

**THE EDUCATION TRUST**

# **ACHIEVEMENT AND OPPORTUNITY IN AMERICA:**

Where are we?  
What can we do?

**Association of California School  
Administrators  
Sacramento, CA  
November, 2015**

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# America: Two Powerful Stories

# 1. Land of Opportunity:

Work hard, and you can become  
anything you want to be.

## 2. **Generational Advancement:**

Through hard work, each generation of parents can assure a better life — and better education — for their children.



These stories animated hopes and  
dreams of people here at home

And drew countless immigrants to our  
shores



Yes, America was often intolerant...

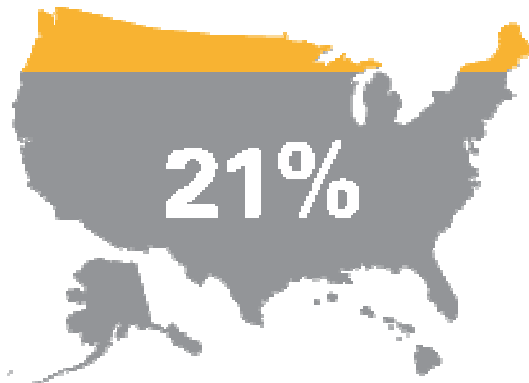
And they knew the “Dream” was a work in progress.

# We were:

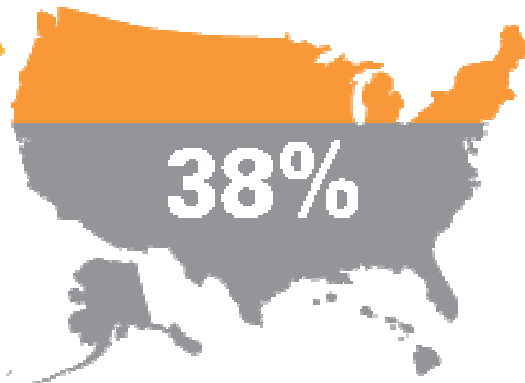
- The first to provide universal high school;
- The first to build public universities;
- The first to build community colleges;
- The first to broaden access to college, through GI Bill, Pell Grants, ...

