Drawing across school boundaries: How federally funded magnet schools recruit and admit students

National Center for Education Evaluation

A key goal of many magnet programs is to improve student diversity in schools. New information suggests that federally funded magnet schools pursue this goal using a variety of strategies to recruit and admit new students. Most of the schools attract just enough applicants to fill open seats, often reporting they have difficulty overcoming perceptions about their academic quality and diversity held by families in their communities.
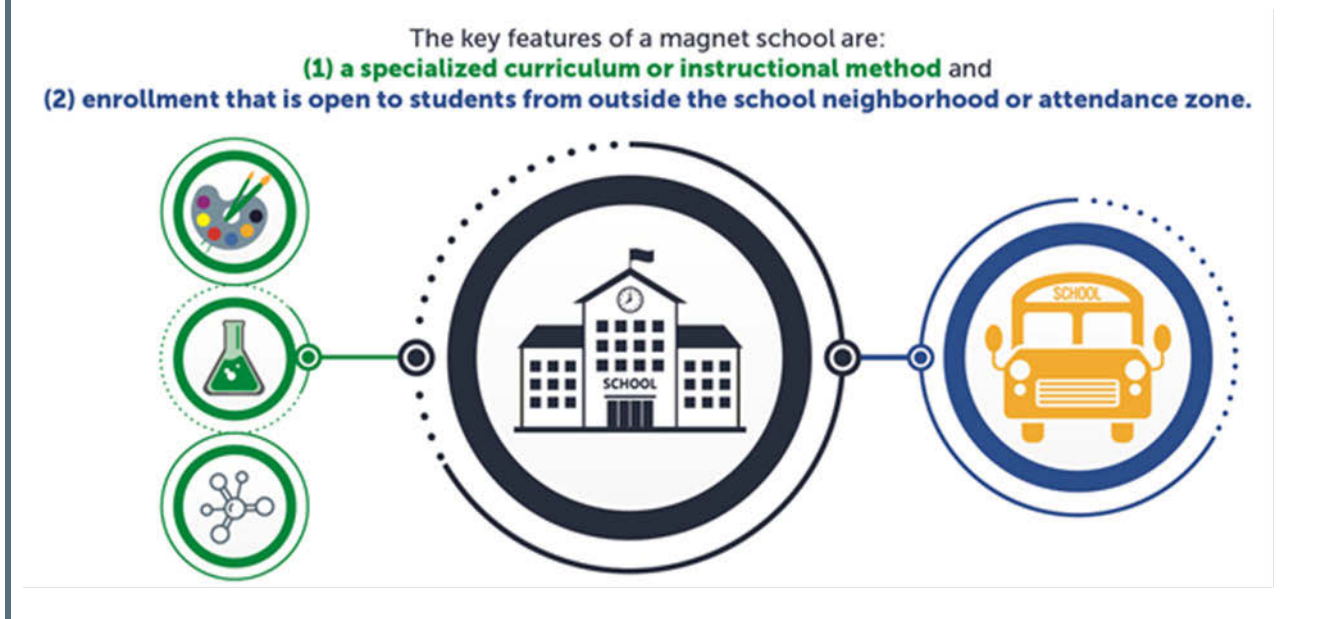
Why this Topic

Magnet schools are an important part of public school choice and one way districts try to improve achievement and diversity in their schools. Since 1985, the Magnet Schools Assistance Program (MSAP) has provided federal grants to support magnet programs in school districts with court-ordered or federally approved voluntary desegregation plans.

To achieve their goals, magnet schools aim to attract students from outside their neighborhood or those from the neighborhood who would likely attend other schools (Figure 1). Some "traditional" magnets start off as lower-performing schools, or serving high proportions of students from low-income households or specific minority racial/ethnic groups; they strive to recruit students who are higher-achieving or different from the current study body in socioeconomic status or race and ethnicity. Others magnets are high-performing schools, often serving higher-income or nonminority students; they are a "destination" for students from outside the neighborhood, who frequently attend struggling schools, are lower-achieving, lower-income, or more likely to be from minority racial/ethnic groups. Because a prior evaluation suggested that some MSAP-funded magnet schools have difficulty shifting their diversity,[i] this snapshot examines the recruitment and admissions practices of a broad set of them. By better understanding the schools' approaches and challenges, the program may be able to help magnet schools improve.

Figure 1. Key features of magnet schools

The key features of a magnet school are:
(1) a specialized curriculum or instructional method and
(2) enrollment that is open to students from outside the school neighborhood or attendance zone.

Data and Analysis

This snapshot is a product of the first phase of a study assessing if students benefit from participating in magnet school programs. The first phase of the study involved determining which MSAP-funded schools admit students using lotteries and gathering other recruitment and admissions information.[ii] Data came from two sources between November 2018 and February 2019: (1) structured interviews with magnet program coordinators in 40 districts that received MSAP grants, and (2) surveys completed by 150 of their 162 MSAP-funded magnet schools (93 percent).[iii] The snapshot includes school-level descriptive statistics and cross tabulations.[iv] In addition, publicly available grant applications submitted by MSAP grantees were used to qualitatively examine why MSAP-funded schools implemented specific admissions preferences.

