

Coffee & Conversation

with Superintendent of Schools **Dr. Frank Santora**

held at Kennedy Elementary School • October 29, 2025



Demystifying School Rankings and Ratings



Understanding the systems behind school performance metrics

Source: New Jersey School Boards Association
(Schwarz & Ross, 2024)

Introduction

“What gets measured gets managed”



— but *not all measures reflect true quality.*



Rankings

*compare schools
numerically*

(1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc.)

vs

Ratings

*assign scores on a
fixed scale*

(e.g., 1-10 or 1-5 stars)

...Both simplify complex educational realities...

Introduction

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Rankings & Ratings affect:

Hiring & Retention

Real Estate Values

Property Taxes

Community Perception

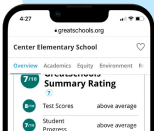
Commonly Referenced Websites



GreatSchools

<greatschools.org>

- **Factors considered:**
 - Student Progress
 - College Readiness
 - Equity
 - Test Scores
- **Strengths:**
Transparency in data
- **Limitations:** User bias and perception



U.S. News & World Report

<usnews.com>

- **Factors & weighting:**
 - [30%] College Readiness
 - [20%] State Test Proficiency
 - [20%] State Test Performance
 - [10%] College Curriculum Breadth
 - [10%] Underserved Performance
 - [10%] Graduation Rate
- **Focused on:**
 - High schools
 - Emphasizes college pathways



Niche

<Niche.com>

- **Combines quantitative & qualitative data, i.e.:**
 - Academics
 - Diversity
 - Teacher quality
 - Community surveys
- **Limitations:**
 - Adds human insight but introduces bias
 - Fixed weights may not reflect evolving education values.



School Digger

<SchoolDigger.com>

- **Factors considered:**
Uses only State Test Performance (Average Standard Score)
- **Strengths:** Clear longitudinal data
- **Limitations:** Ignores non-test dimensions of school quality





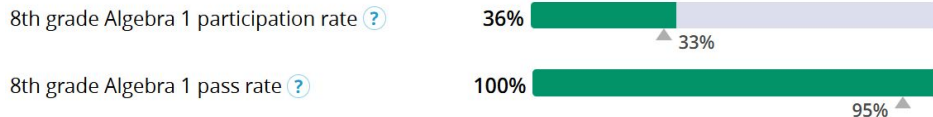
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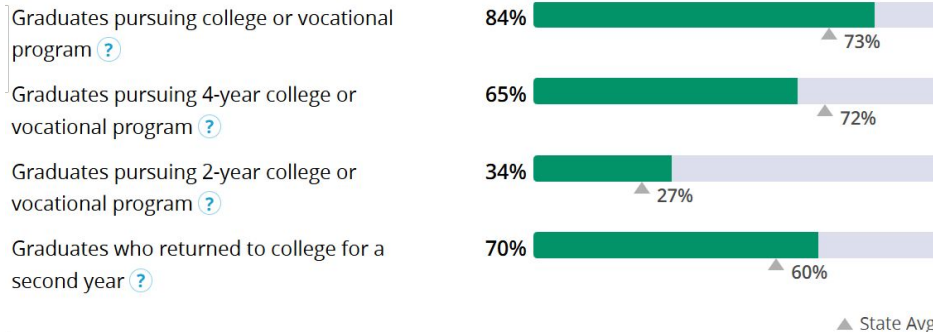
Advanced Courses ?

Rigorous courses can help students prepare for and get into college, including coursework in STEM subjects. [Find out more.](#)



Test scores	College Prep	College Success
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Are graduates from this district prepared to succeed in college? This section looks at important signs of college readiness.



STUDENT LIFE

Teachers & Staff

Students per teacher	11:1
	State Avg. 11:1
Students per counselor	257:1
	State Avg. 326:1

Leave a review

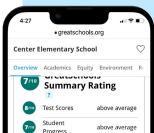
Please review this school:



Do you have any thoughts to share?

We love the teachers at this school! ❤️

Highly recommend!





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We reviewed more than 24,000 U.S. public high schools; 411 New Jersey schools made our rankings.

Overview of Roxbury High School

Roxbury High School is ranked 195th within New Jersey. Students have the opportunity to take Advanced Placement® coursework and exams. The AP® participation rate at Roxbury High School is 27%. The total minority enrollment is 39%, and 20% of students are economically disadvantaged. Roxbury High School is the only high school in the [Roxbury Township School District](#).

Roxbury High School 2025-2026 Rankings

Roxbury High School is ranked #5,721 in the [National Rankings](#). Schools are ranked on their performance on state-required tests, graduation and how well they prepare students for college. Read more about [how we rank the Best High Schools](#).