# Percent of U.S. adults with a high school diploma

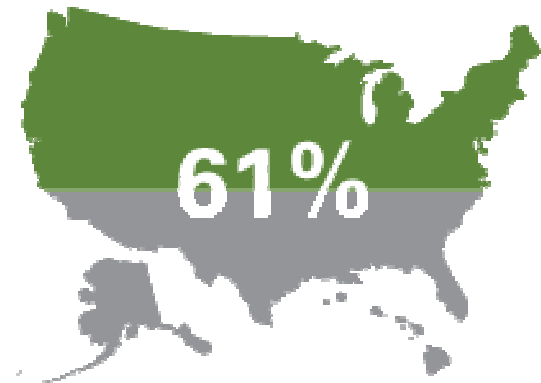
1920



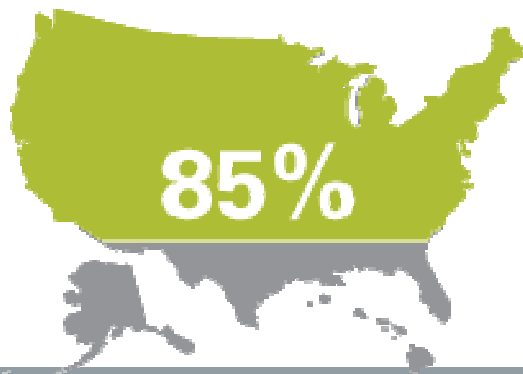
1940



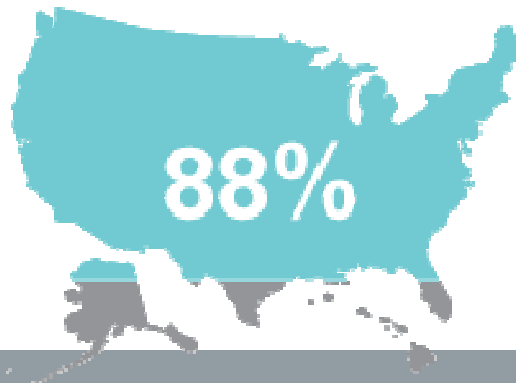
1960



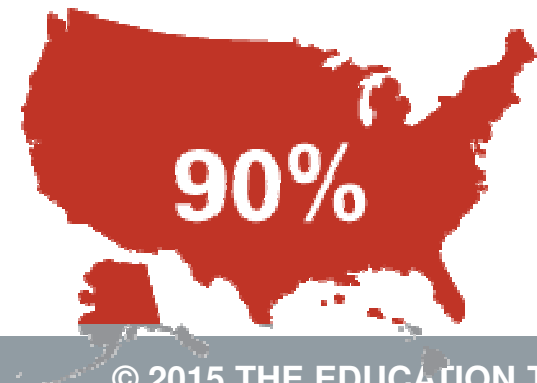
1980



2000



