



# ON TIME GRADUATION AT THREE ISA-FOUNDED SCHOOLS

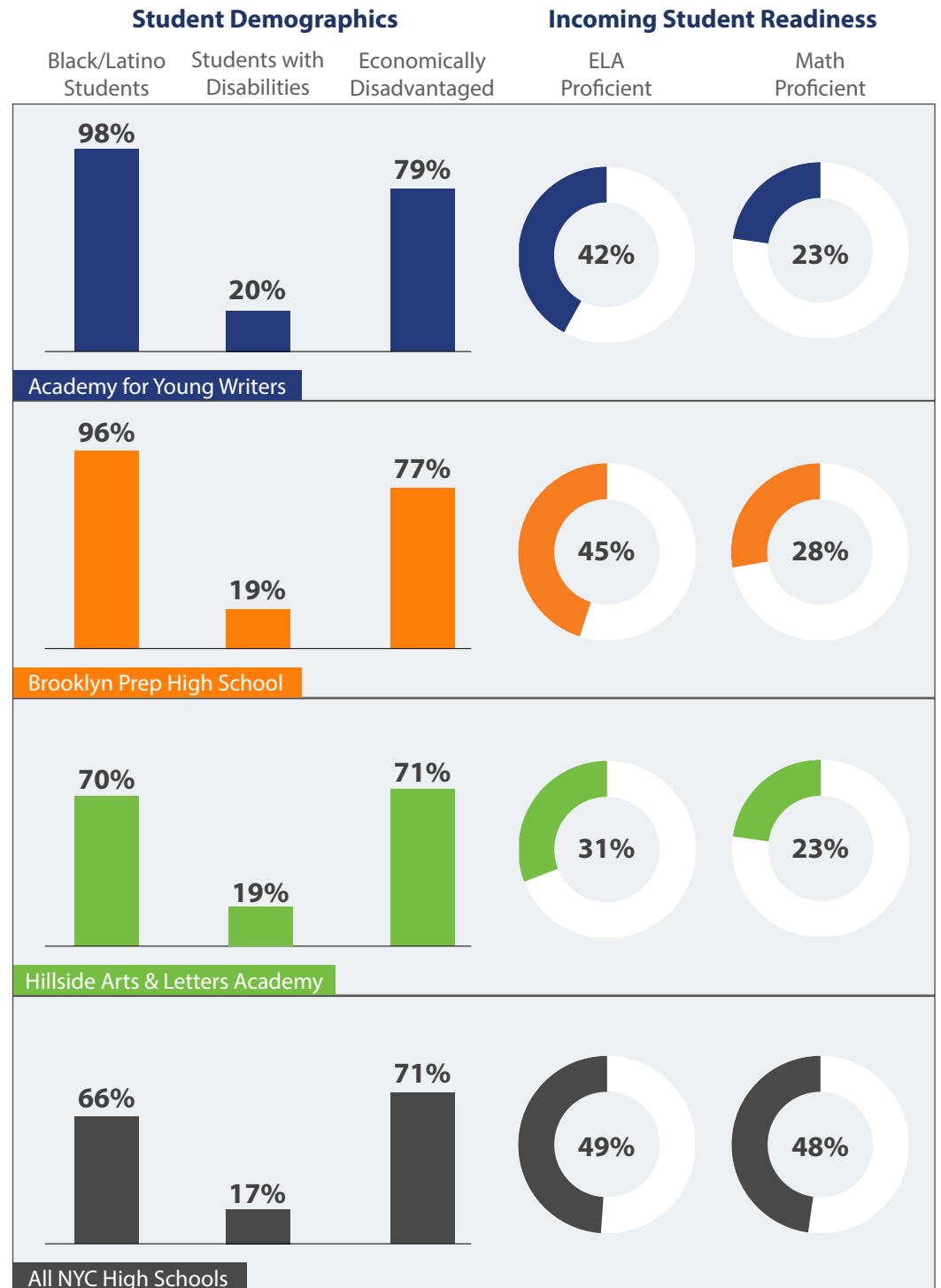
Setting High Expectations for All Students

School Profile

The Academy for Young Writers (AYW), Brooklyn Preparatory High School (BKP), and Hillside Arts and Letters Academy (HALA) are three of New York City’s (NYC) small public high schools founded in partnership with the Institute for Student Achievement over the past 15 years.<sup>1</sup> Serving a majority of students from high-need and underserved backgrounds, these schools have a track record of students graduating within 4 years at rates surpassing the citywide average.