The study schools are concentrated in districts in the South (49 percent) and Northeast (31 percent) regions of the country, with 61 percent in cities (Appendix Table A.1); these characteristics are typical of prior MSAP-funded schools.[v] The districts in which study schools are located tend to have a sizable number of s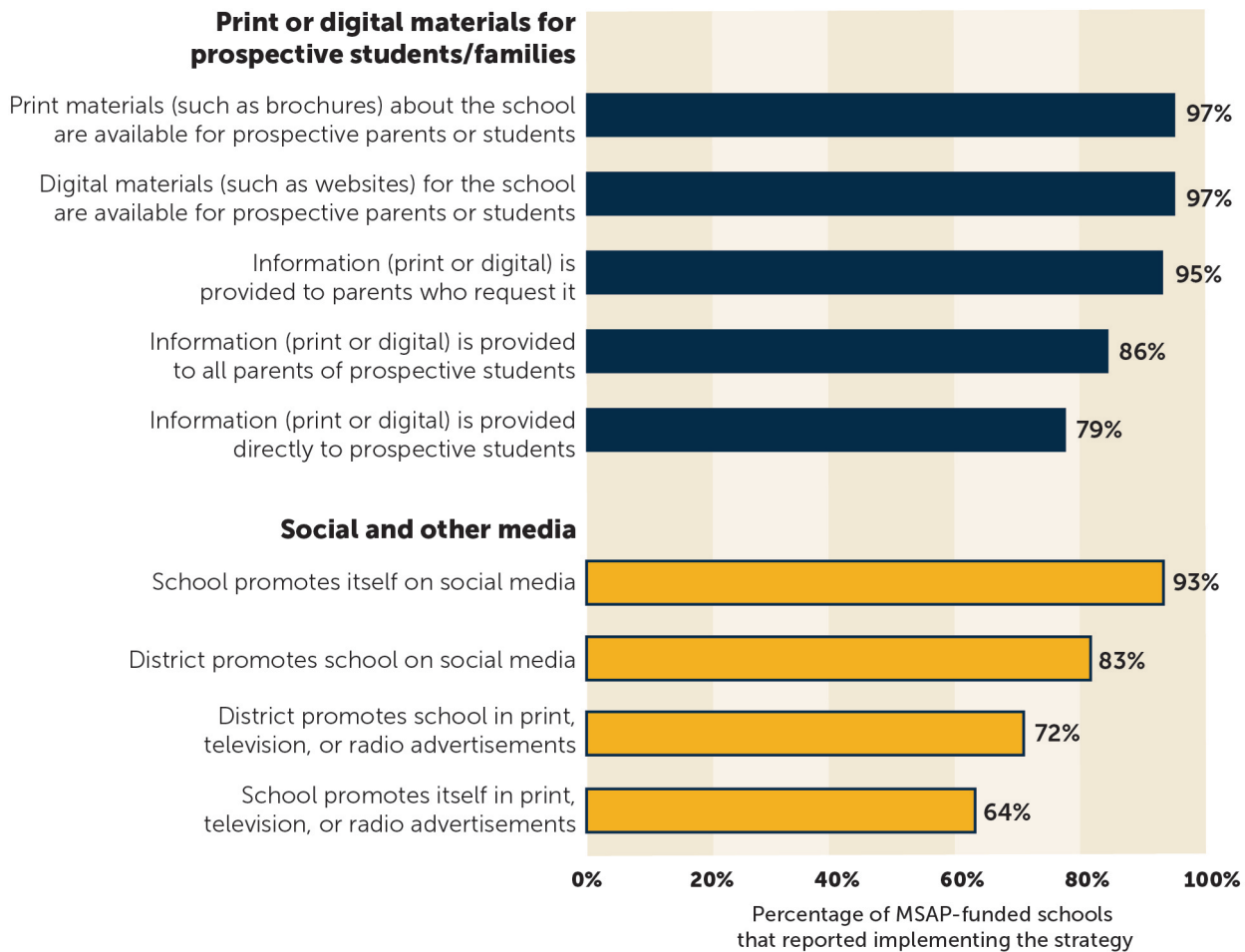chool choice options. On average, approximately one-quarter (26 percent) of schools in MSAP grantee districts are charter or magnet schools, whereas approximately 10 percent of schools nationwide are public schools of choice.[vi,vii]

Key Findings

MSAP-funded schools report using a variety of strategies to recruit students, targeting those the schools believe are likely to exercise choice

- **Almost all MSAP-funded schools provided both print and digital materials about the school for prospective families.** Print materials (such as brochures) and digital materials (such as websites) were available for 97 percent of schools (Figure 2). Most schools also reported providing this information directly to parents who request it (95 percent), to all parents of prospective students regardless of whether they request it (86 percent), and prospective students themselves (79 percent). Almost all schools also used social media to promote themselves (93 percent), while purchased advertisements were somewhat less common (72 percent purchased by districts, 64 percent purchased by schools).

Figure 2. Recruitment strategies: Promotional materials

Print or digital materials for prospective students/families

Print materials (such as brochures) about the school are available for prospective parents or students	97%
Digital materials (such as websites) for the school are available for prospective parents or students	97%
Information (print or digital) is provided to parents who request it	95%
Information (print or digital) is provided to all parents of prospective students	86%
Information (print or digital) is provided directly to prospective students	79%

Social and other media

School promotes itself on social media	93%
District promotes school on social media	83%
District promotes school in print, television, or radio advertisements	72%
School promotes itself in print, television, or radio advertisements	64%

0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

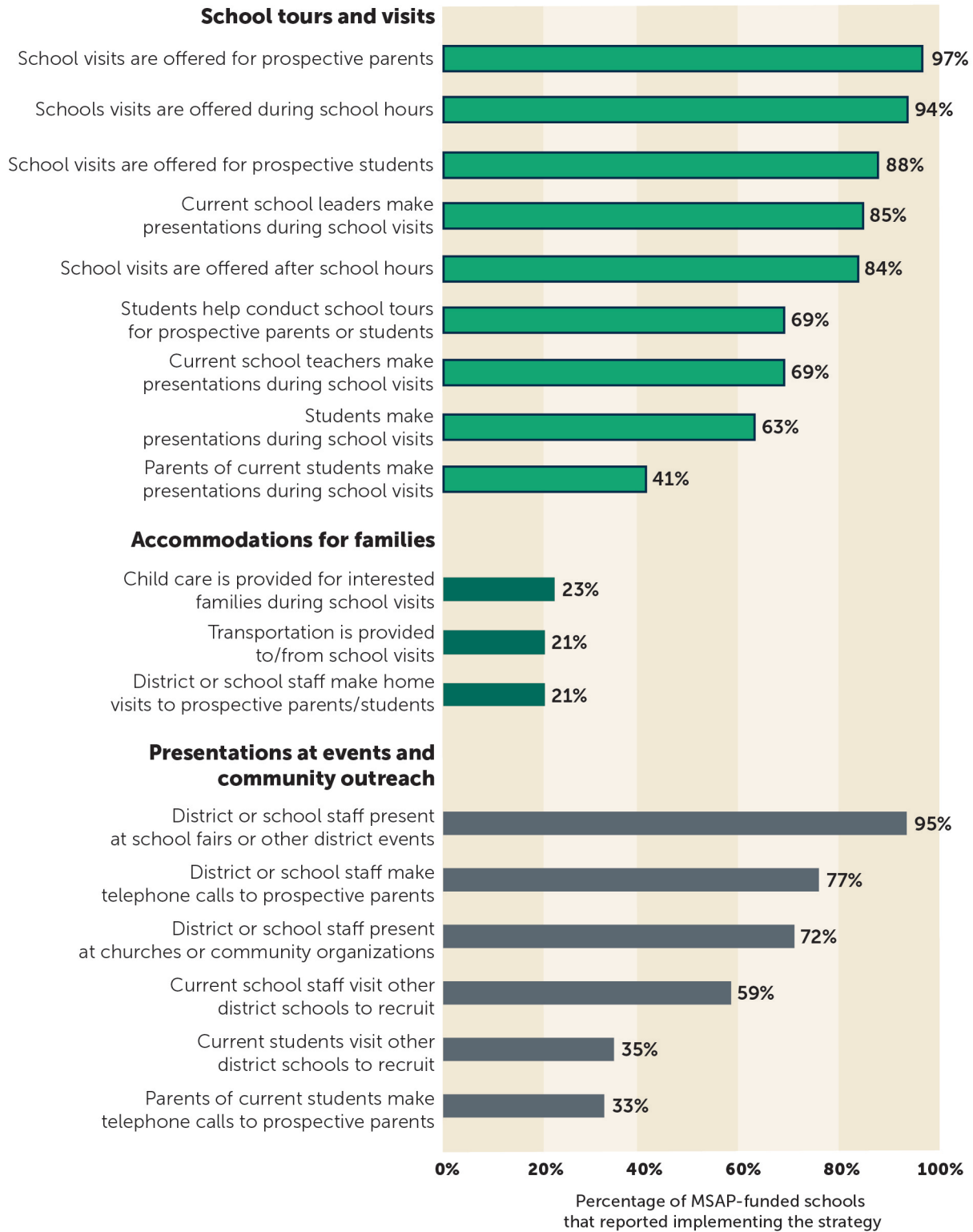Percentage of MSAP-funded schools that reported implementing the strategy

