

April 16,
2015

Breaking the Glass Ceiling of Achievement for Low-Income Students and Students of Color

National Association of Black
Journalists;
Inaugural Institute on Education

Charlotte, NC



The Education Trust

Panelists

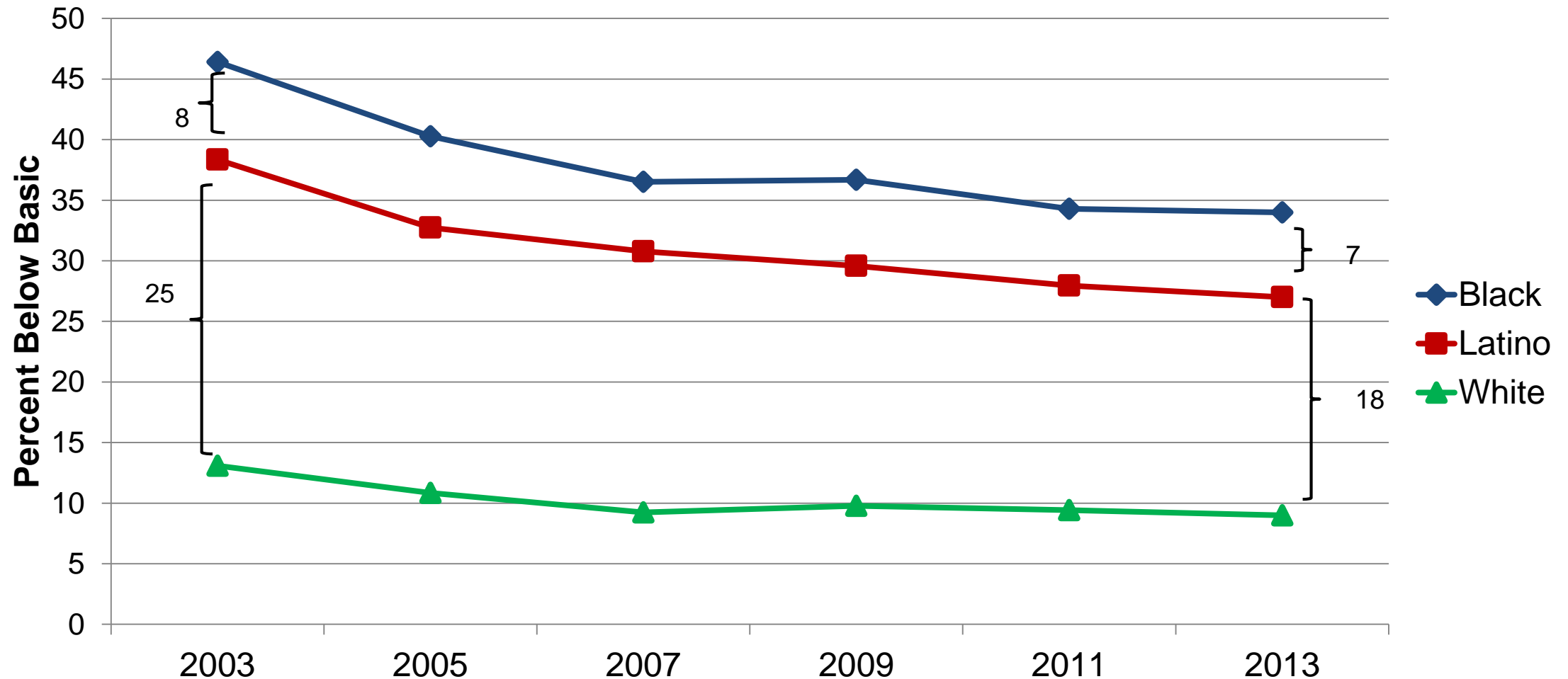
- Christina Theokas, Director of Research, The Education Trust
- Nicole Young, Associate Director of Social Justice, The College Board
- John Capozzi, Principal, Elmont Memorial High School
- Harold Ekeh, Student, Elmont Memorial High School

Why high achievers?

- The achievement gaps exist at all levels of achievement- below basic to advanced. A bring-the-bottom-up strategy won't close equity and readiness gaps.
- Not all student will perform at the advanced level, but equity at the highest levels must be a priority, and represents a feasible goal.

