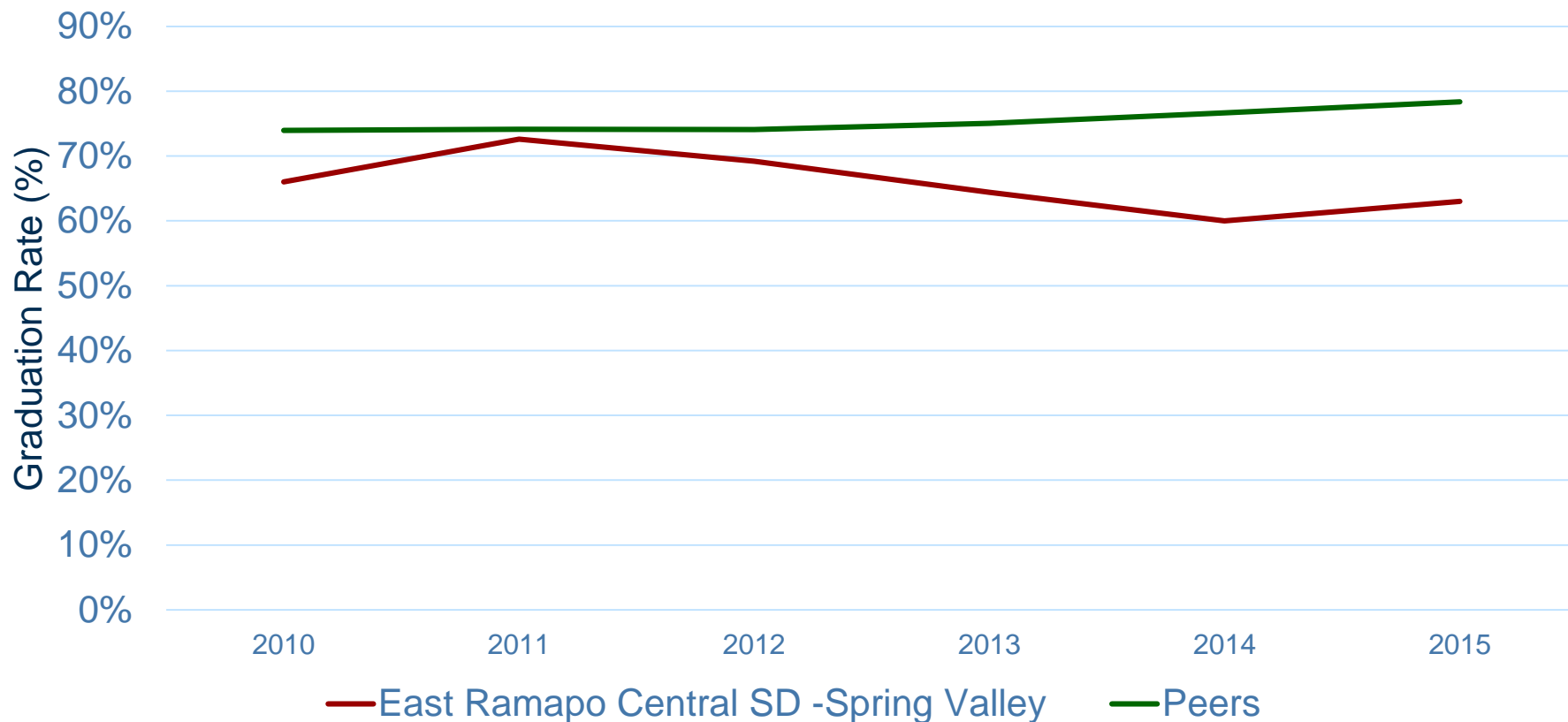
3-8 Achievement Relative to Benchmark Districts