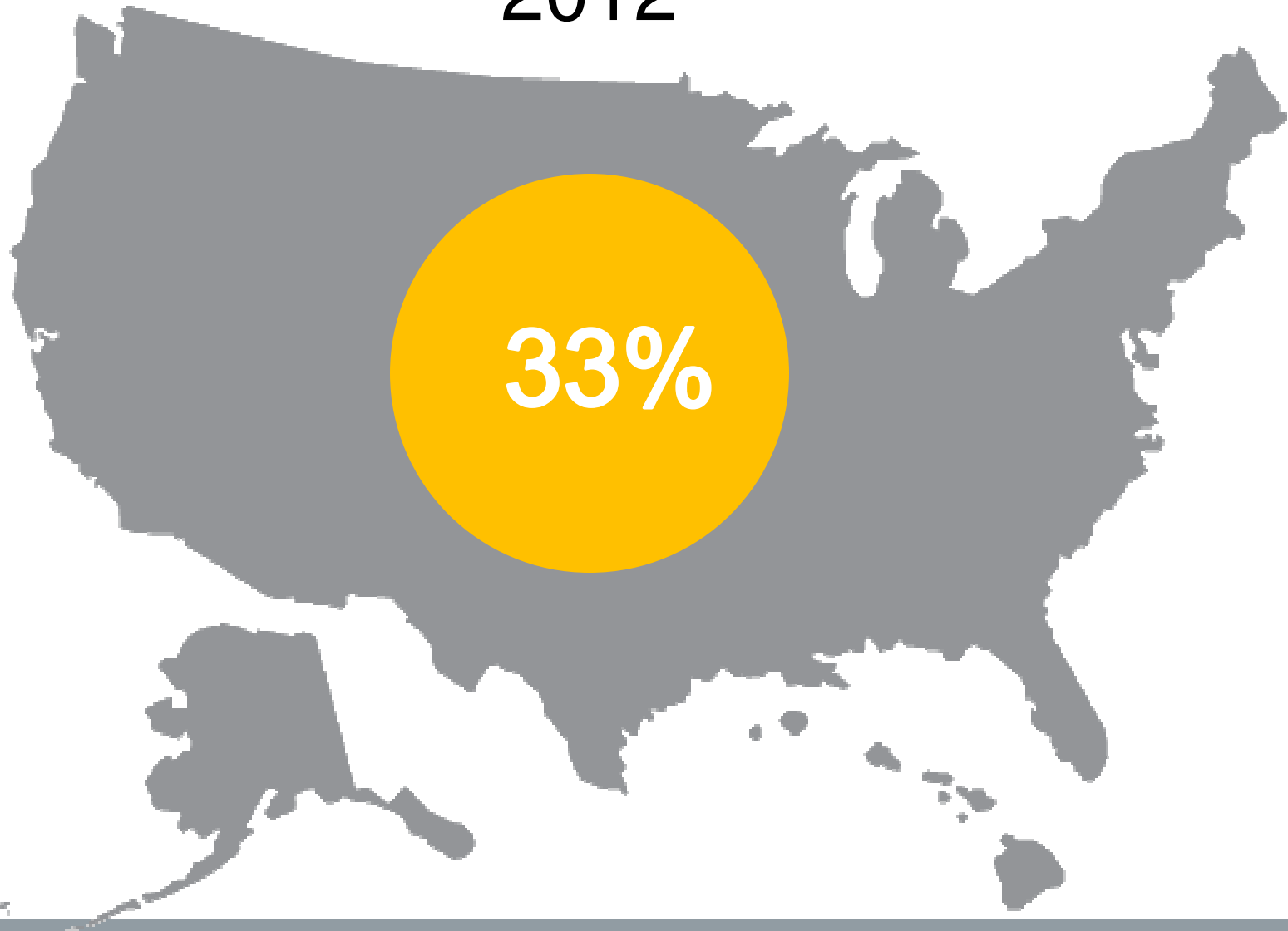
2012






Percent of U.S. adults with a B.A. or more

2012

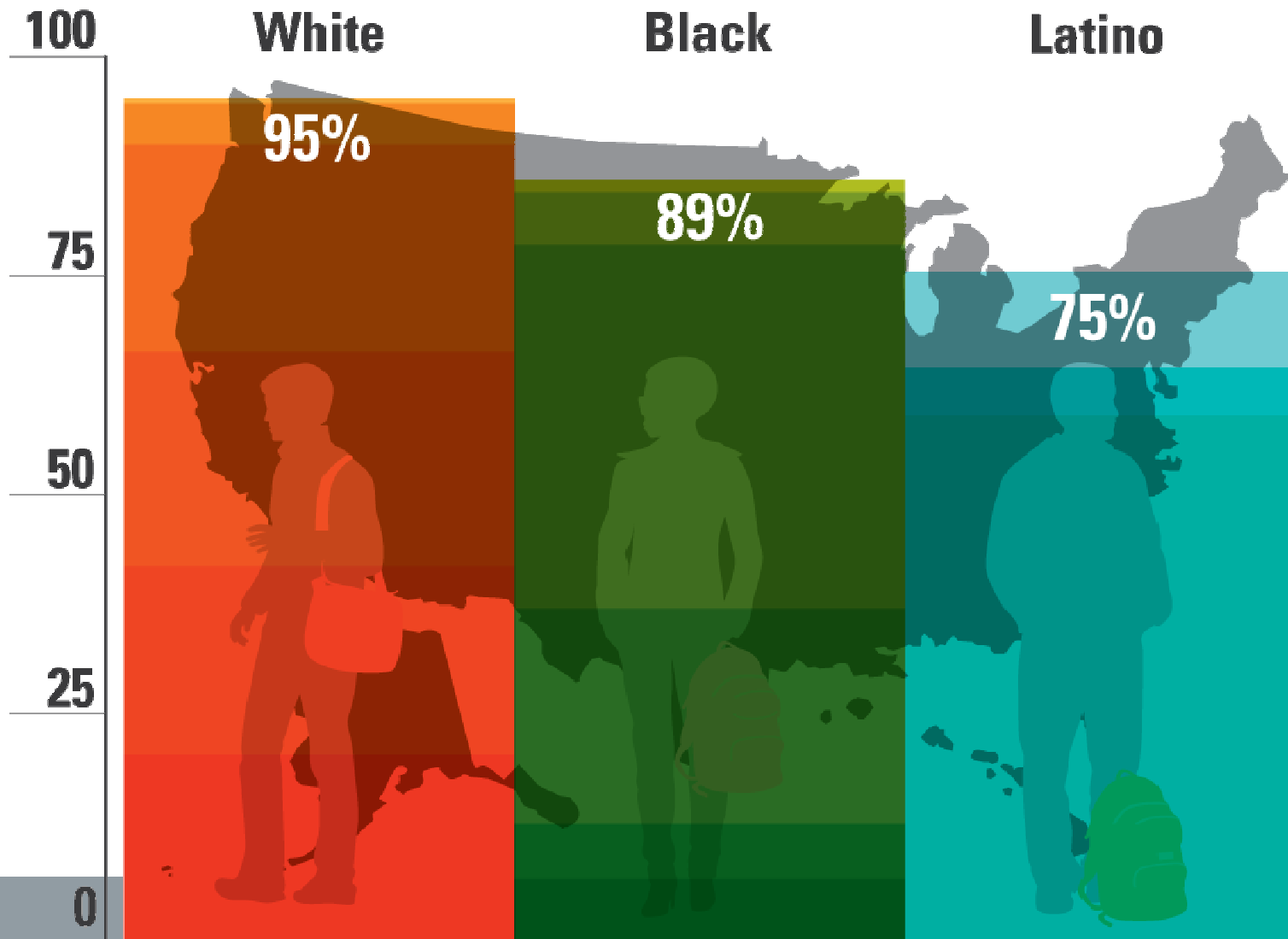




Progress was painfully slow, especially  
for people of color. But year by year,  
decade by decade...