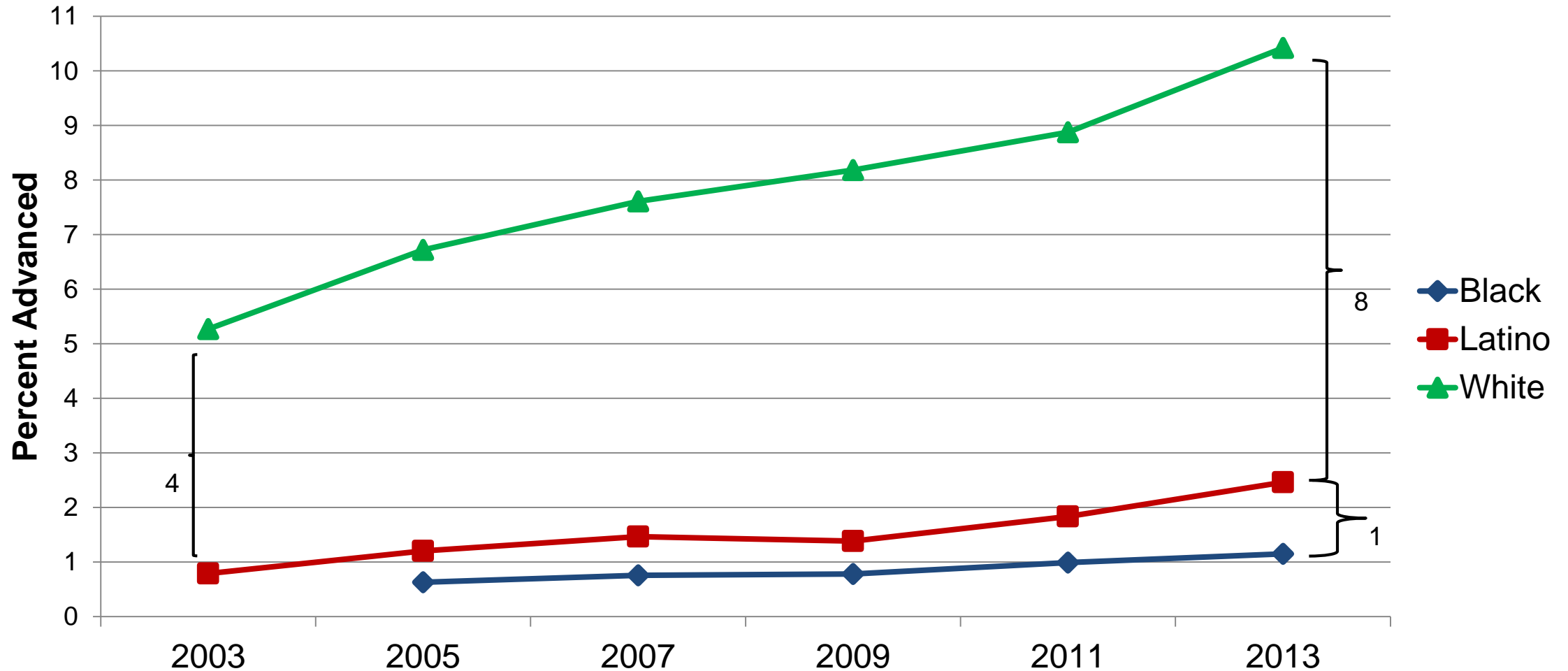
Progress at the low end.

Percent Below Basic, 4th Grade Math, National Public, by Race



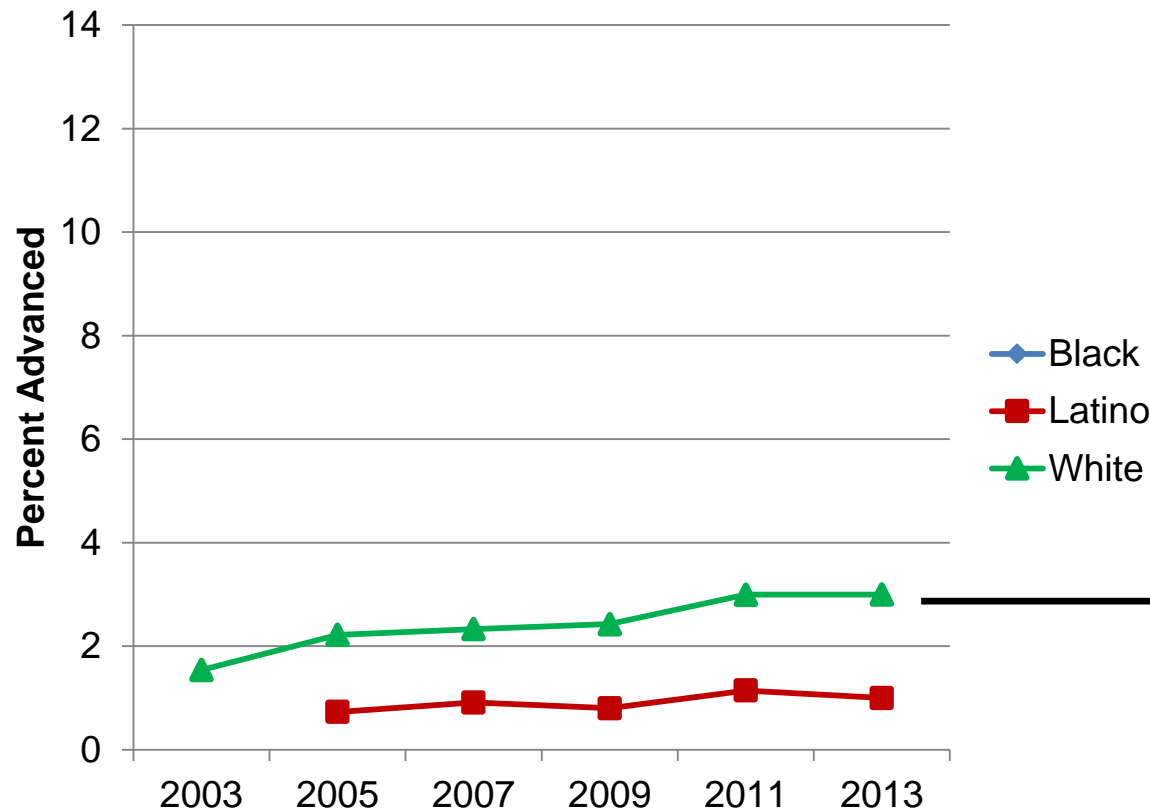
But at the high end, gaps have grown.