ELA performance better than Mathematics

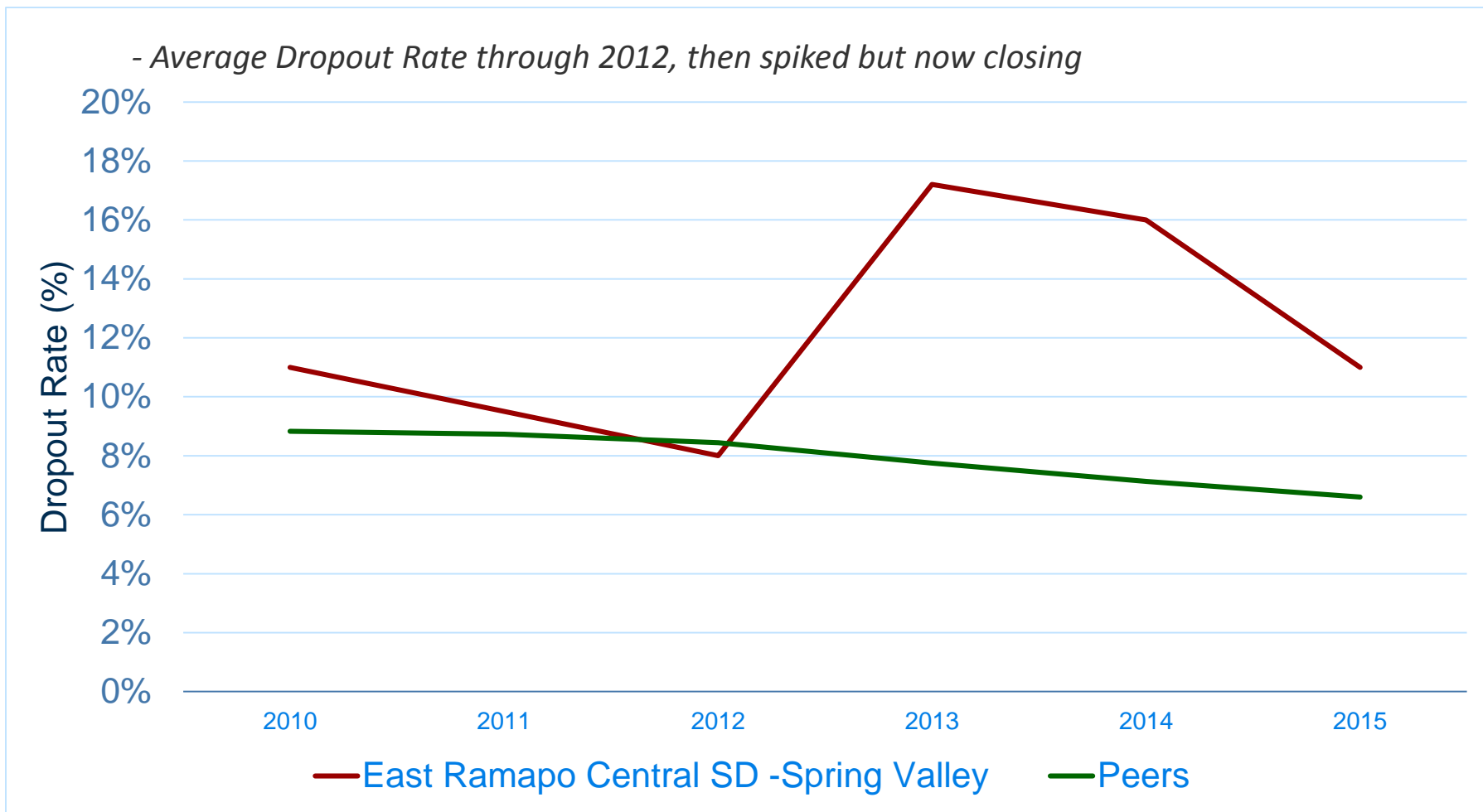


Graduation Rate vs. Peers

- Average in 2011, dropped substantially through 2014, now recovering



Dropout Rate vs. Peers

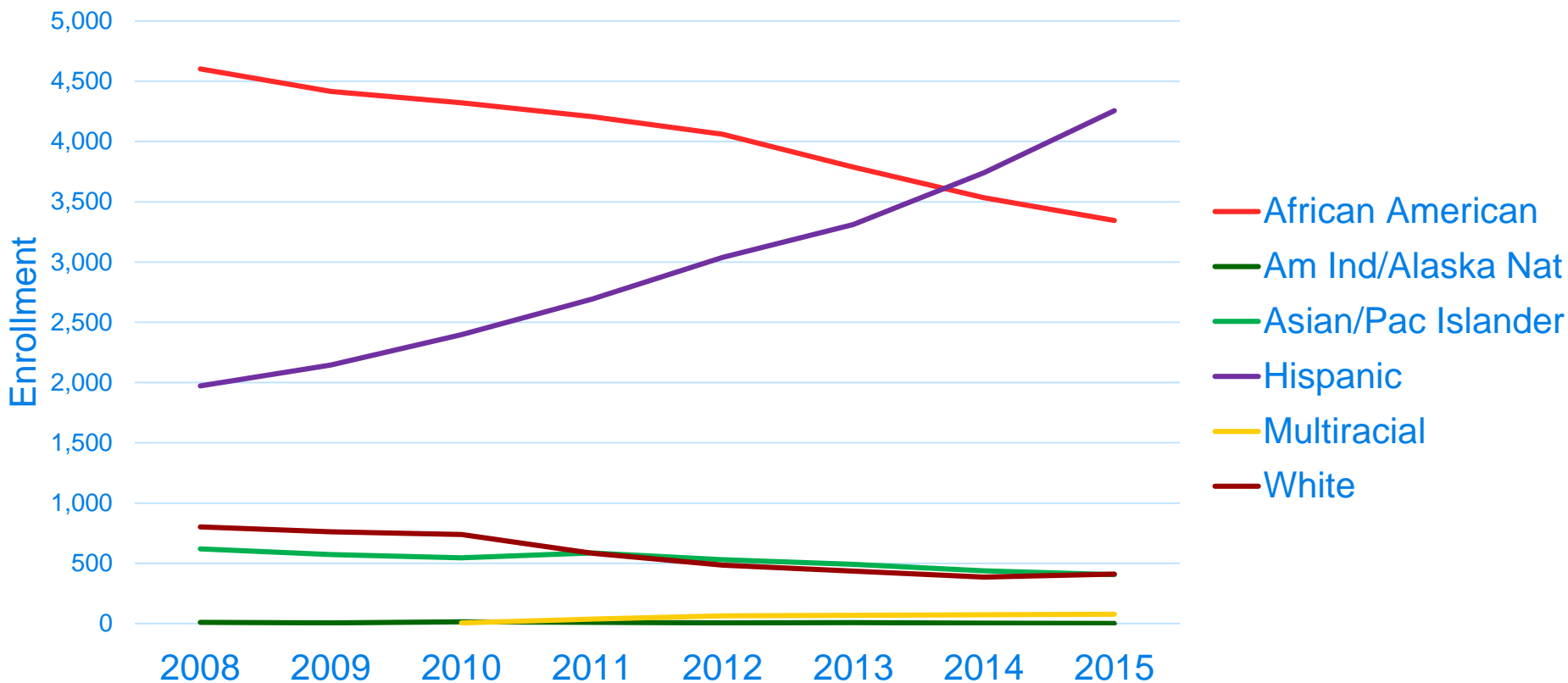


Achievement – Relative to Benchmarks

- 3-8 ELA – Comparable
- 3-8 Math – Below Peers
- English Regents – 5% above peers, better for children above the free or reduced price lunch threshold
- Living Environment – Had been above, now average.
- Chemistry & Physics – well below average