Source: 2018 MSAP School Recruitment and Admissions Survey.
N = 150 schools.

- **While common, school visit and community outreach approaches varied across schools.** Almost all schools offered school visits (97 percent) and were represented at school fairs or other district-sponsored events (95 percent) (Figure 3). Less frequently, schools engaged current families to assist in these efforts. Current students or their parents made presentations during school visits for prospective families in 63 percent and 41 percent of schools respectively. In some schools, current students visited other district schools to help recruit prospective students (35 percent) or their parents made telephone calls to prospective families to provide information (33 percent).

Figure 3. Recruitment strategies: School tours and direct outreach

School tours and visits

School visits are offered for prospective parents	97%
Schools visits are offered during school hours	94%
School visits are offered for prospective students	88%
Current school leaders make presentations during school visits	85%
School visits are offered after school hours	84%
Students help conduct school tours for prospective parents or students	69%
Current school teachers make presentations during school visits	69%
Students make presentations during school visits	63%
Parents of current students make presentations during school visits	41%

Accommodations for families

Child care is provided for interested families during school visits	23%
Transportation is provided to/from school visits	21%
District or school staff make home visits to prospective parents/students	21%

Presentations at events and community outreach

District or school staff present at school fairs or other district events	95%
District or school staff make telephone calls to prospective parents	77%
District or school staff present at churches or community organizations	72%
Current school staff visit other district schools to recruit	59%
Current students visit other district schools to recruit	35%
Parents of current students make telephone calls to prospective parents	33%

Percentage of MSAP-funded schools
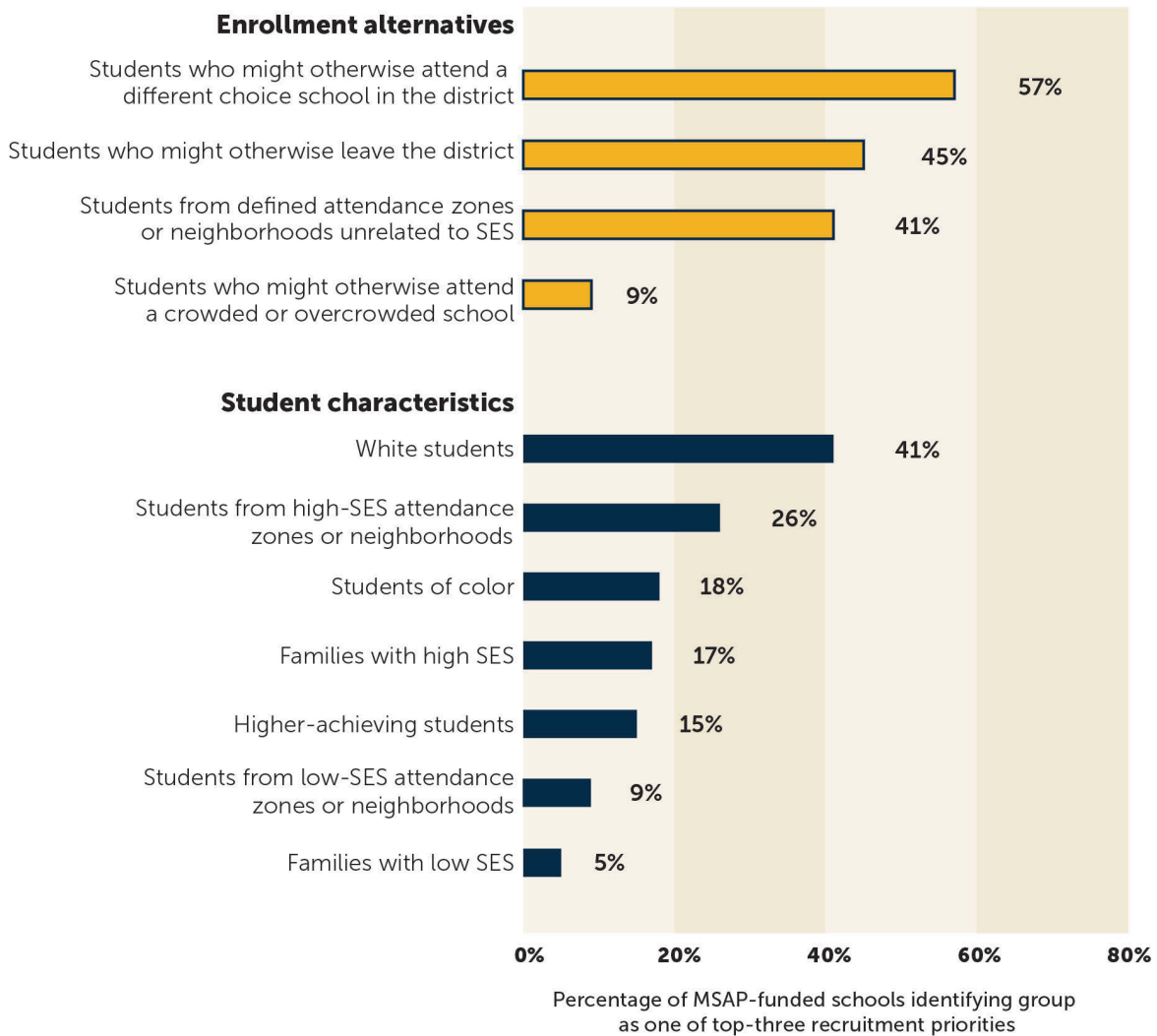that reported implementing the strategy