Percent Advanced, 4th Grade Math, National Public, by Race

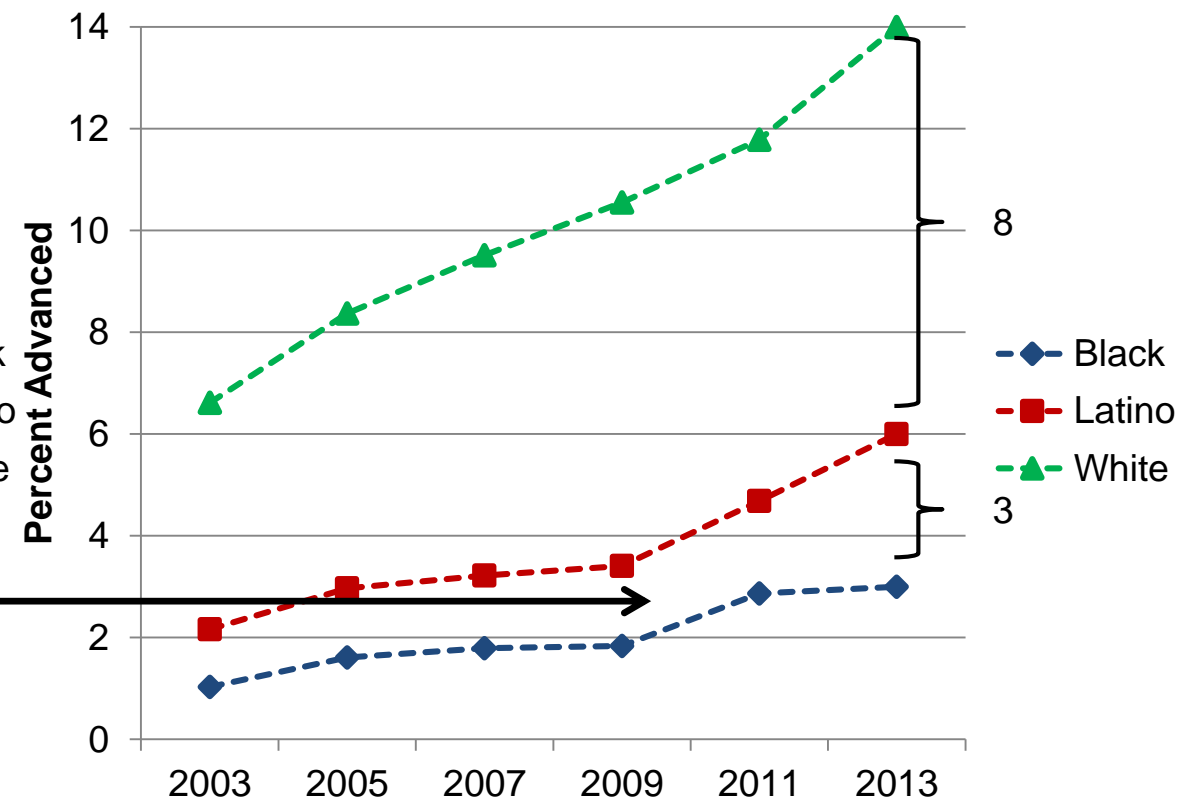


Widening race gaps at the advanced level have been pronounced among higher-income students.

Percent Advanced, 4th Grade Math, National Public, by Race, Low-income



Percent Advanced, 4th Grade Math, National Public, by Race, FRL Ineligible



By high school, few students even reach advanced levels of achievement.

NAEP Reading (2013)

- White students: 7%
- Hispanic students: 2%
- Black students: 1%

- Higher income students: 7%
- Low-income students: 2%

NAEP Math (2013)

- White students: 3%
- Hispanic students: 1%
- Black students: 0%

- Higher income students: 4%
- Low-income students: 0%

AP/IB course-taking is one strategy to produce high level achievement.

- AP/IB programs offer rigorous, college aligned courses to high school students across a variety of subjects.
 - An externally graded exam helps maintain high standards.
- Significant program expansion has occurred in the last decade to reach under served students.
 - Investment by federal, state governments, as well as the private sector to expand opportunity.

So, what schools and students are reached with these programs?

Most students attend a school that offers AP

Access differs by school type

- **71% of all schools**
- 44% of small schools
- 87% of medium schools
- 99% of large schools

- 59% of rural schools
- 86% of suburban schools
- 74% of urban schools

- 84% of Low poverty schools
- 70% of Mid-poverty schools
- 61% of HP schools

Most students are reached equitably.