All Rankings

- 📍 #5,721 in National Rankings
- 📍 #195 in New Jersey High Schools
- 📍 #482 in New York, NY Metro Area High Schools

SCORECARD		68.04
Took at Least One AP® Exam		27%
Passed at Least One AP® Exam		22%
Mathematics Proficiency		49%
Reading Proficiency		54%
Science Proficiency		35%
Graduation Rate		93%



Roxbury Township School District

B+ Overall Grade • PK, K-12 • 📍 Succasunna, NJ • ★★★★★☆ 65

#13 in Best School Districts in Morris County

SAT and ACT Test Scores

Average SAT [?]

1210

439 responses

Average ACT [?]

27

77 responses



Most Diverse School Districts in Morris County

#9 of 32



Best School Districts for Athletes in Morris County

#11 of 18



Best School Districts in Morris County

#13 of 18



Best Places to Teach in Morris County

#18 of 33



Districts with the Best Teachers in Morris County

#23 of 32



Overall Niche Grade

- B+** Academics
- A-** Teachers
- A-** Clubs & Activities
- A-** Sports
- C** Resources & Facilities
- B** Diversity
- A-** College Prep
- B+** Administration
- B** Food

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District Detail

▶ 42 N. Hillside Avenue
Succasunna, NJ 07876-1443

☎ (973) 584-6099

SchoolDigger Rank:
357th of 611 New Jersey districts

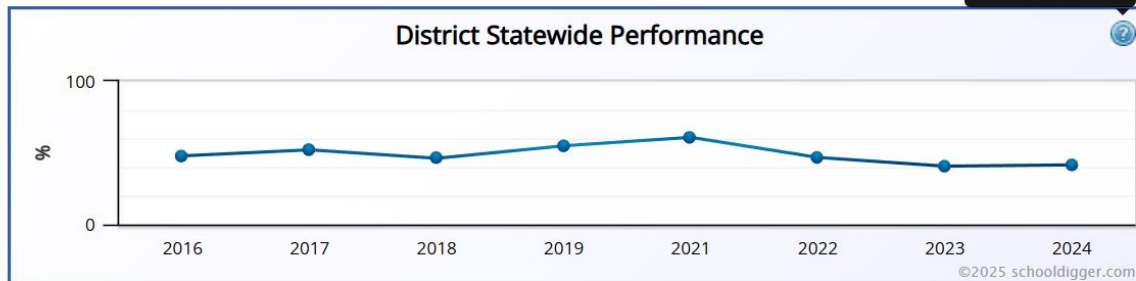


Grades served: PK, KG-12
Students: 3,347

Primary Schools: 4
Middle Schools: 2
High Schools: 1
Alternative Schools: 0

This graph shows how well Roxbury Township District is performing compared to other districts in New Jersey. 100% is the best performing district in the state, 0% is the worst.

See the [2024 New Jersey District rankings!](#)



Key Takeaways

1 Third-party influences

Rankings serve both informational and commercial goals

2 Variability

Different methods = inconsistent outcomes

3 Winners and losers

Rankings shape perceptions - sometimes unfairly

4 Data lag

Information may be years old

5 Community engagement

Local input is critical to true quality assessment



Key Takeaways

1 Third-party influences

2 Variability

3 Winners and losers

4 Data lag

5 Community engagement

What District Leaders Should Do~

- Provide transparency on performance data
- Help communities interpret rankings thoughtfully
- Focus on mission-driven goals, not just metrics
- Discuss data quality and potential biases openly





What are we doing to address our **rankings & ratings**?



Academic Achievement

*Embracing Teacher Voice

- **MTSS**
 - LinkIT roll out
 - DIBELS/Aimsweb
 - WIN
 - Redesign of ISL K-6
 - Elementary ELA Pilot

 - Incorporation of increased supplemental materials
- **Implementation of ISL at EMS**
- **Seal of Biliteracy**

Program and/or Course Offerings

- **Maximization of Master Schedule**
- **RHS Schedule Redesign for 26-27**
 - Increased instructional time
 - Creation of intervention block
- **AP Course Offerings**
- **Comparison of benefits of Dual Enrollment**
- **Instant Decision Day (1st Ever) scheduled for early December**
- **Change to Scoir for College and Career Planning**
- **Changes to course sequence 7-12**
 - Leveled courses for Math 7

Parent Outreach

- **Monthly Superintendent Coffees**
- **Weekly/Monthly Newsletters**
- **Math/ELA information sessions**
- **Parent Education Sessions**
 - Elementary Principals present on NJSLA
 - Pathways Events at RHS