Source: 2018 MSAP School Recruitment and Admissions Survey.
N = 150 schools.

- **Fewer schools offered resource-intensive accommodations in their recruitment efforts that might be particularly attractive to families who want to visit the schools or meet staff but lack access to childcare or transportation.** Parent attendance at school-based events may be hindered by obstacles related to transportation, childcare, and work schedules and can be facilitated by school-arranged transportation and childcare.[viii] Strategies to address these obstacles require a larger investment of time and resources from school staff and current families and were less common. However, some schools offered these accommodations. For example, 23 percent of schools offered childcare for prospective families during school visits and 21 percent provided transportation to and from school visits. For 21 percent of schools, district or school staff made home visits to prospective families.

- **Schools frequently focused their recruitment efforts on students schools believe are likely to exercise school choice.** For 57 percent of schools, one of the top-three priority groups for recruitment is students who might otherwise attend a different choice school in the district (Figure 3). Almost half of MSAP-funded schools (45 percent) prioritized students who might otherwise leave the district, corresponding with district efforts to offer programming that would help the district retain families who have concerns about the quality of their local schools.

- **Recruitment priorities reflect efforts to desegregate and diversify.** When MSAP-funded schools prioritized students for recruitment based on student characteristics (Figure 4), they more commonly reported focusing on higher-income or white students than on lower-income or students of color.[ix] At schools that prioritized higher-income students, three-quarters of currently enrolled students (75 percent) were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, on average (Appendix Table A.4). Similarly, at schools that prioritized white students, most students (85 percent) were students of color. This recruitment approach is consistent with the "traditional" model of magnet schools described earlier. Guidance from the Office of Civil rights at the U.S. Department of Education states that school boards may pursue the goal of bringing together students of diverse backgrounds and races by recruiting students and faculty in a targeted fashion.

Figure 4. Highest-priority student groups recruited by MSAP-funded schools

Enrollment alternatives

Group	Percentage
Students who might otherwise attend a different choice school in the district	57%
Students who might otherwise leave the district	45%
Students from defined attendance zones or neighborhoods unrelated to SES	41%
Students who might otherwise attend a crowded or overcrowded school	9%

Student characteristics

Group	Percentage
White students	41%
Students from high-SES attendance zones or neighborhoods	26%
Students of color	18%
Families with high SES	17%
Higher-achieving students	15%
Students from low-SES attendance zones or neighborhoods	9%
Families with low SES	5%

Percentage of MSAP-funded schools identifying group as one of top-three recruitment priorities

Source: 2018 MSAP School Recruitment and Admissions Survey.

N = 138 schools.

SES = socioeconomic status.

Note: No schools ranked students with disabilities as a top-three priority group for recruitment, and less than three percent ranked lower-achieving students as a top-three priority group. The proportion prioritizing "students of color" includes schools that ranked the following students as a top-three priority group: black students only (4 percent), Hispanic students only (4 percent), other minority students only (4 percent), and combinations of Black, Hispanic, and/or other minority students (6 percent).

Perceived stigma of low academic quality and lack of diversity are top reported obstacles

- **MSAP-funded schools most often cited as a substantial recruiting challenge the perception that their academic quality is poor.** Over half of schools (55 percent) indicated that the perception that their school's academic performance is low was one of their top-three obstacles to recruiting new families and students (Figure 5). How schools obtained such information from parents and students who do not apply to the schools was not collected as part of this school survey.

Figure 5. Greatest recruiting challenges for MSAP-funded schools

Challenge	Percentage
School's academic performance considered low	55%
Student body includes too few students from specific demographic groups	40%
Student body not sufficiently diverse	37%
Charter schools more popular	24%
School further than families are willing to travel	23%
School's climate considered poor	17%
Private schools more popular	16%
Transportation options limited or costly	15%
Staff don't have enough time to recruit students	10%
School located in unsafe neighborhood	9%

Percentage of MSAP-funded schools perceiving
the factor as a top-three challenge for recruitment

Source: 2018 MSAP School Recruitment and Admissions Survey.
N = 150 schools.

- **Perceived lack of diversity was another significant recruitment challenge.** Forty percent of schools reported that one of their biggest barriers was the perception by prospective families that the school enrolled too few students from specific demographic groups. Similarly, 37 percent of schools reported that prospective families and students perceived the school as not sufficiently diverse more generally.

- **Challenges related to transportation and competition from other choice schools were less prevalent.** One quarter (23 percent) of schools reported that the school is further than

parents or students seem willing to travel, and 15 percent reported that transportation options to the schools are limited or costly. Nearly all MSAP-funded schools (92 percent) are in districts that provide transportation for all students or for students who live a certain distance from the school. However, transportation might still be an obstacle for families; for example, students who participate in after-school programs might not have access to district-provided transportation home from these programs. Schools also perceived that charter schools (24 percent) or private schools (16 percent) were more popular alternatives for prospective families.