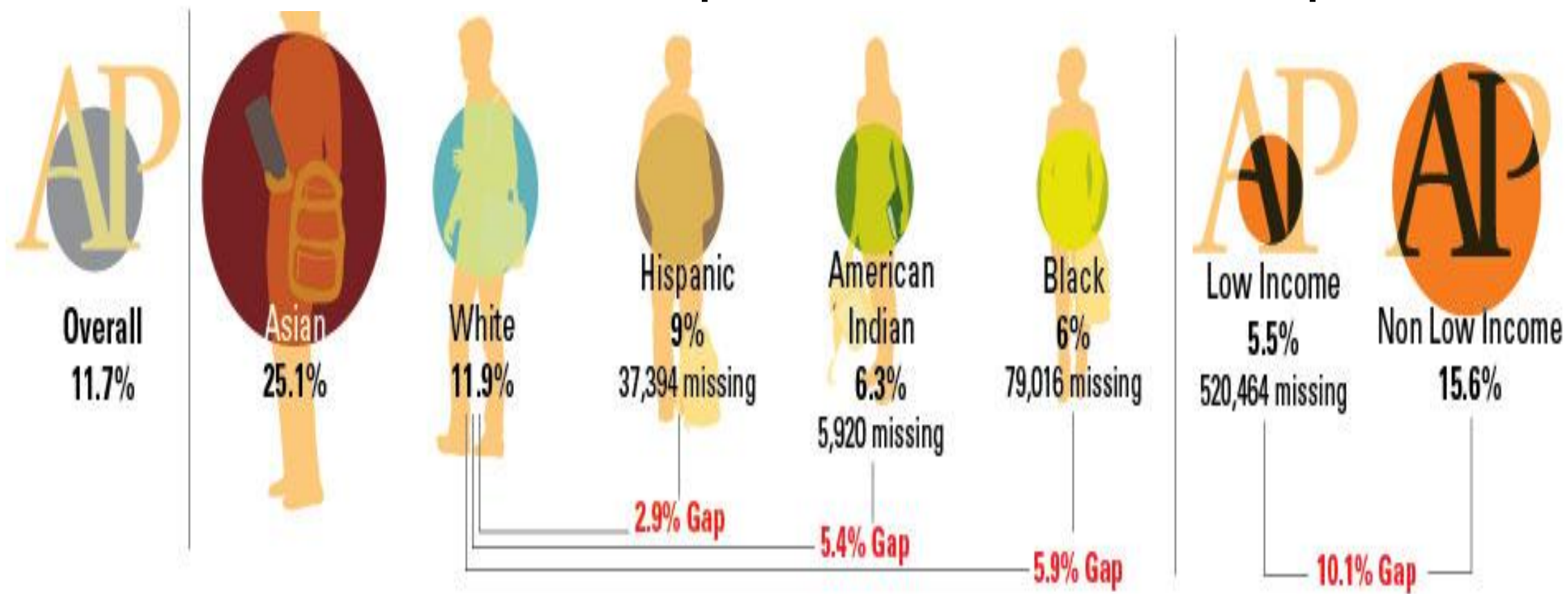
- **91% of ALL students**

- 97% of Asian students
- 91% of White students
- 89% of Black students
- 91% of Hispanic students
- 76% of American Indian students

- 91% of FRL students
- 93% of non-FRL students

Which students are enrolling in these rigorous classes?

National Participation Rates and Gaps

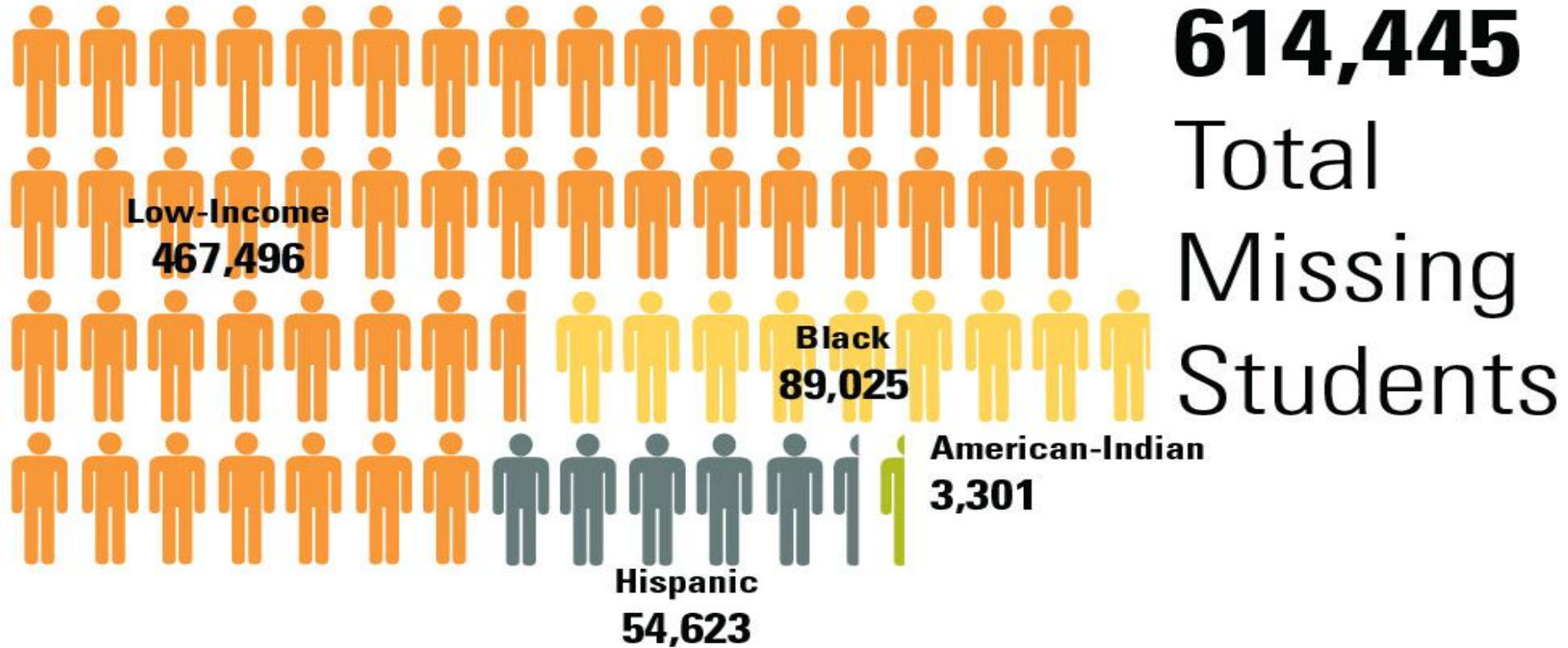


Participation in the AP program tends to be a small part of the high school student body in a given year; slightly more than 1 in 10 students participates. Clearly, some subgroups are more likely to participate

School by School: What is the cost of inequitable participation patterns?



