

# Memo to the Harborview Site Council:

At our last Site Council meeting we wanted to understand two matters with better clarity. We wanted to understand how the demographics of the adjacently located Montessori elementary school differed from Harborview; and how to better interpret the recent Peaks standardized test. The analysis below combines both of these objectives into several graphs.

## Ethnic Diversity

The first element we wanted to understand is the difference in diversity between the two grade schools. Together, Harborview and Montessori make up one-quarter of the elementary population in Juneau and are located in connecting buildings, but in many ways they could not be more different. Interestingly enough after a review of all Juneau’s schools, Harborview is the **most** ethnically diverse elementary school in Juneau, while Montessori is the **least** diverse in the capital city. Approximately half of all elementary kids in Juneau are caucasian. At Harborview, just over one-third of the student body identifies as caucasian (35%), while at Montessori nearly twice that percentage (69%) is white.

Factor	All Juneau	Harborview	Montessori
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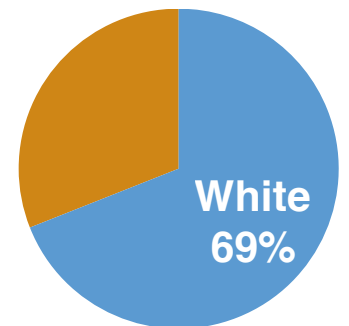
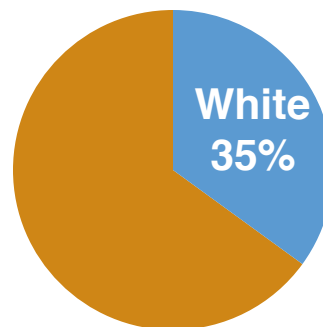
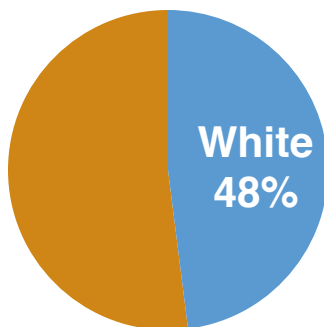
**Total Students**

2,191

360

178

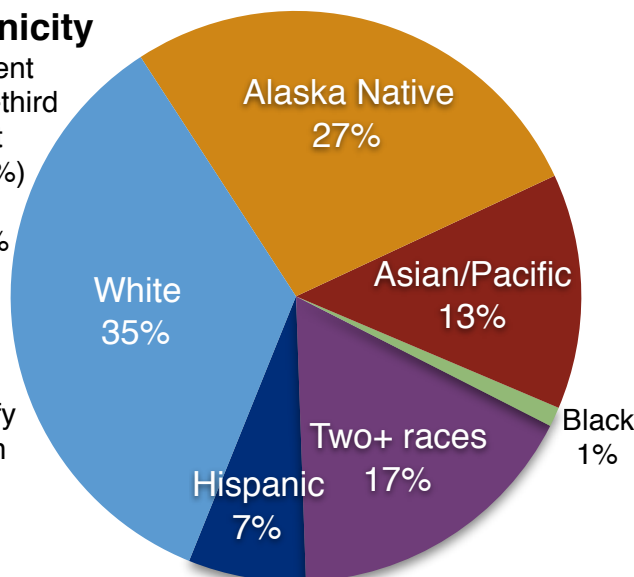
**Ethnic Diversity: Percent Caucasian**



Harborview is the **most** ethnically diverse elementary school in Juneau, while Montessori is the **least** diverse.

## Harborview Ethnicity

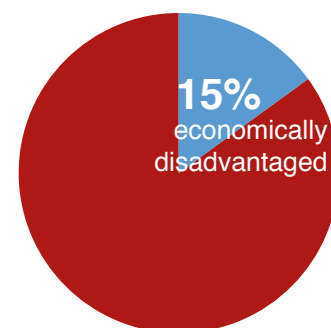
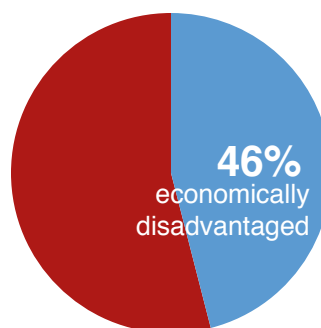
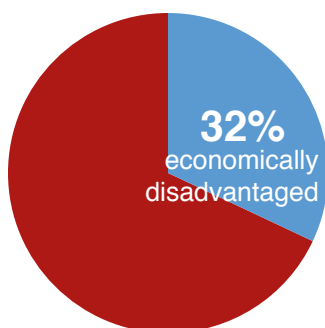
The Harborview student body is just over one-third (35%) caucasian; just over one-quarter (27%) Alaska Native or American Indian; 13% Asian, Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander; 7% Hispanic; and 1% African American. An additional 17% identify as being of more than one ethnicity.



## Economic Diversity

Harborview is also economically diverse with **the highest percentage** of “economically disadvantaged” students among elementary schools in Juneau. Of those 3rd, 4th, and 5th, graders who took the Peaks test, 46% were identified as being “economically disadvantaged” (The definition of this is long and formulaic, but for purposes of this memo think of a family of four with a total household income of under \$55,000.) Across all elementary schools, just under a third (32%) of students were identified as economically disadvantaged. Once again, the contrast between Harborview and Montessori is dramatic, as **Montessori has the smallest percentage of economically disadvantaged students** in the district, at just 15% of their student body (as reported by Peaks) as coming from a household with an economic disadvantage.