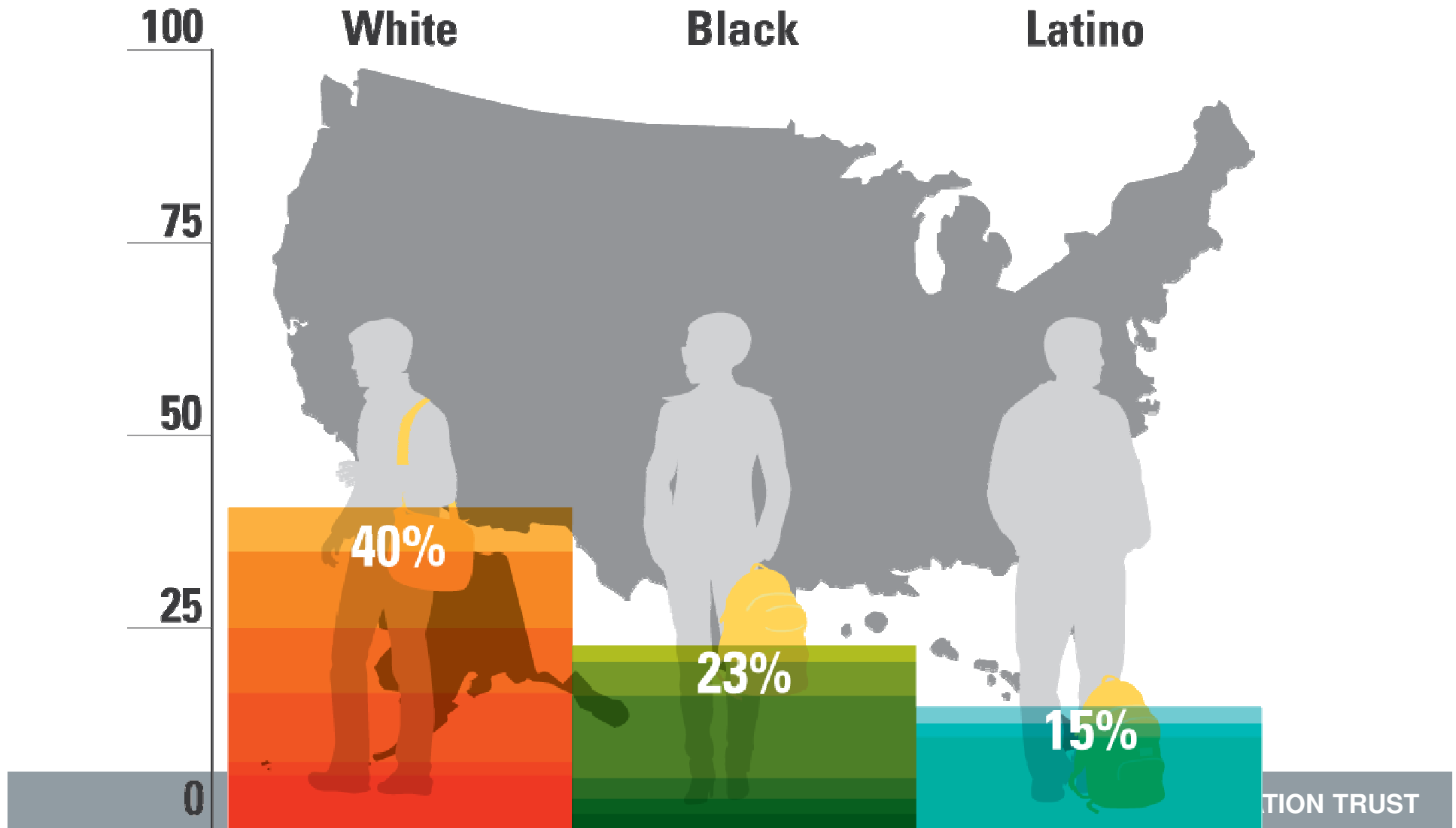
# Percent of U.S. adults with a high school diploma, by race