= 10,000 Students



Participation rates vary between schools and within schools. If students participated at equal rates within their schools another 600,000 students would benefit from AP courses. If within school gaps were closed, the national missing student Hispanic and Black gap would close completely and the Low-Income missing student gap would nearly close (90%).

The College Board

Nicole Young, Associate Director, Social
Justice



What is All In?

- The College Board's multi-year, multi-faceted, coordinated campaign to change public understanding, institutional practices, student behaviors, and public policy so that more students with AP Potential are taking advantage of the opportunities they've earned.

What is AP Potential?

- AP Potential is a free, Web-based tool that helps you increase access to AP by using PSAT/NMSQT® score data to identify students with the potential to succeed in AP.
- Research shows that PSAT/NMSQT® scores predict performance on specific AP Exams with much stronger correlations than other traditionally used methods.



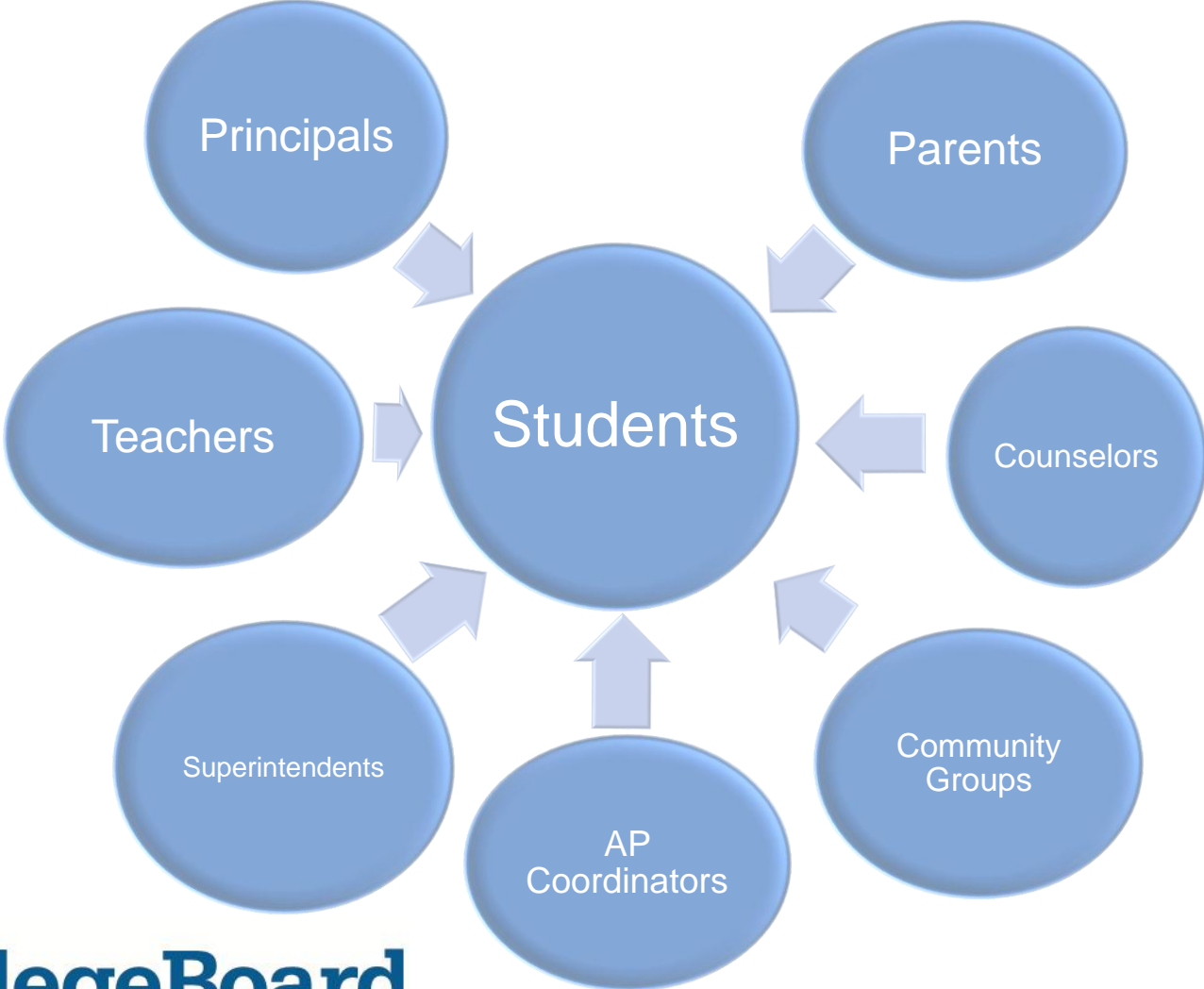
Advancing Equity through AP Potential

- More students of color with AP potential attend schools in which AP classes are offered:

**2014 cohort of students with AP potential
who took a matched AP exam**

	2014 Cohort		
	African American Students	Latino Students	Native American Students
Took	20,203	42,714	2,099
Didn't take	17,737	31,362	2,086
With courses	13,468	23,779	1,475
Without courses	4,269	7,583	611
Total	37,940	74,076	4,185

All In Strategy



Outreach in Year 1 and Year 2

- **Snail Mail Campaign**

- Sent **70,000** letters to African American and Latino parents and received over **1000** responses already in Year 2

- **Email Campaign**

- Mobilized star power (Richard Sherman and Shonda Rhimes)
- Emailed over **38,000** students with AP Potential
- Emailed over **40,000** education professionals