Most MSAP-funded schools reportedly admit students using the same application as other schools in their districts
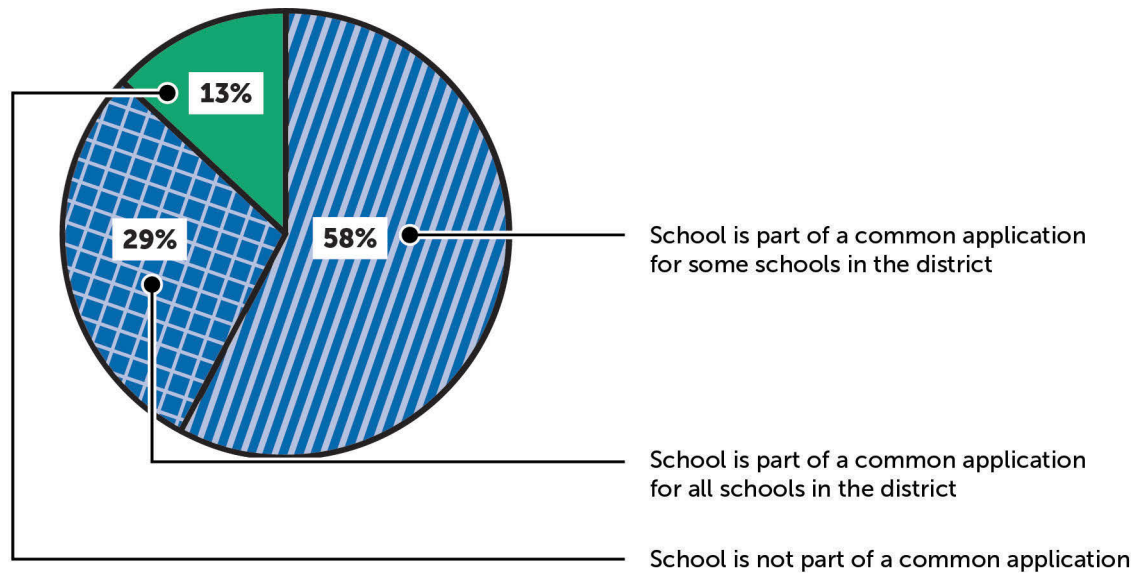
- **Most MSAP-funded schools are part of a common application system.** For 29 percent of schools, this common application includes all schools in the district; another 58 percent of MSAP-funded schools are part of a common application that includes a subset of district schools (Figure 6). A common application allows students in a district to apply to any school in the district or to a subset of schools in the district–for example, all magnet schools–using a single application form. A common application reduces the burden of applying to MSAP-funded schools for families who are already applying to other schools of choice, which may attract a larger pool

of students. Only 13 percent of MSAP-funded schools are not part of a common application in some form.

MSAP-funded schools are most likely to give preference in admissions to students from affiliated families or communities, according to districts

- **Admission preferences are only applicable when schools have more applicants than they can serve, which is not the case for most MSAP schools.** While grantee districts reported information about how preference in admissions works in theory in all schools; a majority of MSAP-funded schools (69%) had enough seats to admit all applicants without using a lottery for the 2018-2019 school year.

Figure 6. MSAP-funded school inclusion in common application systems

- 13% — School is not part of a common application
- 29% — School is part of a common application for all schools in the district
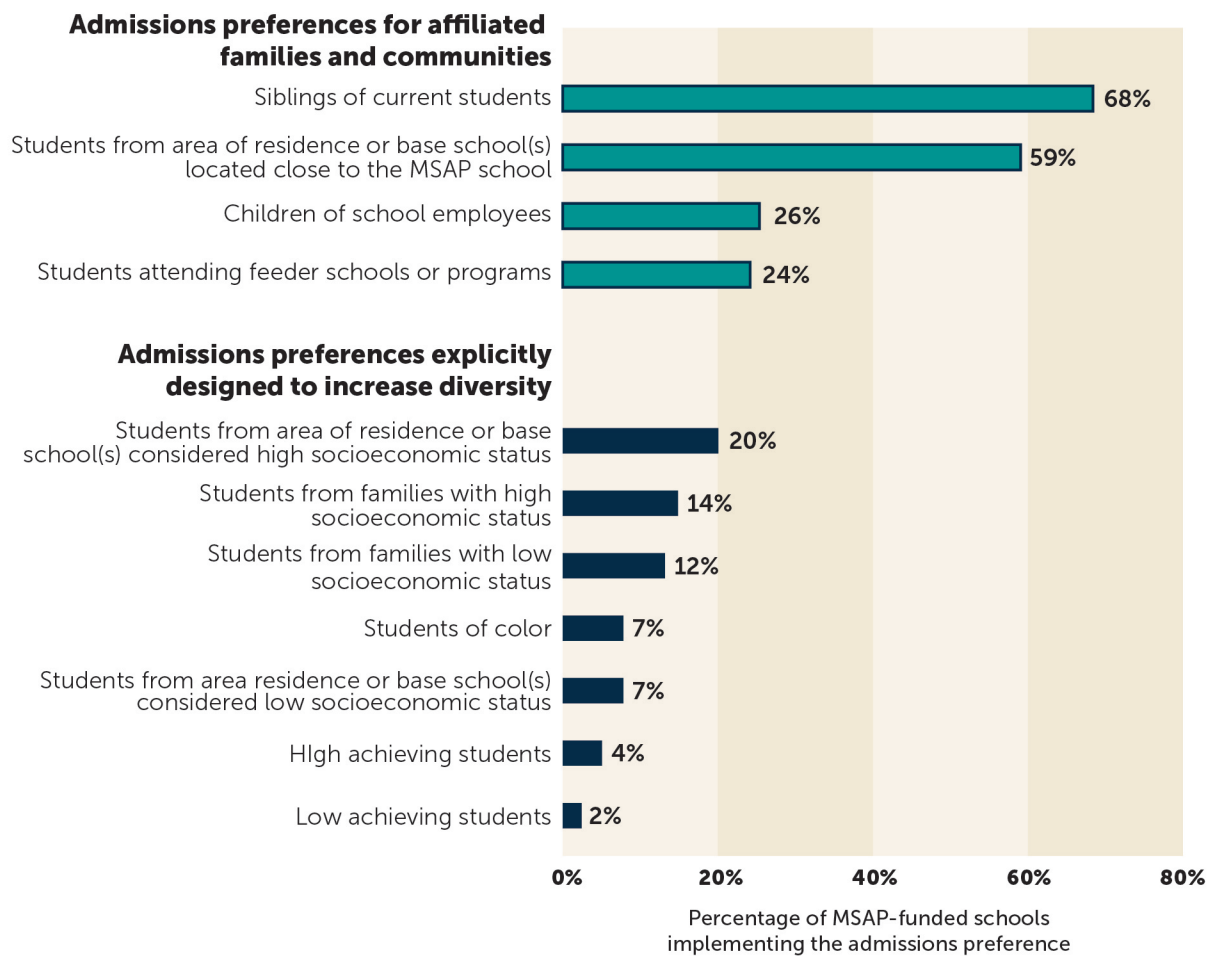- 58% — School is part of a common application for some schools in the district

Source: 2018 MSAP district interviews, school-level items.
N = 150 schools in 40 grantee districts.