Factor	All Juneau	Harborview	Montessori
Diversity: Economically Disadvantaged (based on 3-5th Peaks data)	32% economically disadvantaged	46% economically disadvantaged	15% economically disadvantaged



Harborview has the **highest** percentage of economically disadvantaged students among Juneau elementary schools in Juneau, while Montessori has the **lowest**.

## Comparative Test Scores

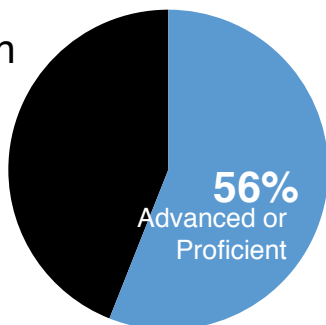
We also wanted to understand the new Peaks test score results better. There is some debate as to how effective the test actually is in measuring Advanced/Proficient students by subject area. Regardless, the fact that the test was administered to all students means that it is a fantastic way to compare schools to one-another. However, because the demographics of schools can have such a variety, the most effective “apples to apples” method of comparing test score across school is measuring the scores for students who are **not** economically disadvantaged.

When this methodology is applied, Harborview 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students scored nearly exactly the same as their peers across the district in Language Arts (55% Advanced/Proficient versus 56% Juneau-wide); and significantly better in math. Districtwide 54% of students were rated as Advanced/Proficient, while at Harborview that percentage leapt to 64%.

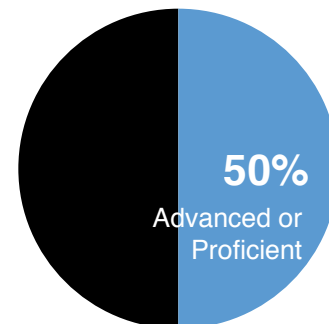
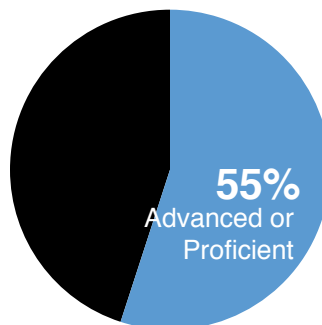
Interesting enough, Montessori’s students with no economic disadvantage scored more poorly on the test than either the district as a whole, or Harborview. Just a third of Montessori students were rated as Advanced/Proficient in math, a two-to-one factor lower than Harborview. Half of Montessori’s students scored advanced or proficient on the Language Arts element of the test (See following page.)

Factor	All Juneau	Harborview	Montessori
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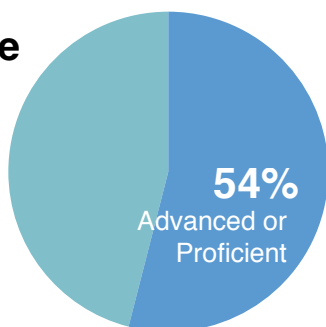
**Peaks Language Arts Score** for non Economically Disadvantaged students (based on 3-5th Peaks data)



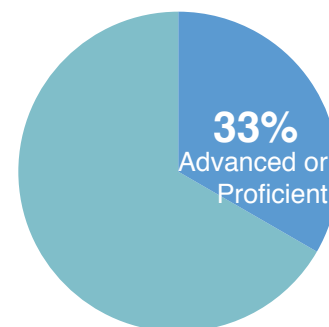
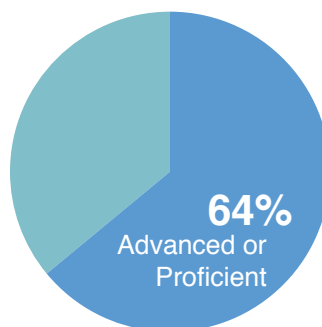
**Language Arts**



**Peaks Math Score** for non Economically Disadvantaged students (based on 3-5th Peaks data)



**Math**



Harborview has the **second highest** math scores among non-economically disadvantaged students in Juneau, while Montessori has the **lowest**.

**Harborview is a Success Story**

There are two main take-aways from this analysis:

1. **The first is a question.** Why are there two elementary schools adjacent to each other in downtown Juneau that are so dramatically different in terms of ethnic and economic diversity? According to the data, these schools are significantly divided. It doesn't make sense that the **least** and **most** diverse elementary schools in Juneau are colocated together on the Harborview/Marie Drake campus and even share a playground. Is there a way to address this contrast? Should we? Should we share this information with a wider audience?
2. **What this analysis appears to show is that Harborview is an extremely attractive place to send your kids to school.** Harborview is Juneau's most diverse elementary school and performs well relative to other schools in the district, especially in math (when using a valid cohort comparison). This is counter to many's stereotypes about diverse schools and is something to be proud of and celebrate. Parents can choose Harborview for their children and get the best of both worlds: A culturally rich experience with children from all walks of life getting a chance to interact and engage, and an institution that generates among the highest math scores in Juneau.