

If school admission committees use alphabetically sorted lists of applicants in their evaluations, one's position in the alphabet according to last name initial may be important in determining access to selective schools. Jurajda and München (2010) provide evidence consistent with this hypothesis based on graduation exams taken in grade 13 in the Czech Republic: 'Z' students in selective schools had higher exam scores than 'A' students. In this paper, we use the TIMSS&PIRLS test scores of 4th graders and the PISA test scores of 8th and 9th graders in the Czech Republic to provide evidence on how the alphabetical sorting outcome uncovered in Jurajda and München (2010) arises during early tracking into selective schools. Using the PISA – data, we also provide corresponding evidence for Denmark, where sorting into selective schools happens in higher grades.