- **MSAP-funded schools most commonly give special consideration in admissions to siblings of students already enrolled, regardless of whether the school used a lottery for the 2018-19 school year.** This preference, implemented by 68 percent of schools, could reflect an effort by magnet schools to support entire families, reducing their burden of transporting and managing schedules for siblings at different schools (Figure 7). For

example, two grantees proposed admissions preference for siblings in their grant applications, indicating this preference would be particularly appealing to prospective families because of the opportunity to stay together at the same school.[x] However, if schools are trying to change the demographic composition of their student body, prioritizing siblings for admission could make it more difficult to achieve that goal.

Figure 7. Admissions preferences implemented by MSAP-funded schools

Admissions preferences for affiliated families and communities

Preference	Percentage
Siblings of current students	68%
Students from area of residence or base school(s) located close to the MSAP school	59%
Children of school employees	26%
Students attending feeder schools or programs	24%

Admissions preferences explicitly designed to increase diversity

Preference	Percentage
Students from area of residence or base school(s) considered high socioeconomic status	20%
Students from families with high socioeconomic status	14%
Students from families with low socioeconomic status	12%
Students of color	7%
Students from area residence or base school(s) considered low socioeconomic status	7%
HIgh achieving students	4%
Low achieving students	2%

Percentage of MSAP-funded schools implementing the admissions preference

Source: 2018 MSAP district interviews, school-level items.

N = 150 schools in 40 grantee districts.

Note: For each school, districts were provided with a list of categories of students and asked to indicate which, if any, of the groups of students receive admissions preferences. They were also provided with an option to specify other groups of students who receive admissions preferences at each school.

- **Many schools give explicit preference to prospective students from particular neighborhoods or "sending schools."** Most MSAP-funded schools (59 percent) give admissions preference to students in nearby neighborhoods or schools. Twenty-four percent provide a similar admissions preference to students attending feeder schools which may be located nearby or further away. The neighborhood preferences may be designed to align with district priorities for serving neighborhood students. One grantee proposed this preference because magnet schools were specifically located in high-poverty areas where neighborhood students would benefit most from a high-quality curriculum.[xi] The feeder school preference could reflect an interest in providing sustained exposure to the same theme across school levels. Two grantees proposed this preference because their districts and families value a continuous educational pathway from elementary school through high school.[xii] However, these admissions preferences could limit a school's ability to successfully meet recruitment goals by enrolling students from outside the neighborhood, who are of a different race/ethnicity or socioeconomic status than most current students.

- **Some schools give preference to children of school staff in admissions.** This 26 percent of schools may be required by district policies or state regulations governing open enrollment to admit or prioritize children of employees.[xiii] If the composition of the teaching staff, however, does not align with the characteristics of the students the school is seeking to enroll, then this admissions preference is unlikely to increase the diversity of the student body.

- **MSAP-funded schools are most likely to focus on socioeconomic status when using preferences explicitly related to the demographic composition of their student body.** Schools may grant preference to students from attendance zones or neighborhoods with high or low socioeconomic status (20 percent and 7 percent respectively) or to students from individual families with high or low socioeconomic status (14 and 12 percent respectively). Taking into account overlap across these categories, more than one-third of MSAP-funded schools (37 percent) give formal admission preference related to socioeconomic status in some way.

- **Few MSAP-funded schools give admissions preference to students based on their race/ethnicity or prior achievement.** Schools may have limited ability to admit or give special consideration to students based on their race/ethnicity: court decisions, federal and state laws and regulations, and district policies can affect how public schools admit students. However, some preferences–such as those based on socioeconomic status–may be used to increase racial/ethnic diversity without explicitly referencing race or ethnicity. Admissions preferences based on student achievement are rarely used: four percent of MSAP-schools grant preference in admissions to high-achieving students, and just two percent grant preference to low-achieving students, as reported by grantee districts.

ENDNOTES

[i] Betts, Julian, Sami Kitmitto, Jesse Levin, Johannes Bos, and Marian Eaton. 2015. *What Happens When Schools Become Magnet Schools? A Longitudinal Study of Diversity and Achievement*. Washington, D.C.: American Institutes for Research. Betts et al. (2015) found that, after the MSAP-funded schools converted to magnet status, enrollment of students from outside the neighborhood increased little, and the non-neighborhood students who enrolled were like the neighborhood students on a variety of characteristics.

[ii] Districts and schools receiving FY 2016 and FY 2017 MSAP funding were screened to determine how many used lotteries to admit their students. Because there are enough of these schools to enable analyses to detect policy-relevant impacts on student outcomes, the evaluation will involve comparing the outcomes of approximately 4,000 students randomly assigned by lottery to either attend the MSAP-funded magnet schools or not attend these schools. See https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/projects/evaluation/choice_impactmagnet.asp for additional details.

[iii] This includes all 40 districts that received MSAP grants in FY 2016 and/or FY 2017.

[iv] The study team created a school-level analysis file by merging data from the district and school surveys and examined raw descriptive statistics and cross-tabulations. Because the population of FY2016 and FY2017 grantees were surveyed, the study team did not weight any of the analyses.

[v] Betts et al. (2015).

[vi] Calculations for MSAP grantee districts based on data from the Common Core of Data.

[vii] Wang, K., Rathbun, A., and Musu, L. (2019). School Choice in the United States: 2019 (NCES 2019-106). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved March 6, 2020, from https://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch.

[viii] Baker, Timberly L., Wise, Jillian, Kelley, Gwendolyn, and Russell J. Skiba. (2016). "Identifying Barriers: Creating Solutions to Improve Family Engagement." *School Community Journal*, 26(2), 161-184. Retrieved November 10, 2020, from https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1124003.pdf.