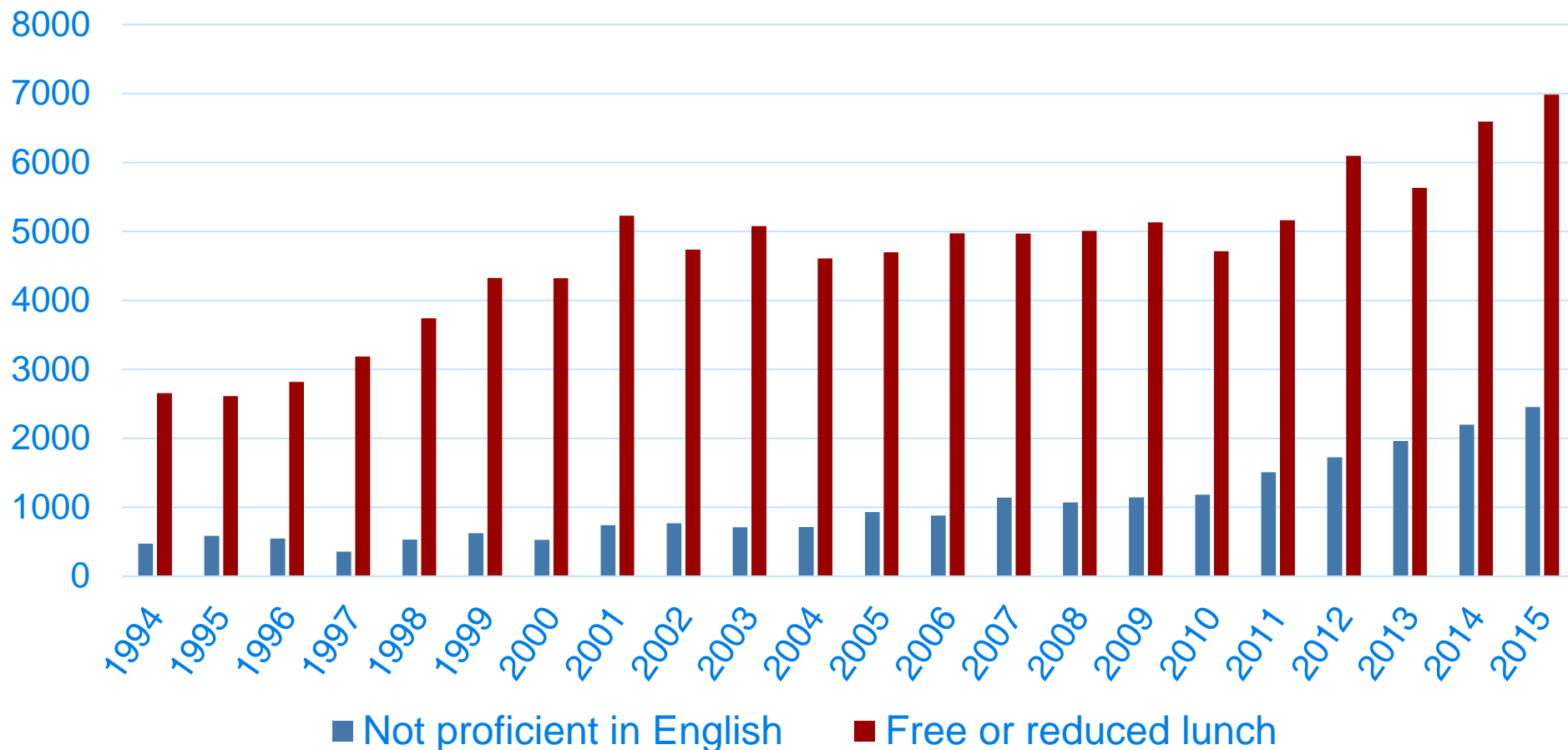
Demographic Changes

ERCSD Enrollment by Race 2008-2015
- The ERCSD become majority Hispanic.