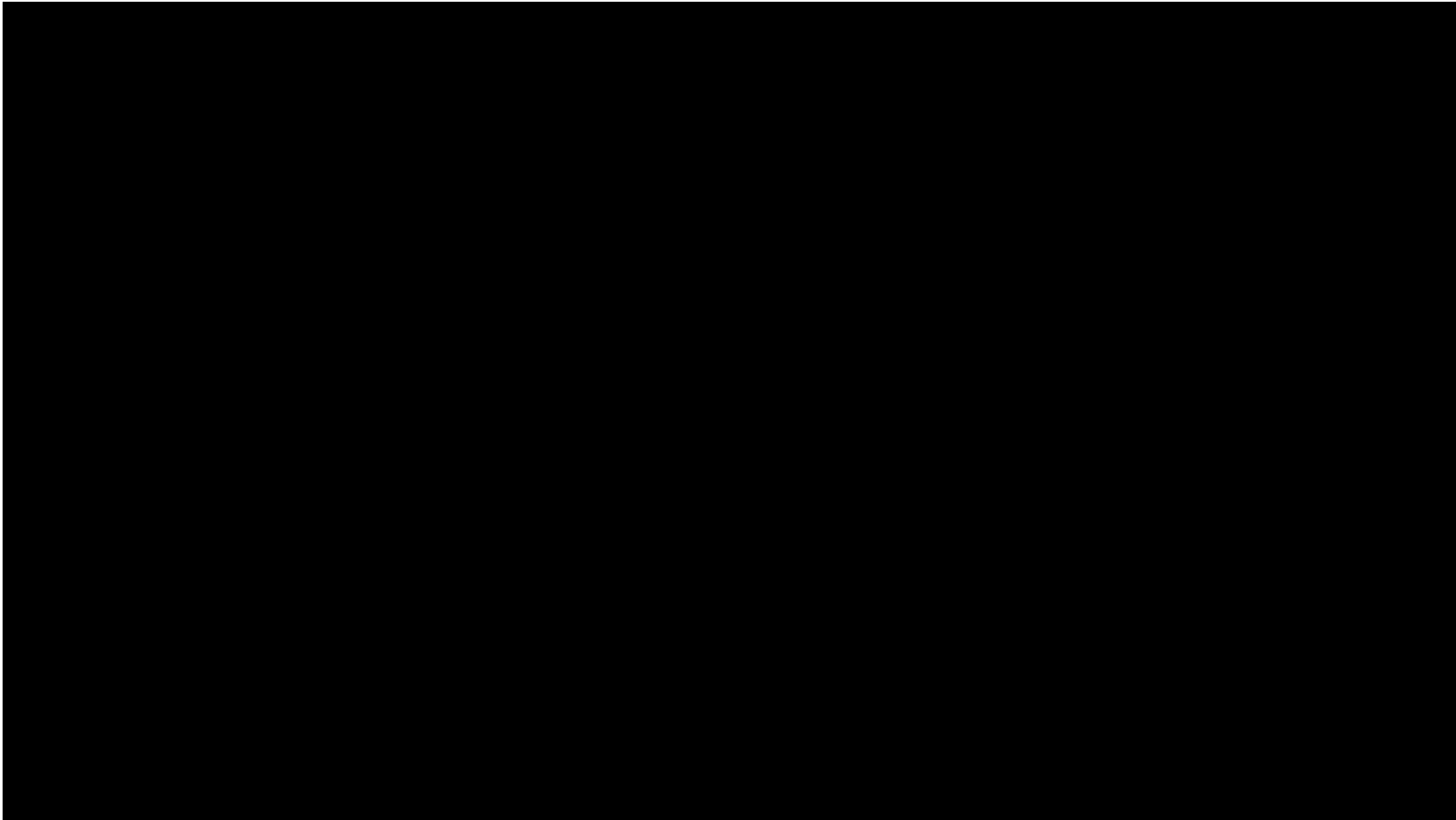
- **Social Media Campaign**

- **7,000** new visits to the AP Student site in Year 1
- Almost **1000** new followers of the AP for Students Twitter handle