2012




# Percent of U.S. adults with a B.A. or more, by race

2012





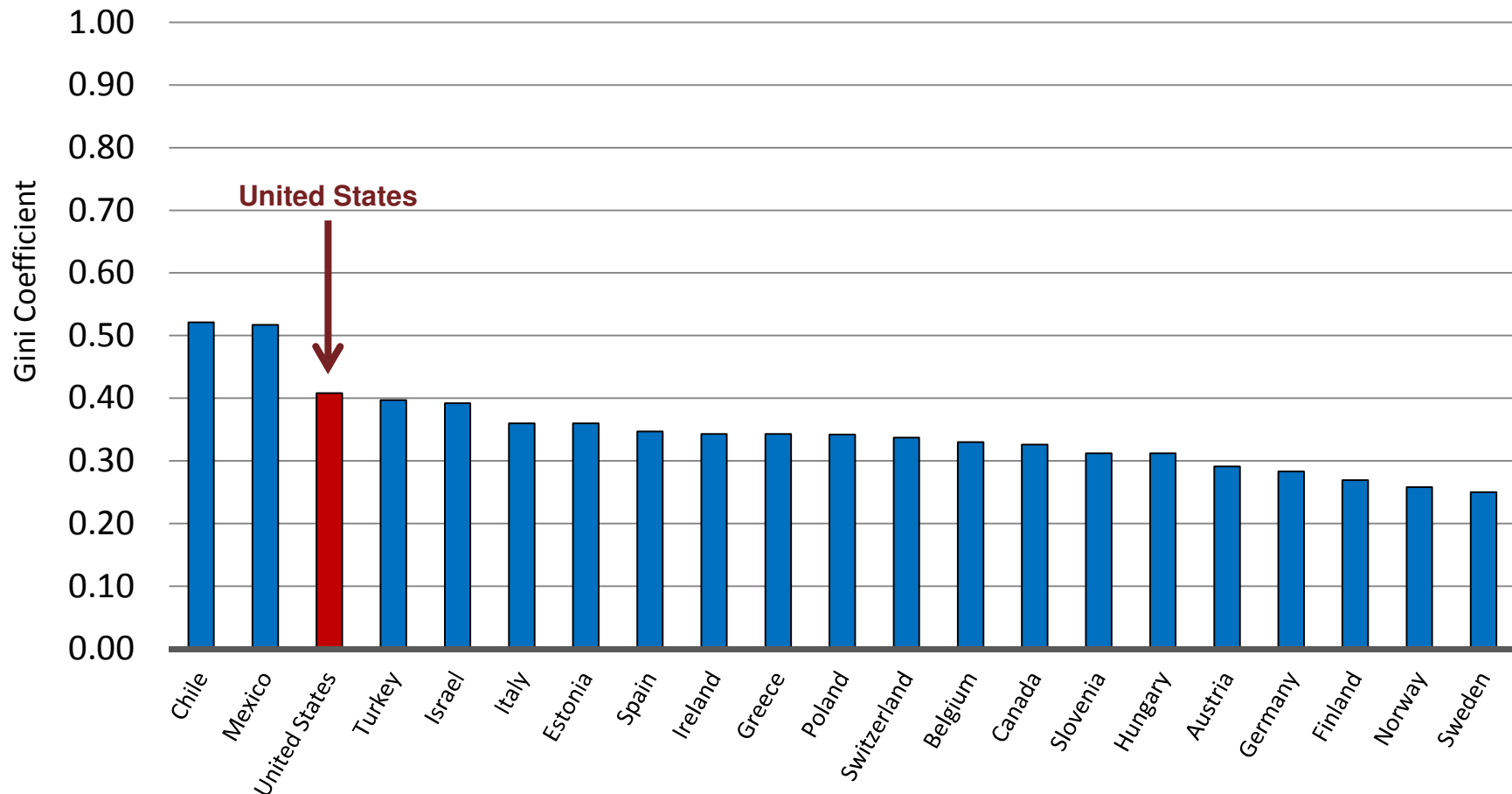
Then, beginning in the eighties,  
growing economic inequality  
started eating away at our  
progress.



In recent years, most income gains have gone to those at the top of the ladder, while those at the bottom have fallen backwards.

Source: Stiglitz, "Inequality is a Choice," *New York Times*, October 13, 2013.

Instead of being the most equal, the U.S. has the third highest income inequality among OECD nations.



Note: Gini coefficient ranges from 0 to 1, where 0 indicates total income equality and 1 indicates total income inequality.

Source: United Nations, U.N. data, <http://data.un.org/DocumentData.aspx?q=gini&id=271>: 2011