## Serving High Need and Underserved Students

AYW, BKP, and HALA, like most ISA partner schools, serve high-need and historically underserved students. Compared to other NYC public high schools, these three schools serve a larger portion of Black and Latino students, students with disabilities, and students from households facing economic hardship. In addition, over half of incoming 9th graders at these schools are below grade level proficiency in English language arts (ELA) and approximately three quarters are below grade level proficiency in math.



## School Quality Review: The Evidence and Impact of Setting High Expectations

“*School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to the entire staff. Teacher teams and staff establish a culture for learning that systematically communicates a set of high expectations to all students and provides clear focused feedback and guidance supports. Effective communication leads to a culture of mutual accountability where all students, including high-need sub-groups, are taking ownership of their learning to prepare for the next level.*

—Academy for Young Writers  
Quality Review Report 2017-18

*High expectations are consistently communicated by school leaders to all teachers and students concomitant to high expectations being communicated from teachers to students. A positive school tone and climate has resulted due to the consistent communication of expectations to all stakeholders.... The culture, tone, and climate of the school gives evidence to the realization of the goal of each child moving from “I have to go to school” to “I am a college-bound learner.”*

—Brooklyn Preparatory High School  
Quality Review Report 2014-15

*High expectations for all students are maintained and supported through clear, focused and effective feedback and advisory supports so that students are better prepared for college and careers.... The school provides and promotes opportunities for students to exhibit ownership of their educational experiences and to demonstrate preparedness for high school graduation, college, and beyond.* ”

—Hillside Arts and Letters Academy  
Quality Review Report 2016-17

## Setting High Expectations for All Students

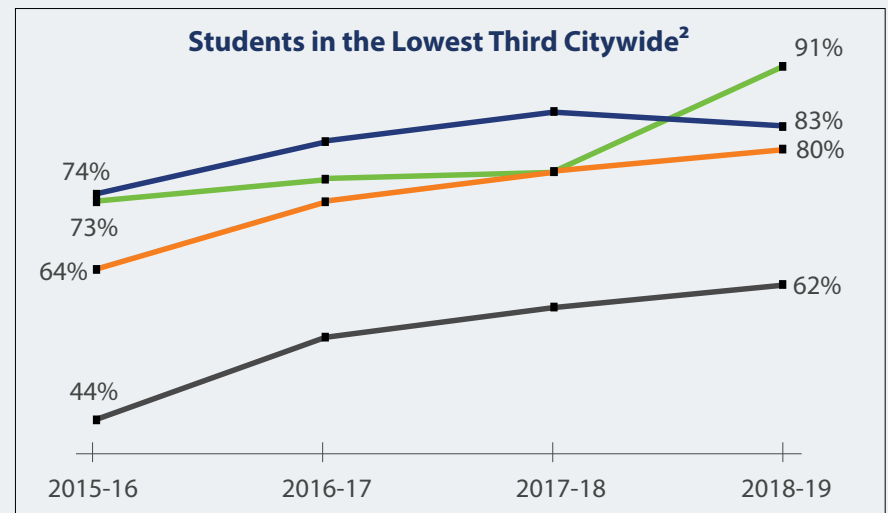
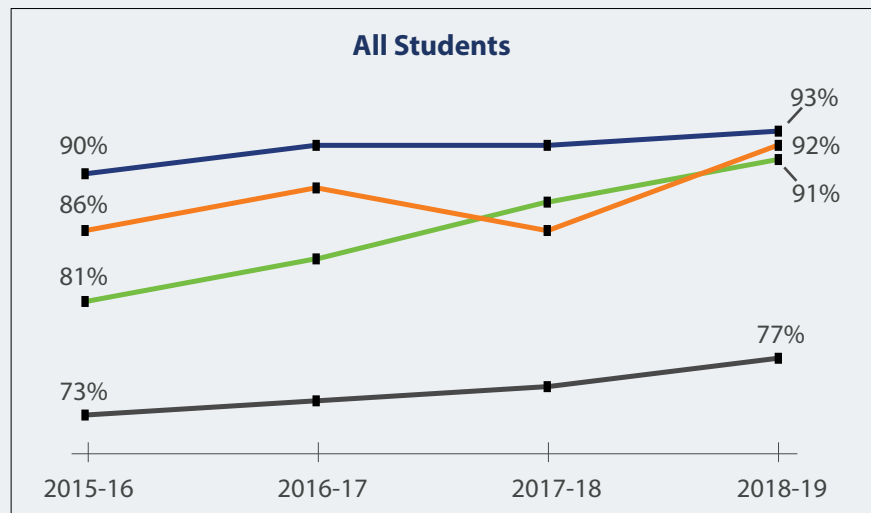
AYW, BKP, and HALA are recognized and celebrated for creating school cultures in which high academic expectations are consistently and continually communicated to all students and staff, with targeted supports provided to achieve those expectations. In recent reports on school quality from the NYC Department of Education, all three schools received a rating of “Well Developed” for their school culture with reviewers explicitly noting the impact of setting, communicating, and supporting high expectations for students:



# More Students Are Graduating on Time

Trends in on-time graduation rates at AYW, BKP, and HALA show students at these schools having increased success graduating within 4 years. From 2016 to 2019, rates of on-time graduation increased by 2 percentage points at BKP, six points at AYW, and 10 points at HALA (compared to a four point increase citywide). Further, all three schools have achieved success graduating increasingly larger portions of students on time who entered high school with the greatest academic need (i.e., in the lowest third citywide with respect to ELA, math, and other criteria<sup>ii</sup>). From 2016 to 2019, these schools saw increases from nine (BKP) to 18 (HALA) percentage points in students entering in the lowest third who graduated in 4 years.

### Four-Year Graduation Rates: 2016-19



Brooklyn Prep

Academy for Young Writers

Hillside Arts & Letters

New York City

## References

### 2018-19 School Quality Guide—Online Edition

Academy for Young Writers

[https://tools.nycenet.edu/guide/2019/#dbn=19K404&report\\_type=HS](https://tools.nycenet.edu/guide/2019/#dbn=19K404&report_type=HS)

Brooklyn Preparatory High School

[https://tools.nycenet.edu/guide/2019/#dbn=14K488&report\\_type=HS](https://tools.nycenet.edu/guide/2019/#dbn=14K488&report_type=HS)

Hillside Arts and Letters Academy

[https://tools.nycenet.edu/guide/2019/#dbn=28Q325&report\\_type=HS](https://tools.nycenet.edu/guide/2019/#dbn=28Q325&report_type=HS)

### Quality Review Reports

Academy for Young Writers

[https://www.nycenet.edu/OA/SchoolReports/2017-18/Quality\\_Review\\_2018\\_K404.pdf](https://www.nycenet.edu/OA/SchoolReports/2017-18/Quality_Review_2018_K404.pdf)

Brooklyn Preparatory High School

[https://www.nycenet.edu/OA/SchoolReports/2014-15/Quality\\_Review\\_2015\\_K488.pdf](https://www.nycenet.edu/OA/SchoolReports/2014-15/Quality_Review_2015_K488.pdf)

Hillside Arts and Letters Academy

[https://www.nycenet.edu/OA/SchoolReports/2016-17/Quality\\_Review\\_2017\\_Q325.pdf](https://www.nycenet.edu/OA/SchoolReports/2016-17/Quality_Review_2017_Q325.pdf)

## Endnotes

- i In 2003, ISA was among the organizations selected by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to serve as a partner in support of the creation of small high schools to replace larger, failing schools.
- ii For detail on how NYC calculates student membership in the lowest third category, please see the city's School Quality Reports Educator Guide (pp. 4-5), cited here.

## Contact ISA

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