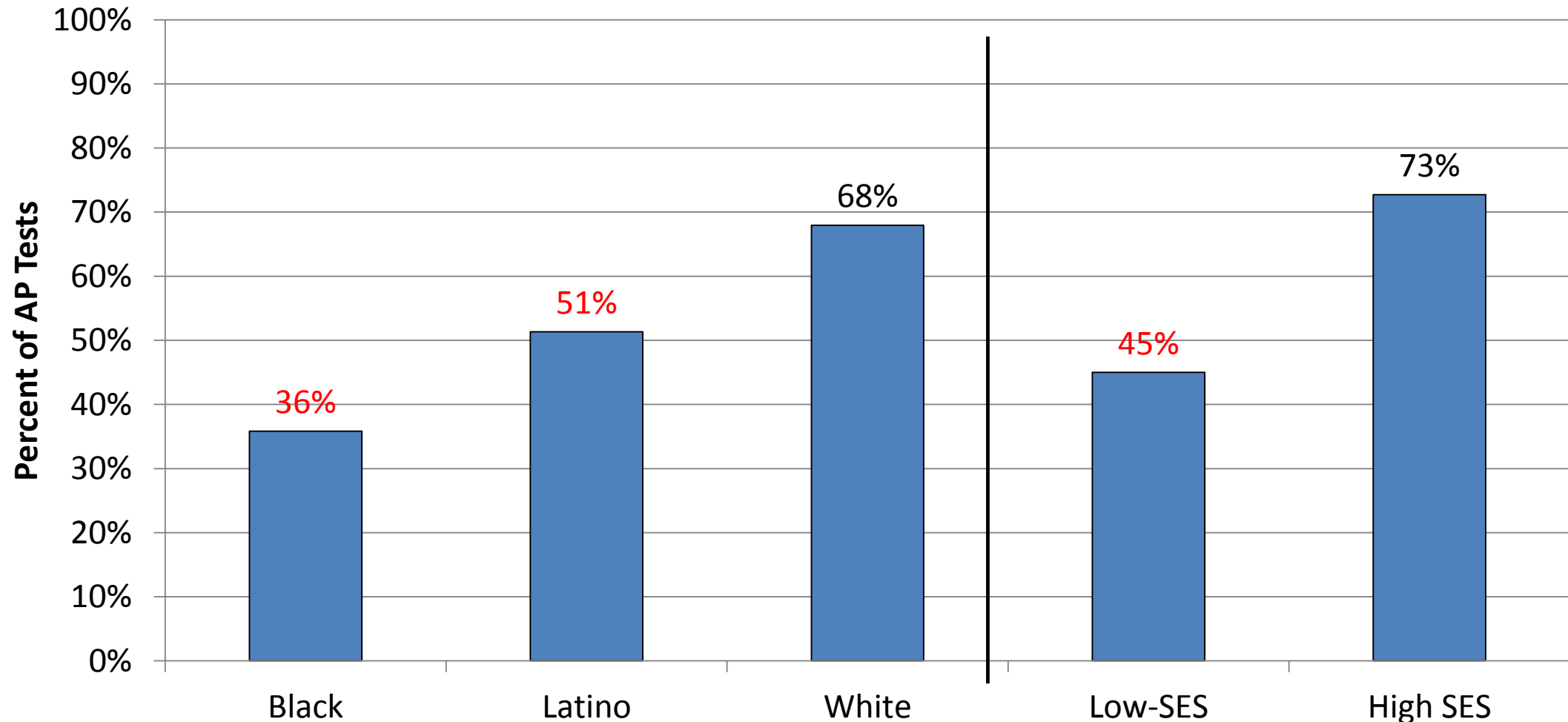
But it's not just about access

I, Too, Am B-CC



Differential outcomes for similarly prepared students

Percent of AP Tests that Receive a Score of 3 or Higher, Taken by High-Achieving Students Only, by Race and SES



Notes: Educational Longitudinal Study (2002), Education Trust Analysis. Initially high-achieving students identified in 10th grade by scoring in the top quartile on high-quality reading and math assessment. AP outcomes examined during students' senior year.

And, it is not just AP, just focusing on students of color and low-income students who enter high school as high-achievers, as the students progress through high school, they fall off on all postsecondary readiness indicators making them less competitive for college.

High-achieving students have diverse experiences in school.

ON COURSES

"I took a lot of AP courses, but even my regular courses were rigorous."

"My calculus wasn't even calculus."

"Crossword Puzzles made up 60% of our grade, and exams on made up 10."

"My school didn't really tell us what we needed to do in order to apply to college, so a lot of students felt overwhelmed."

"(The school) gave us a college counselor who we start working with in 11th grade...They make it a requirement that we finish our applications in November, so that we only have to worry about scholarships and financial aid for the rest of the year."

ON Support for Postsecondary

What lies beneath these numbers?

- School culture and expectations
- School practices and policies
- Course quality
- Academic support and mentors
- Guidance and support for postsecondary

**Some schools are
disrupting the high-end
gap.**

Elmont Memorial High School, New York State

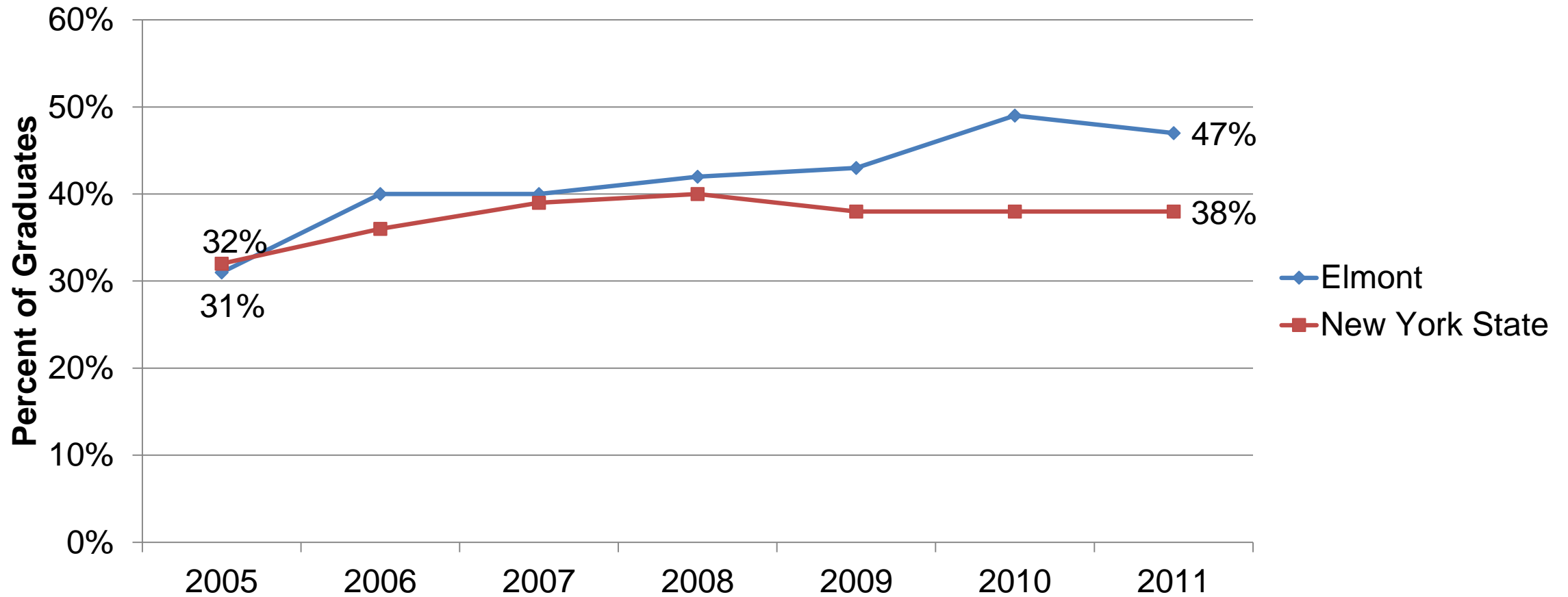
- 1,907 students, Grades 7-12:
 - 78% black
 - 12% Hispanic
 - 8% Asian
 - 2% white
 - 29% FRL