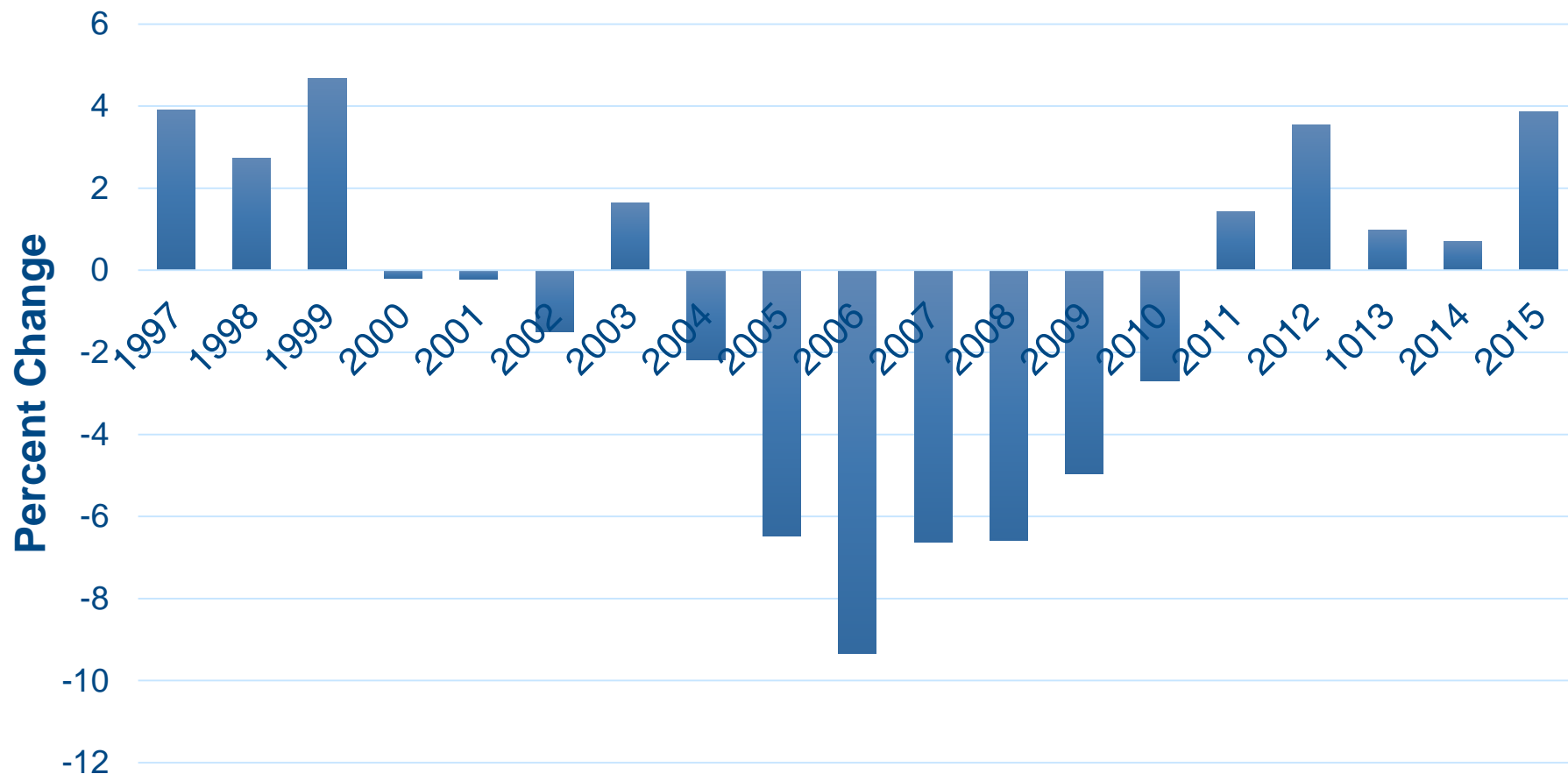
Demographic Changes

Poverty and English Language Learner Enrollments



Enrollment Change

Average Three-Year Change in K-12 Enrollment

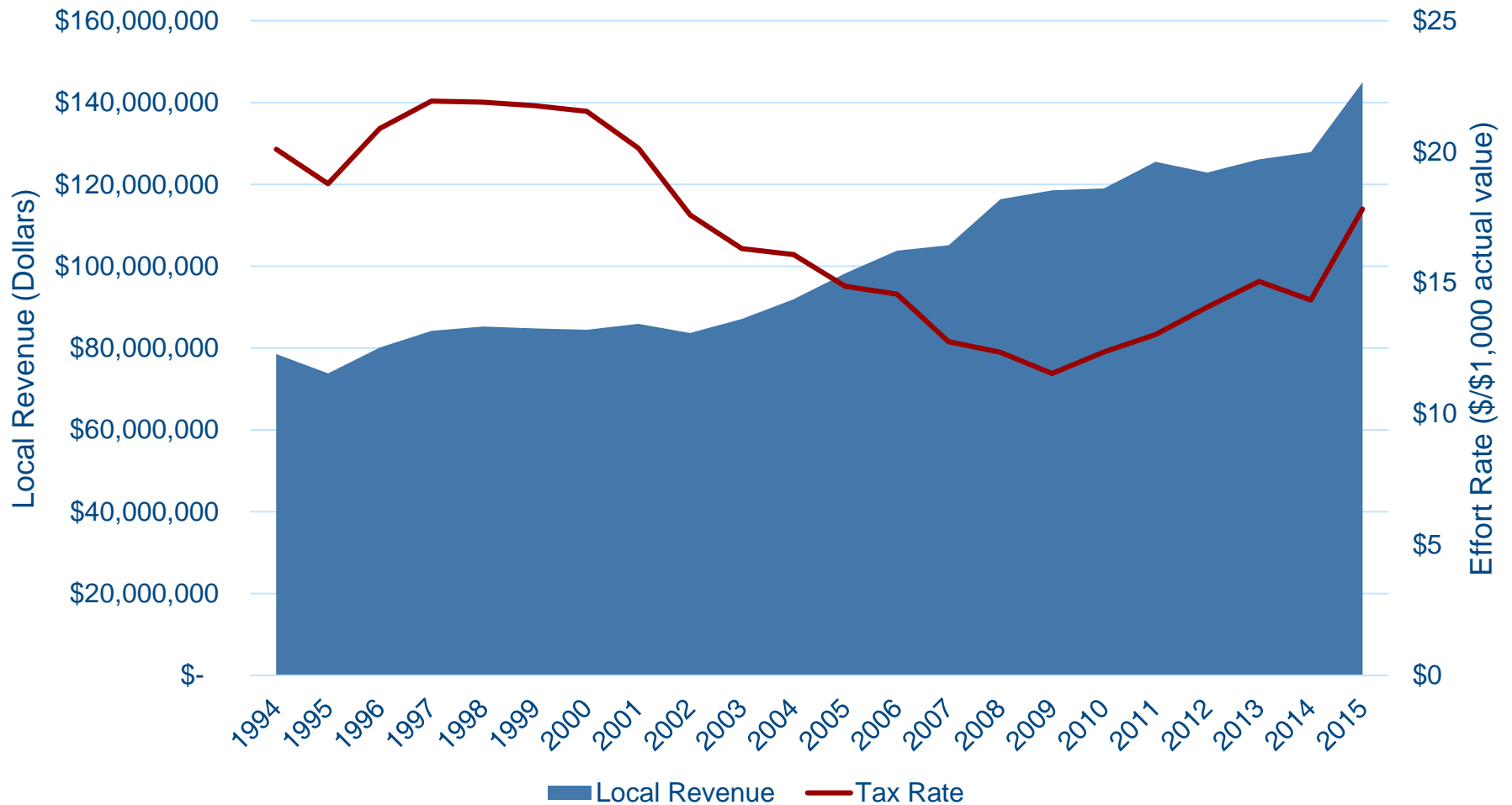


Cost of Defeated Budget Votes

Budget re-votes/contingency budgets: 2005-06 to 2012-13

