

COLLEGE READINESS OUTCOMES IN HOUSTON, TX

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To what extent do charter schools differ in college readiness outcomes compared to traditional public schools (TPS)?



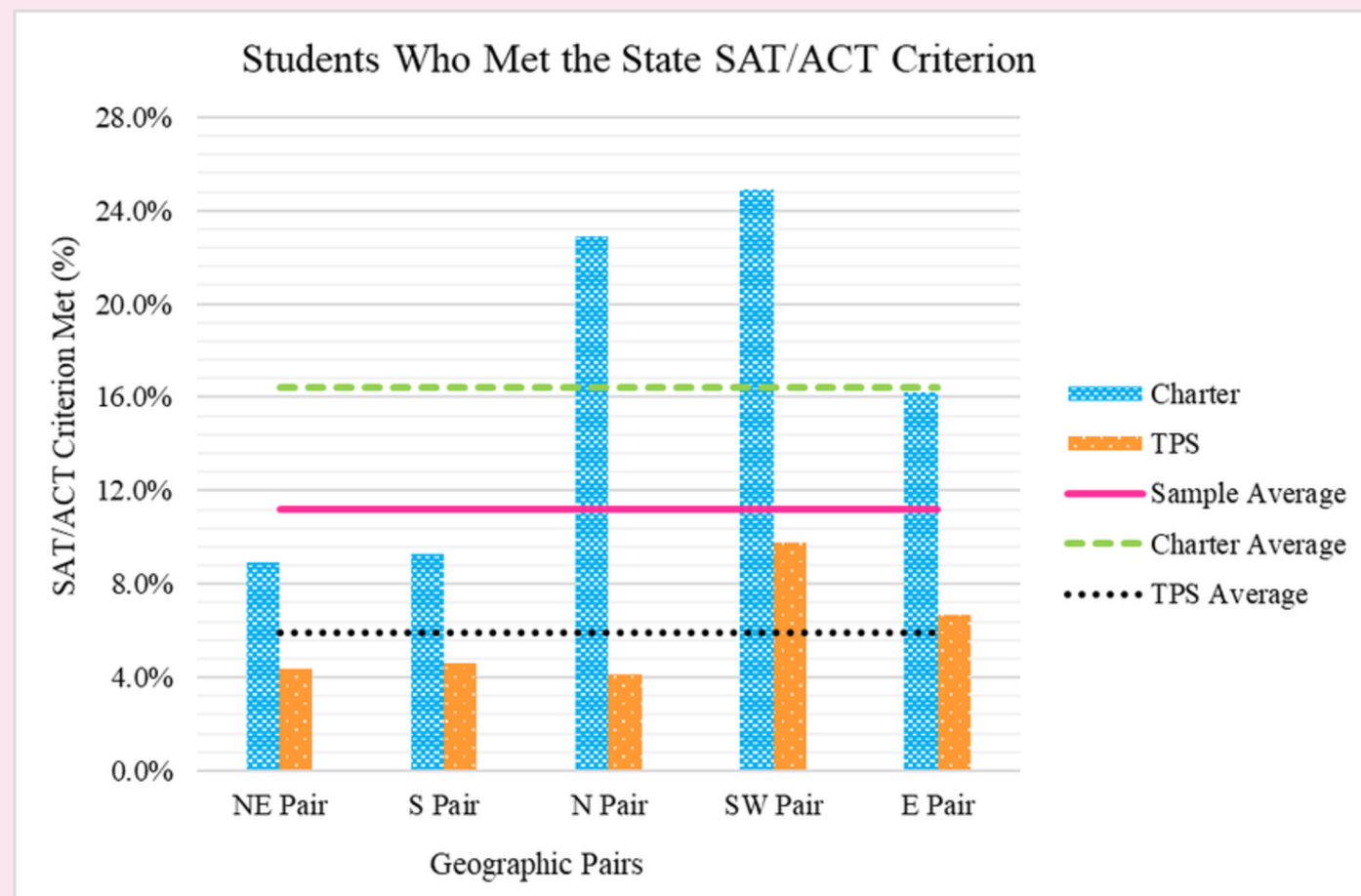
Do these differences increase or decrease when assessing college readiness outcomes for economically disadvantaged students (ED), English learner (EL), and students with disabilities (SWD)?