John Capozzi on Advanced Diplomas:

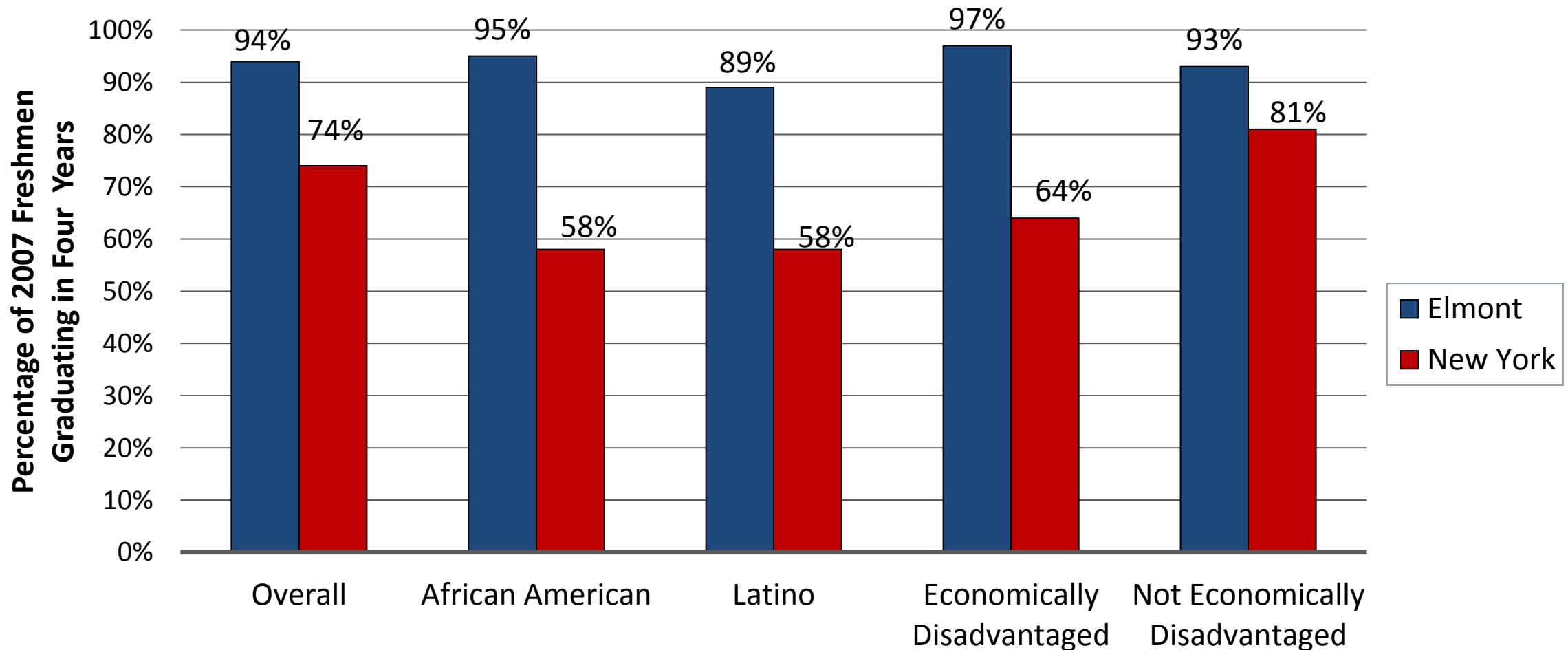
“Why should a minority school only be at 31%? I don’t want to feed into that.”

Graduates with Advanced Diplomas, Elmont vs. the State



Increasing advanced diploma rates did not mean overall graduation rates suffered.

4 Year Cohort Graduation Rates, 2011, by Group, Elmont vs. the State



Elmont's dual focus on mastering grade level standards for all students and striving for excellence is rare and difficult to achieve.

So what can schools do?

Advice from High Achieving Students

- *“Start early:”* Offer opportunities in high school that expose students to college-level content and expectations.
- *“What holds back a lot of students is people tell them ‘No:’”* Communicate positive messages to students about their future possibilities, and help them identify solutions to potential barriers that stand in the way of their postsecondary dreams.
- *“My advisor was probably the single greatest resource I had at the time:”* Provide students with quality mentorship, particularly during the college search and application process.
- *“Being in an environment with other students at or above my ability level...really helped me:”* Cultivate a college-going culture such that students feel their peers aspire to similar postsecondary goals.