Objective
To compare school outcomes of students in religious schools versus students in public schools using population data from the Netherlands

Background
Religious schools enjoy a high academic reputation

However, religious minority schools seen as problematic

Literature
- Meta-analysis of over 90 studies (Jeynes, 2012)
  - Religious school advantage of about 0.15 SD in primary education and 0.17 SD in secondary education
  - However, most studies investigated only Catholic schools in the US, Australia or UK where religious schools are privately funded and include mostly high-SES students
- Studies using treatment effect bounds to separate the effect of religious schooling from private schooling: religious school advantage explained by selection effects (Altonji et al., 2005; Elder & Jepsen, 2014; Gibbons & Silva, 2011; Ghiieb & Giuntella, 2017; Ngiem et al. 2015)
  - However, exclusively Catholic primary schools

Contribution
- Administrative population data (1999-2007 cohorts) from the Netherlands where state has been funding religious schools since 1917: same funding irrespective of religion
- Catholic, Mainstream Protestant, Orthodox Protestant (e.g., Evangelical, Baptist), Islamic, Jewish, and Hindu schools
- We study both primary (high-stakes standardized test) and secondary education (diploma attainment, tertiary education enrolment)

Methods
Oster (2019) bounds
- Comparing students in vs public schools if the selection on unobserved characteristics is just as large as the selection on observed characteristics

Results

Conclusion
- Children in all but Jewish schools perform better on the standardized test than children in public schools
- The benefits of religious schooling were largest for children in Islamic and Hindu schools
- In the longer run, the influence of religious schooling faded out