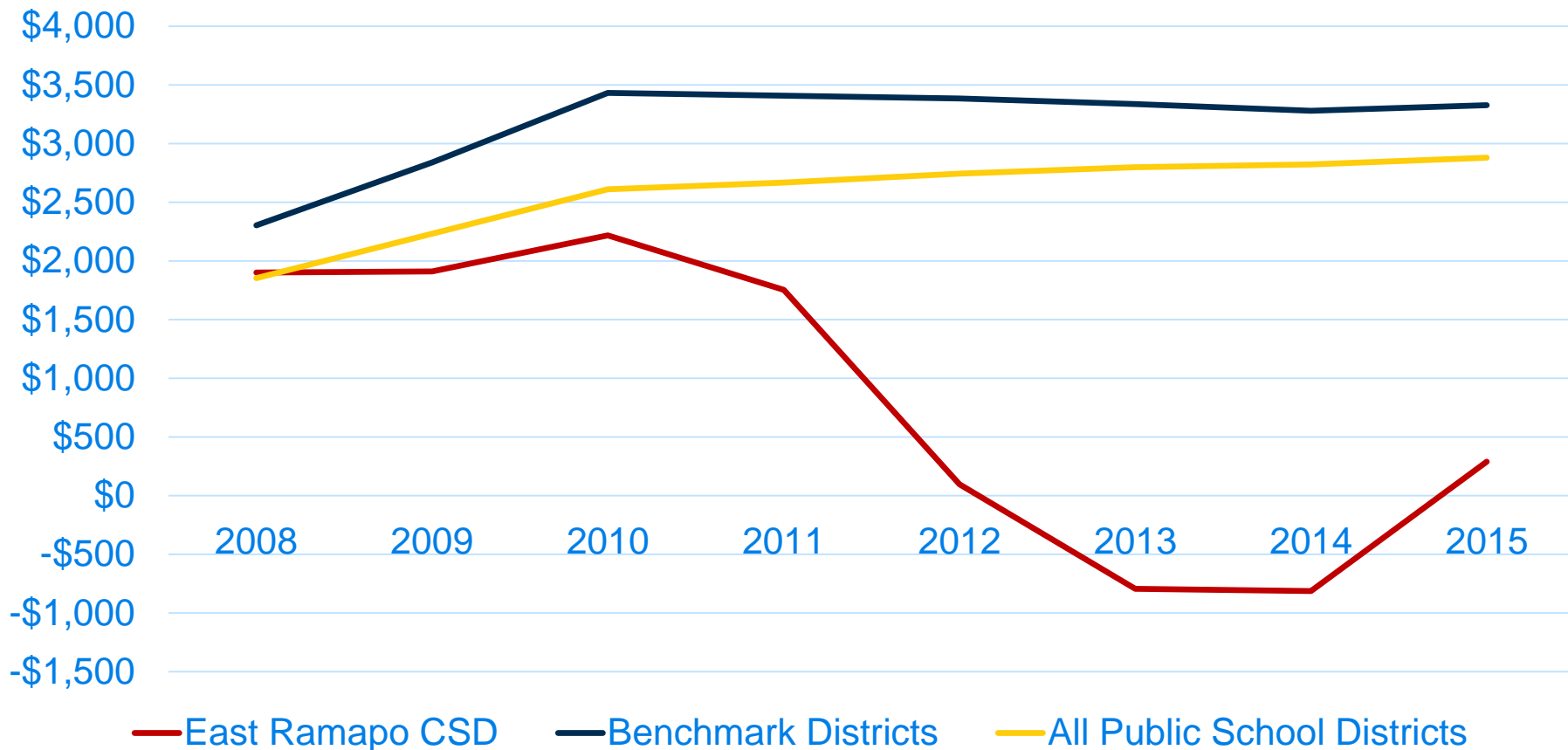
- May 2004-05 budget voted down.
 - Adopted (June) budget (-1,835,294)
- May 2005-06 budget voted down.
 - Adopted (June) budget (-\$1,708,000)
- May 2008-09 budget voted down.
 - Contingent budget, no 2nd vote (-\$716,078)
- May 2010-11 budget voted down.
 - Adopted (June) budget (-\$2,778,287)
- May 2011-12 budget voted down.
 - Contingent budget no 2nd vote (-\$1,637,580)
- May 2012-13 budget voted down.
 - Same budget was offered to the voters with no cuts
- Total “Lost” dollars from budget rejections **-\$ 8,675,264**

Local Tax Levy vs. Tax Rate



Fund Balance Per Pupil (2008-2015)