[ix] Prior guidance from the Office of Civil rights at the U.S. Department of Education, interpreting the Supreme Court's decision in *Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District No. 1* (*Parents Involved*), states that "School boards may pursue the goal of bringing together students of diverse backgrounds and races through other means, including strategic site selection of new schools; drawing attendance zones with general recognition of the demographics of neighborhoods; allocating resources for special programs; recruiting students and faculty in a targeted fashion; and tracking enrollments, performance, and other statistics by race. These mechanisms are race conscious but do not lead to different treatment based on a classification that tells each student he or she is to be defined by race, so it is unlikely any of them would demand strict scrutiny to be found permissible." See https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/guidance-ese-201111.html. This guidance was withdrawn in July 2020, a few months prior to the administration of the interviews and surveys, and was not replaced by new guidance.

[x] See https://www2.ed.gov/programs/magnet/awards.html for all applications submitted by grantees.

[xi] See https://www2.ed.gov/programs/magnet/awards.html for all applications submitted by grantees.

[xii] See https://www2.ed.gov/programs/magnet/awards.html for all applications submitted by grantees.

[xiii] See, for example, Tennessee Code Section 49-6-3113.

Appendix

Characteristics of MSAP-funded schools in sample

The analysis sample includes 150 magnet schools from 40 school districts and consortia funded by MSAP in fiscal years (FY) 2016 and 2017 (Figure A.1). MSAP-funded schools in the sample are concentrated in the South and Northeast; 61 percent are in cities, just over one-third are in suburbs, and 5 percent are in distant towns or rural areas (Table A.1). Almost 60 percent of the MSAP-funded schools in the sample serve elementary students (pre-kindergarten through grade 6), and 16 percent serve secondary students (grades 9 through 12). However, since middle and high schools tend to enroll more students, only 43 percent of students at MSAP schools are in elementary grades (Table A.2). Most MSAP-funded schools are similar in size to the average public school[1]: two-thirds of the schools with enrollment data for the 2016–2017 school year enrolled between 400 and 999 students.

Figure A.1. Location of MSAP grantees
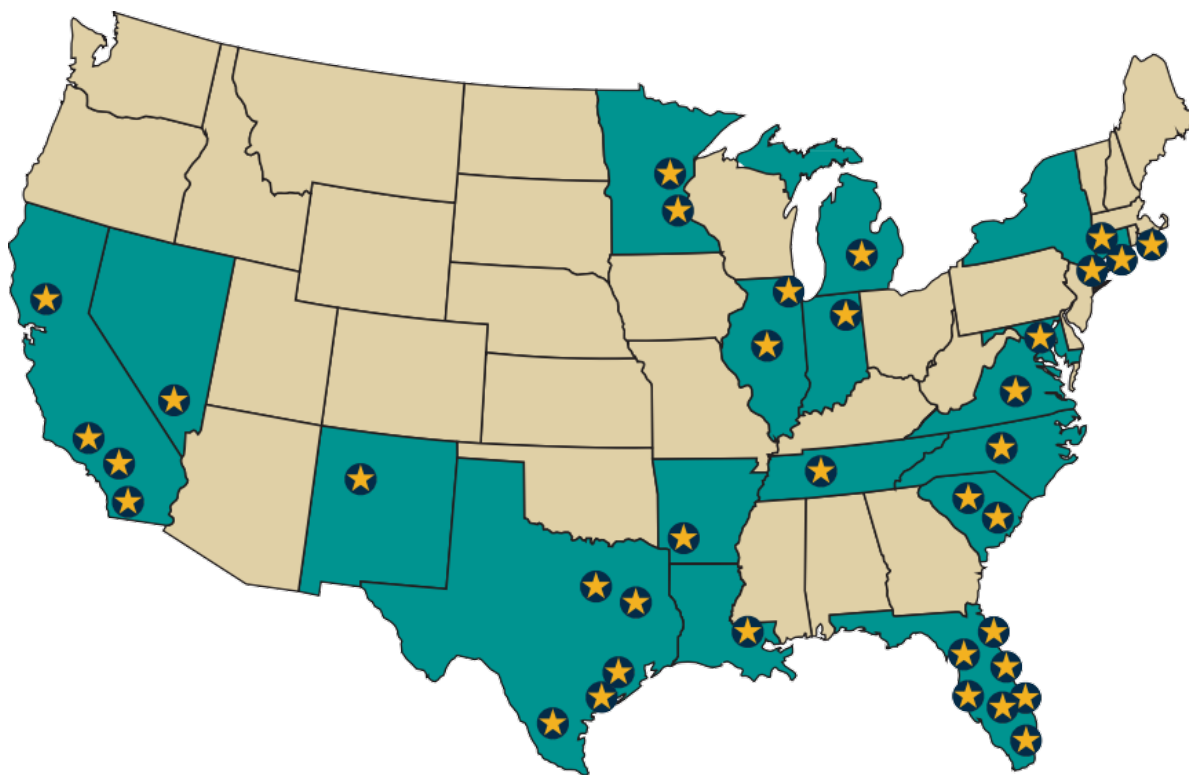
Source: 2018 MSAP district interviews, school-level items.

N = 150 schools in 40 grantee districts.

Note: For each school, districts were provided with a list of categories of students and asked to indicate which, if any, of the groups of students receive admissions preferences. They were also provided with an option to specify other groups of students who receive admissions preferences at each school.

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[1] See https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d18/tables/dt18_214.40.asp.

Table A.1. Characteristics of MSAP-funded schools

MSAP-funded school characteristic	Number of schools	Percentage of schools
Region (N=150)[a]		
Midwest	11	7
Northeast	46	31
South	74	49
West	19	13
Urbanicity (N=148)[b]		
City	90	61
Suburb	51	34
Town or rural	7	5
School size, based on total student enrollment (N=146)[b]		
Small (400 students or fewer)	27	18
Medium (401-999 students)	96	66
Large (1,000 students or more)	23	16
School level (N=150)[c]		
Elementary	86	57
Middle	40	27
High	24	16
Whether the magnet program is schoolwide (N=150)		
Magnet program is schoolwide	122	81
Magnet program is a separate program within a broader school	28	19

Sources:　Common Core of Data and 2018 MSAP district interviews, school-level items.

[a]Regions defined by the Census Bureau.

[b]Two schools were not included in the Common Core of Data for the 2016-17 school year, and two additional schools were missing enrollment data for the 2016-17 school year.