SETTING & INTERVENTION

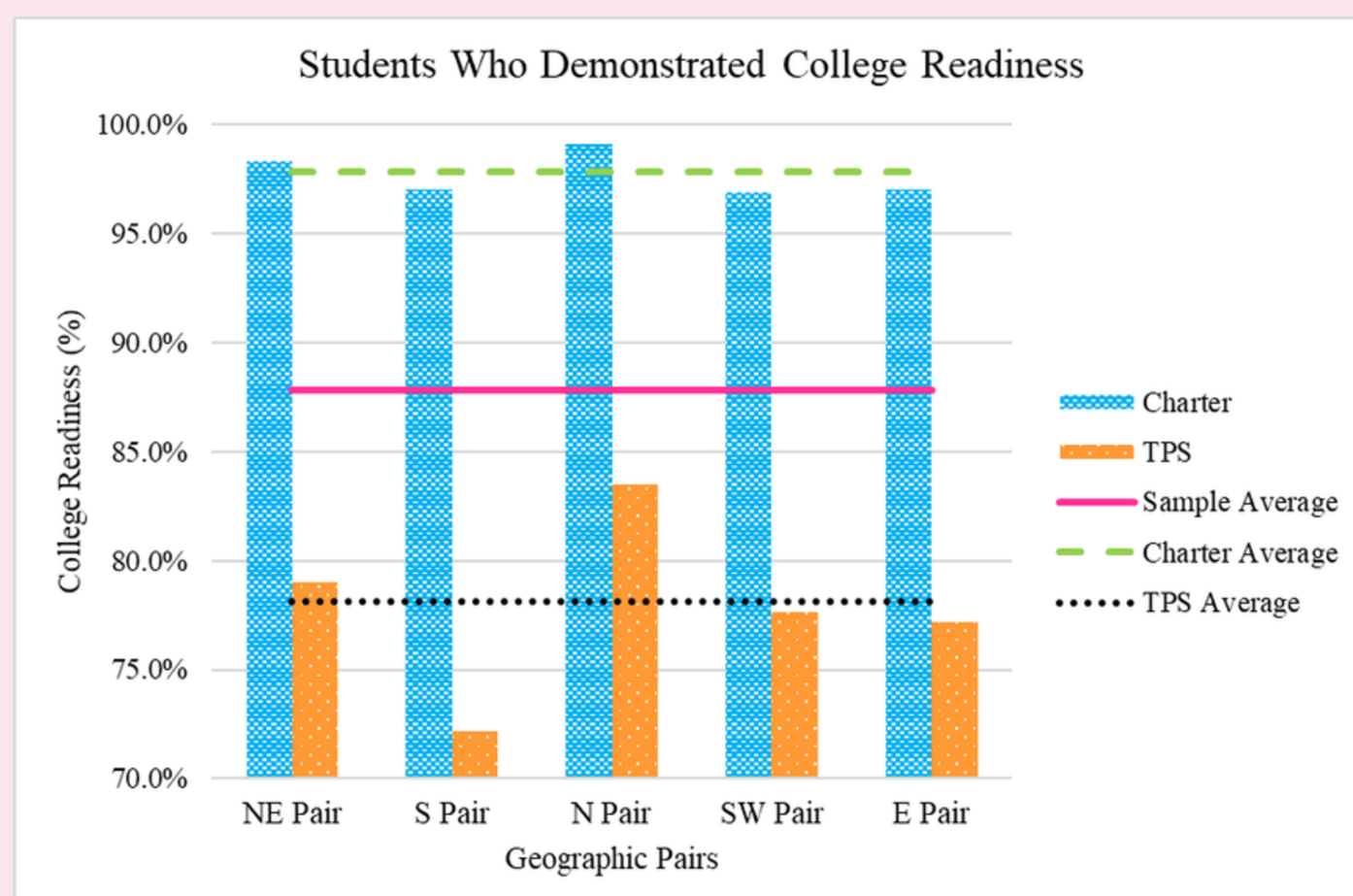
- Houston, Texas: A large and well-established charter school sector alongside a substantial number of traditional public schools within the city school district.
- The charter model is the treatment group because it is historically grounded in the 'No Excuses' charter model and has a college-aligned instructional program.
- The comparison group consists of geographically proximate TPS located within an eight-mile radius of each charter school.

SAMPLE & ANALYTIC PROCEDURES

- 5 charter schools were matched with their geographic proximate TPS.
- Schools were also matched to ensure demographic similarity within a $\pm 5\%$ margin across the following student groups: ED, ELs, and SWD.
- We compared the mean percentage of graduating students who met the state's SAT/ACT criterion and the percentage who demonstrated College Readiness, and calculated the differences between the two groups.
- All data represents results from SY 2023-24 and was collected from the Texas Academic Performance Report.



The state criterion for the SAT is 480 on reading/writing and 580 on math. For the ACT, it is a 40 on ACT English & Reading and a 22 on Math



College readiness is defined as either meeting college readiness standards on the state assessment, the Texas Success Initiative, earning dual credit, scoring at least a 3 on an AP exam or a 4 on an IB exam, earning an Associate's degree, or earning an Advanced Diploma as a student with disability

KEY FINDINGS

- Charters have an average of 16.4% of students meeting the SAT/ACT criterion, while TPS schools have an average of only 5.9%. Although there is a 10.9% gap, geographic variation moderates this gap.
- Charters continues to outperform TPS in the percent of ED and EL students meeting SAT/ACT criterion, but reaches near parity when comparing SWD.
- Charter schools have almost a 100% of students demonstrating college readiness across all student groups, whereas TPS has an average range of 73 to 78% of student groups meeting this criteria.

IMPLICATIONS

- There is evidence that students benefit from attending a charter school.
 - The variability in SAT/ACT outcomes for EL students and SWD across the treatment and comparison groups suggests a critical need to examine how programming can be modified to better support these students.
- The charter school's near-perfect proficiency in college readiness contrasts with its average of 16.4% of students meeting the SAT/ACT threshold. This suggests a gap between the two metrics and a further examination of the rigor of charter schools' courses.