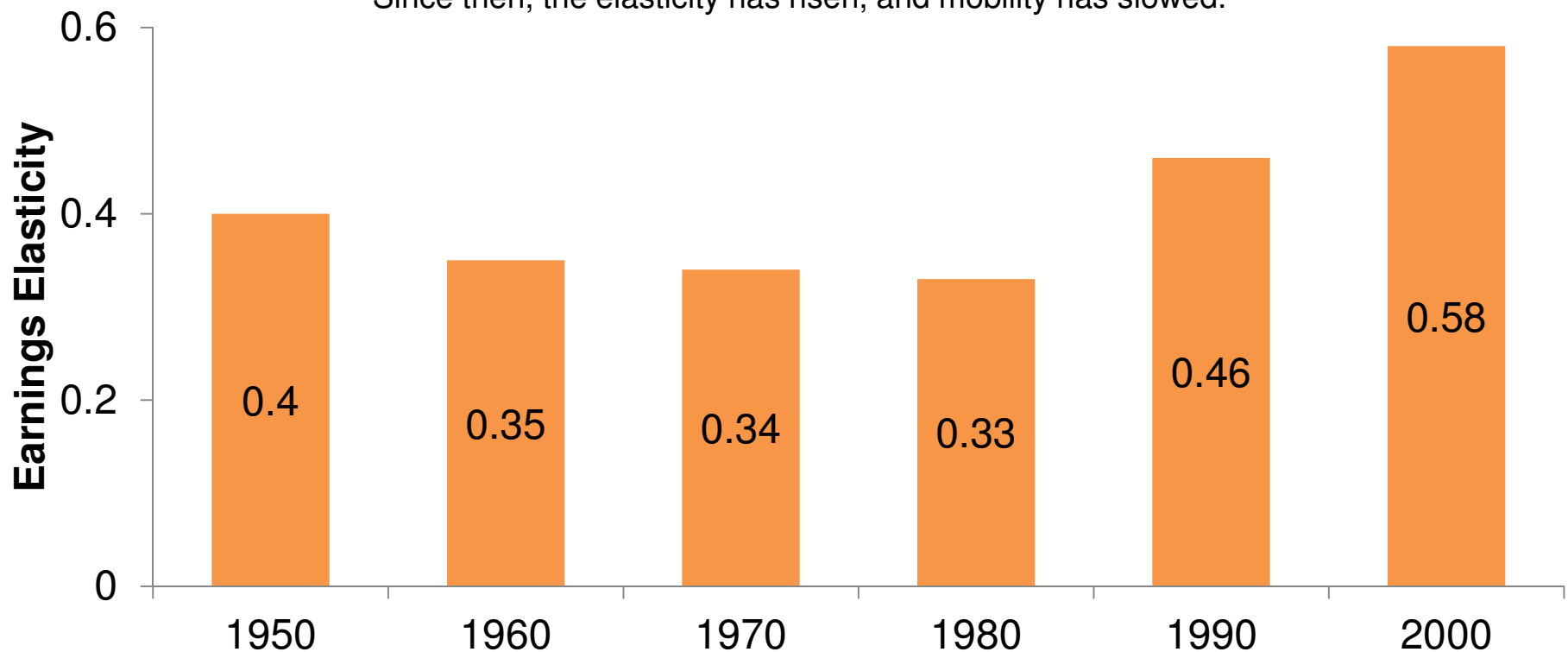


Not just wages and wealth, but  
social mobility as well.



# U.S. intergenerational mobility was improving until 1980, but barriers have gotten higher since.

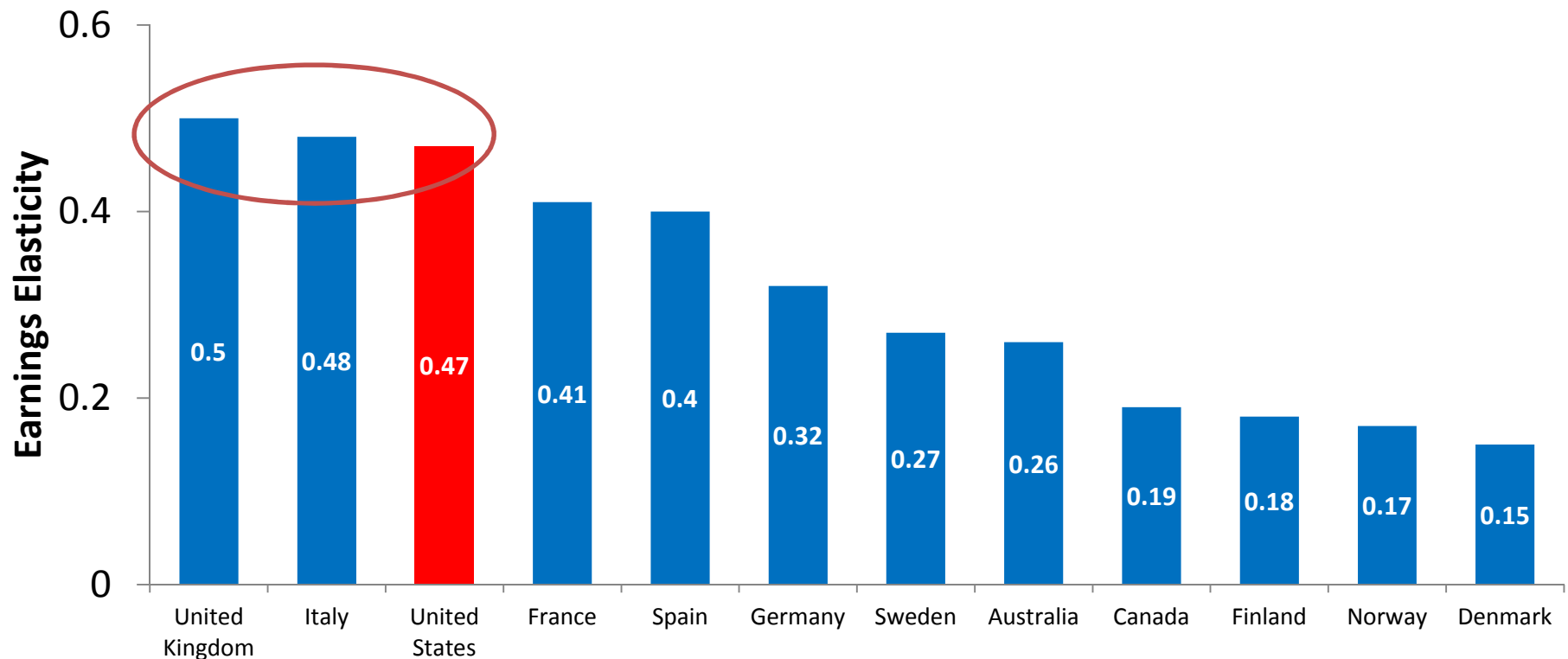
The falling elasticity meant increased economic mobility until 1980.  
Since then, the elasticity has risen, and mobility has slowed.