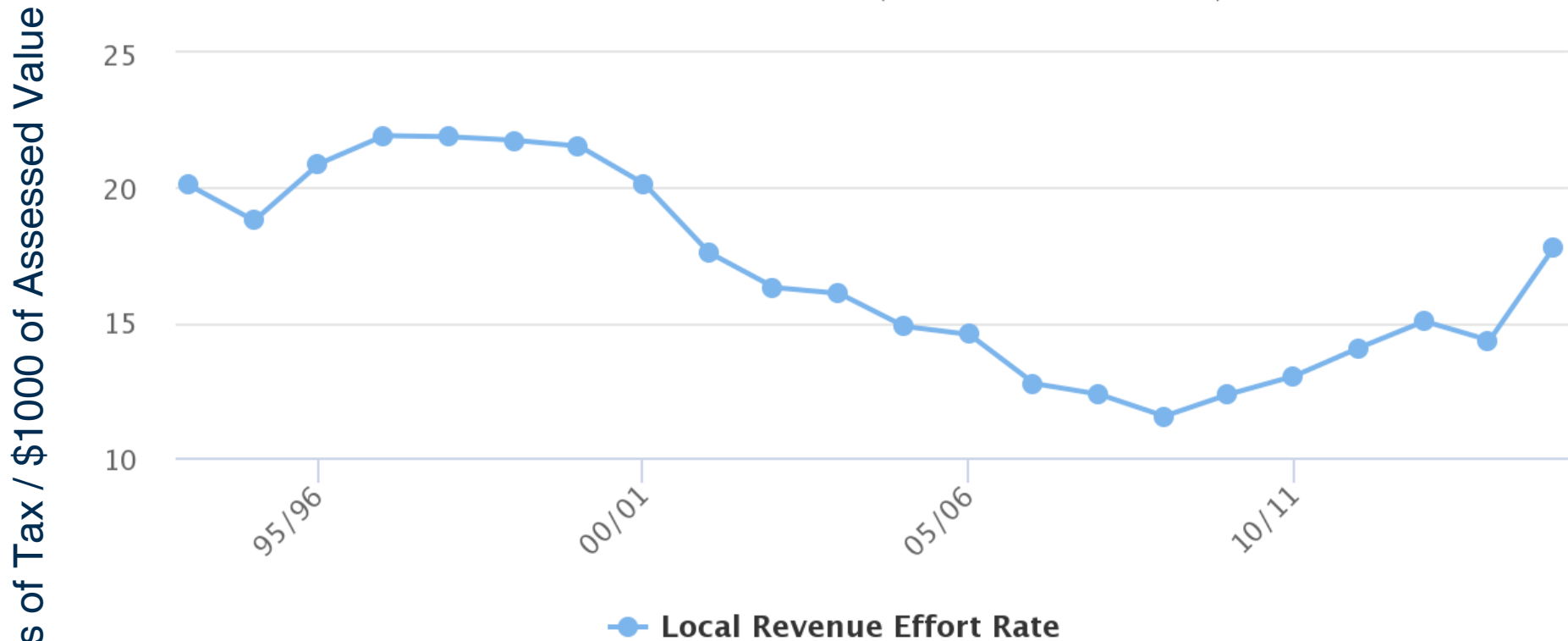
After Loss, now recovering



Local Revenue Effort Rate (LRER)

(dollars/thousand dollars actual value)

EAST RAMAPO CSD (SPRING VALLEY)











Data source: NYSED Fiscal Analysis and Research Unit

Made through Cornell Program on Applied Demographics

LRER (Tax Rate) Across their BOCES

(dollars/thousand dollars actual value)

BOCES ROCKLAND

| | 10/11 | 11/12 | 12/13 | 13/14 | 14/15 |
|--|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--|
| EAST RAMAPO CSD (SPRING VALLEY) | 13.02 | 14.07 | 15.05 | 14.34 | 17.81  |
| CLARKSTOWN CSD | 12.82 | 15.54 | 15.65 | 15.42 | 17.94  |
| HAVERSTRAW-STONY POINT CSD (NORTH RO | 21.82 | 24.99 | 26.18 | 25.13 | 31.22  |
| NANUET UFSD | 16.91 | 23.19 | 23.43 | 21.35 | 26.56  |
| NYACK UFSD | 16.27 | 19.15 | 19.53 | 19.24 | 21.54  |
| PEARL RIVER UFSD | 16.13 | 19.40 | 19.16 | 19.54 | 21.05  |
| RAMAPO CSD (SUFFERN) | 17.72 | 20.37 | 21.87 | 21.06 | 23.97  |
| SOUTH ORANGETOWN CSD | 15.13 | 18.08 | 18.97 | 18.26 | 20.05  |