[c]Elementary schools are schools with an entry grade of pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, or 1st grade and an exit grade no higher than 8th grade. Middle schools are schools with an entry grade of 4th, 5th, 6th, or 7th grade and an exit grade no higher than 9th grade. High schools are schools with an exit grade of 12th grade.

Table A.2. Student enrollment in MSAP-funded schools, by school level

School level	Number of students	Percentage of students
Elementary	43,020	43
Middle	27,780	28
High	28,624	29
Total	99,424	100

Source: Common Core of Data, total enrollment for the 2016-17 school year.

N = 146.

Note: Elementary schools are schools with an entry grade of pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, or 1st grade and an exit grade no higher than 8th grade. Middle schools are schools with an entry grade of 4th, 5th, 6th, or 7th grade and an exit grade no higher than 9th grade. High schools are schools with an exit grade of 12th grade.

According to MSAP grant applications and school websites, some key features of the magnet schools include:

- Most MSAP-funded magnet programs are whole-school programs. Only 19 percent are school-within-a-school programs that enroll only a portion of the school's students.

- MSAP-funded schools most commonly focus on science, technology, math, engineering, and arts (Figure A.2). More than half (53 percent) of the MSAP-funded schools have either a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) theme or a Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM) theme. The next most common theme is Arts.

Figure A.2. Percentage of MSAP-funded schools by theme
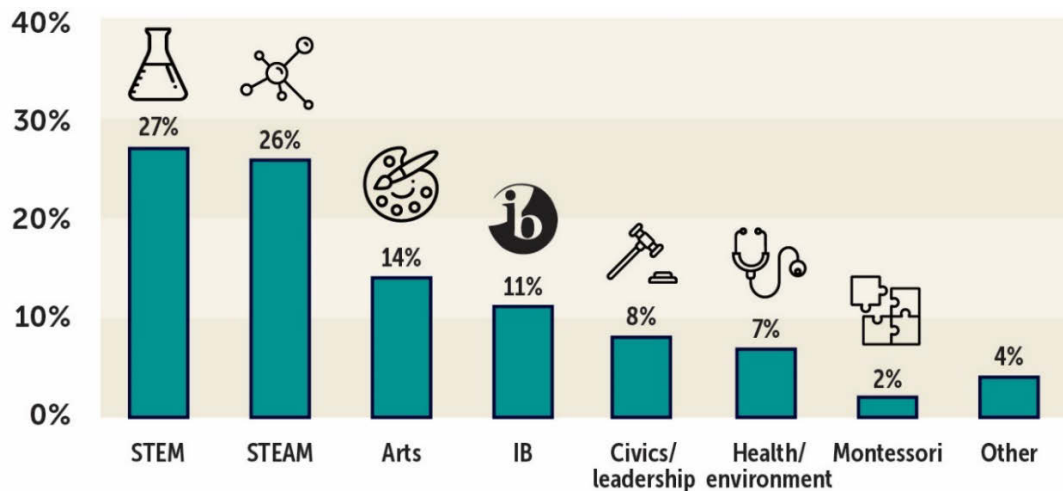
Source: MSAP grant applications and school websites.

N = 150 schools.

STEM = Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math.

STEAM = Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math.

IB = International Baccalaureate.

Note: STEAM schools focus on the same scientific concepts as STEM but also integrate the arts through creative processes and other forms of expression.

Supplemental findings

MSAP-funded schools in the sample were surveyed about whether they specifically focused their recruiting efforts on each of 15 different groups, as defined based on demographic characteristics and perceived school preferences. The 15 groups included:

1. Students from a specific attendance zone or neighborhood(s) considered to have low socioeconomic status;
2. Students from a specific attendance zone or neighborhood(s) considered to have high socioeconomic status;
3. Students from a defined attendance zone or neighborhood targeted for other reasons (such as proximity to the school);
4. Students who might otherwise attend a crowded or overcrowded school;
5. Students from families with high socioeconomic status;
6. Students from families with low socioeconomic status;
7. Black students;
8. Hispanic students;
9. Other minority students;
10. Non-minority/white students;
11. Higher-achieving students;
12. Lower-achieving students;
13. Students with disabilities;
14. Students who might otherwise attend a different choice school in the district (including charter schools or other magnet schools); and
15. Students who might otherwise leave the district (to attend an out-of-district school or private school).

Table A.3 shows that most schools reported recruiting eight or more groups.

Table A.3. Number of recruited student groups reported by MSAP-funded schools

Number of student groups recruited	Percentage of schools	Cumulative percentage of schools	Number of student groups recruited	Percentage of schools	Cumulative percentage of schools
2 or fewer	3	3	9	5	57
3	14	17	10	3	60
4	9	26	11	11	71
5	7	33	12	5	76
6	9	41	13	3	79
7	7	48	14	3	82
8	4	52	15	17	99

Source: 2018 MSAP School Recruitment and Admissions Survey.

N = 150 schools

Table A.4. Student composition in MSAP-funded schools, by recruitment priority

Student group prioritized for recruitment	Percentage of schools reporting recruitment priority	Average percentage of currently enrolled students in student group, among schools reporting recruitment priority
White students	42	15
Students from high-SES families or high-SES neighborhoods	36	25

Source: 2018 MSAP School Recruitment and Admissions Survey and Common Core of Data, 2016-17 school year.

N = 127.

Note: Percentage of students from high-SES families or high-SES neighborhoods is calculated as the percentage of currently enrolled students not eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.

Data collection and methods

The descriptive findings are based on data collected for MSAP-funded schools via school surveys and structured interviews with 40 FY 2016 and FY 2017 MSAP grantees. All 40 grantees and 150 of the 162 schools (93 percent) funded by the FY 2016 and FY 2017 grants participated in the data collection between November 2018 and February 2019. Key information collected included recruitment and admissions priorities, practices, and challenges.

To describe other characteristics of MSAP-schools, the study team used information on entry and exit grades, student enrollment, geographic location, and urbanicity from the Common Core of Data and information on curricular themes from the MSAP grant applications and school websites.

To examine the reported rationales for the admissions preferences implemented by MSAP-funded schools, the study team reviewed the MSAP grant applications.

All the variables used in this report were based on survey or interview items with response rates between 92 percent and 100 percent. Therefore, nonresponse bias analysis was not conducted.