



EXTRA ordinary DISTRICTS

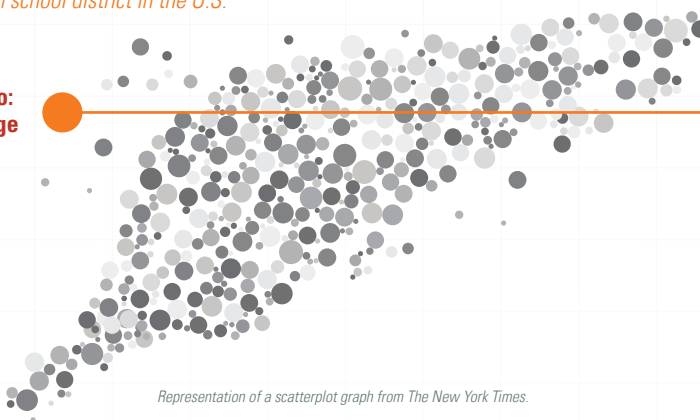
Ordinary school districts that get extraordinary results

ExtraOrdinary Districts is a podcast from The Education Trust that demonstrates the power that schools and school districts have to educate all children, regardless of background. To identify leading districts, we used an analysis of almost 12,000 districts done by a team led by Stanford University's Sean Reardon.

Episode 3: Steubenville, Ohio

Educational attainment in each school district in the U.S.

Steubenville, Ohio:
1.1 grade levels above average



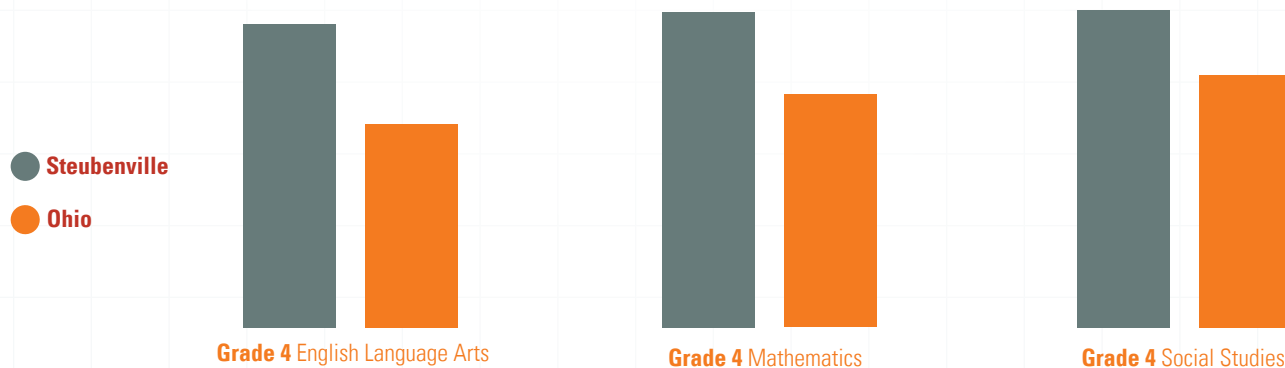
- 3 grades ahead of average
- 2 grades ahead of average
- 1 grade ahead of average
- About average
- 1 grade behind average
- 2 grades behind average
- 3 grades behind average

POORER ← Parents' socioeconomic status → RICHER

Why focus on Steubenville? Steubenville, Ohio, in the heart of the Rustbelt, has proven to be one of the nation's highest achieving high-poverty districts. In a deeper analysis, Reardon found that Steubenville's third and fourth graders read and do math at levels comparable the nation's wealthiest districts. After that, it falls down a bit. Even so, its high school graduation rate is much higher than the state as a whole, which raises the question: What is Steubenville doing?

Basic Facts

2,384 Students | 24% Black | 2% Hispanic | 12% Multiracial | 60% White | 99.9% Economic disadvantage | Number of schools: 5
Graduation rate: **Steubenville: 97%** Ohio: 83%





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What contributed to Steubenville's success?

You would be hard-pressed to find a teacher or principal in Steubenville who didn't credit the program Success for All for its success in helping Steubenville's elementary school students read and do math at high levels. The district first adopted Success for All in 2001 in its elementary schools and has stuck with it through its many changes and refinements. Success for All was first developed at Johns Hopkins University in partnership with Baltimore City Schools and is one of the few whole-school programs that has a demonstrated track record of success.

Success for All is one of the best-researched and supported programs available, with multiple studies finding that students generally succeed at higher rates with Success for All than with almost any other program. While there are plenty of schools that use Success for All that are not successful, Steubenville's elementary schools are among the most effective Success for All schools in the country.

Steubenville's educators also point to the culture of high expectations and excellence that has been part of Steubenville's history for a long time. Most educators and staff are from Steubenville and see the schools as being the path out of poverty for their students.

Their expectations can be seen in the way administrators address the fact that their students' achievement results drop off after fifth grade when they get to middle school. To try to fix that, the district has recently adopted Success for All through middle school, and administrators say they have started to see results.

To address high school achievement, Steubenville has adopted:

- College Credit Plus, in which students work on a two-year college degree while still in high school;
- High Schools that Work, which has specific coursework that leads to careers and was developed by the Southern Regional Education Board.

What can other districts learn from Steubenville?

- Steubenville educators see their role as "changing the path of poverty" for their students. And they have been very canny about using federal funds and state grants to support research-based approaches to drive improvement.
- Also, Steubenville does not hop from program to program in search of a magic bullet. Its educators look at programs carefully, evaluate the evidence, and then stick with the program so that teachers and administrators are fully invested and can develop tremendous expertise.