Source: Daniel Aaronson and Bhashkar Mazumder. *Intergenerational Economic Mobility in the U.S., 1940 to 2000*. Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago WP 2005-12: Dec. 2005.

# The US now has one of lowest rates of intergenerational mobility

Cross-country examples of the link between father and son wages



Source: Corak, Miles. *Chasing the Same Dream, Climbing Different Ladders*. Economic Mobility Project; Pew Charitable Trusts, 2010.



At macro level, better and more equal  
education is not the only answer.

But at the individual level, it really is.



There is one road up, and that  
road runs through us.

So, how are we doing?



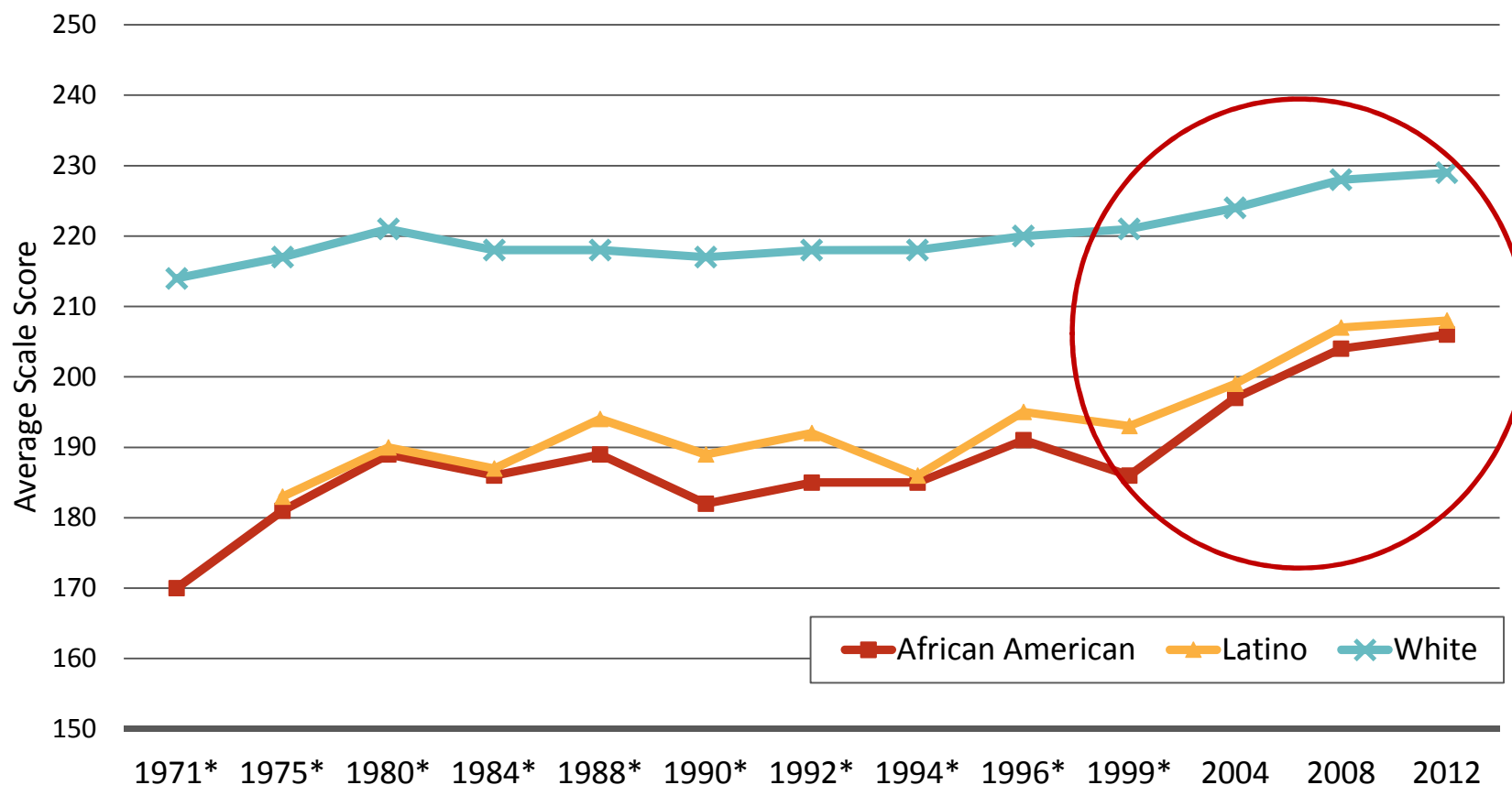


# First, some good news.

After more than a decade of fairly flat achievement and stagnant or growing gaps in K-12, we appear to be turning the corner with our elementary students.

# Since 1999, large gains for all groups of students, especially students of color

## 9 Year Olds – NAEP Reading



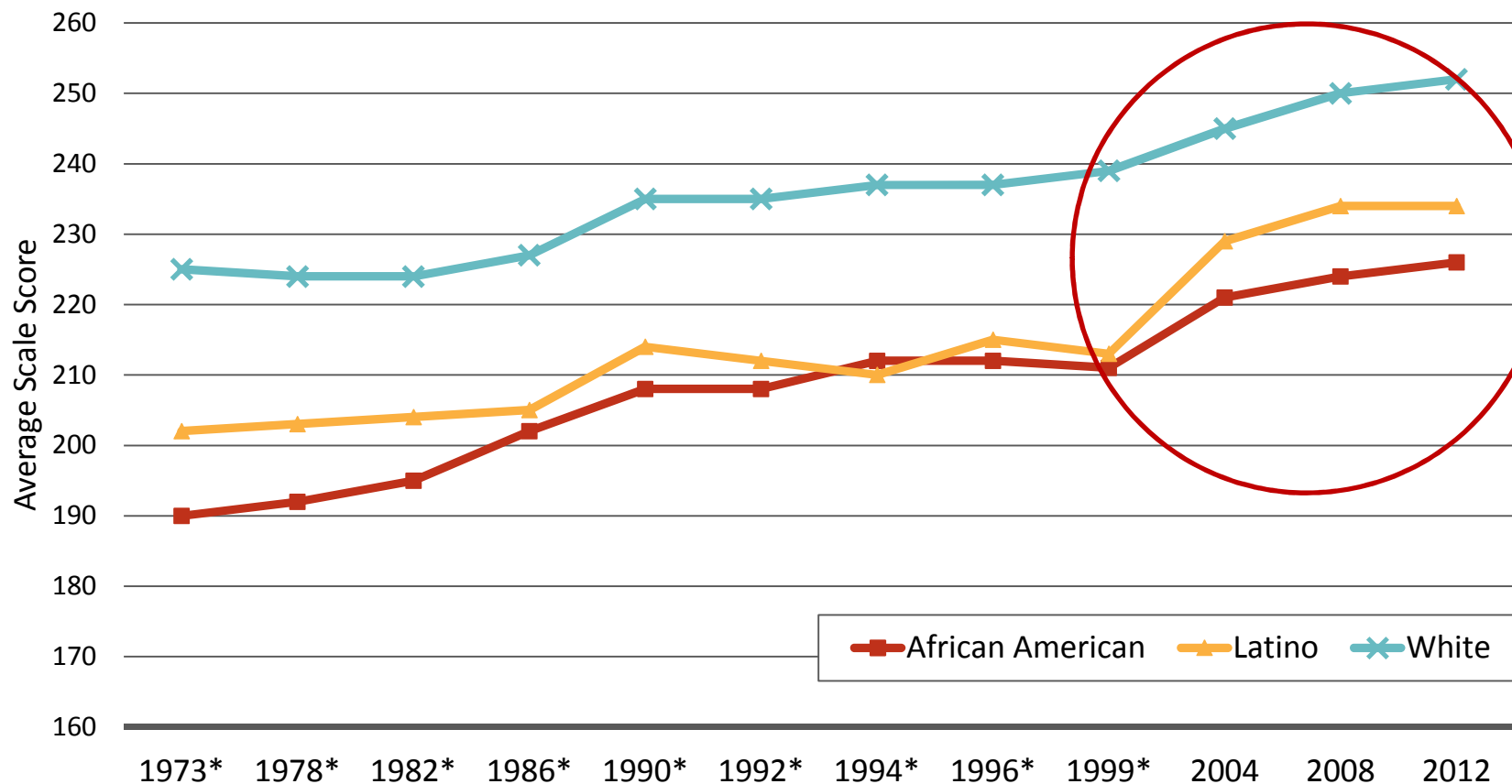
\*Denotes previous assessment format

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, "The Nation's Report Card: Trends in Academic Progress 2012"

e:

# Since 1999, performance rising for all groups of students

## 9 Year Olds – NAEP Math



\*Denotes previous assessment format

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, "The Nation's Report Card: Trends in Academic Progress 2012"

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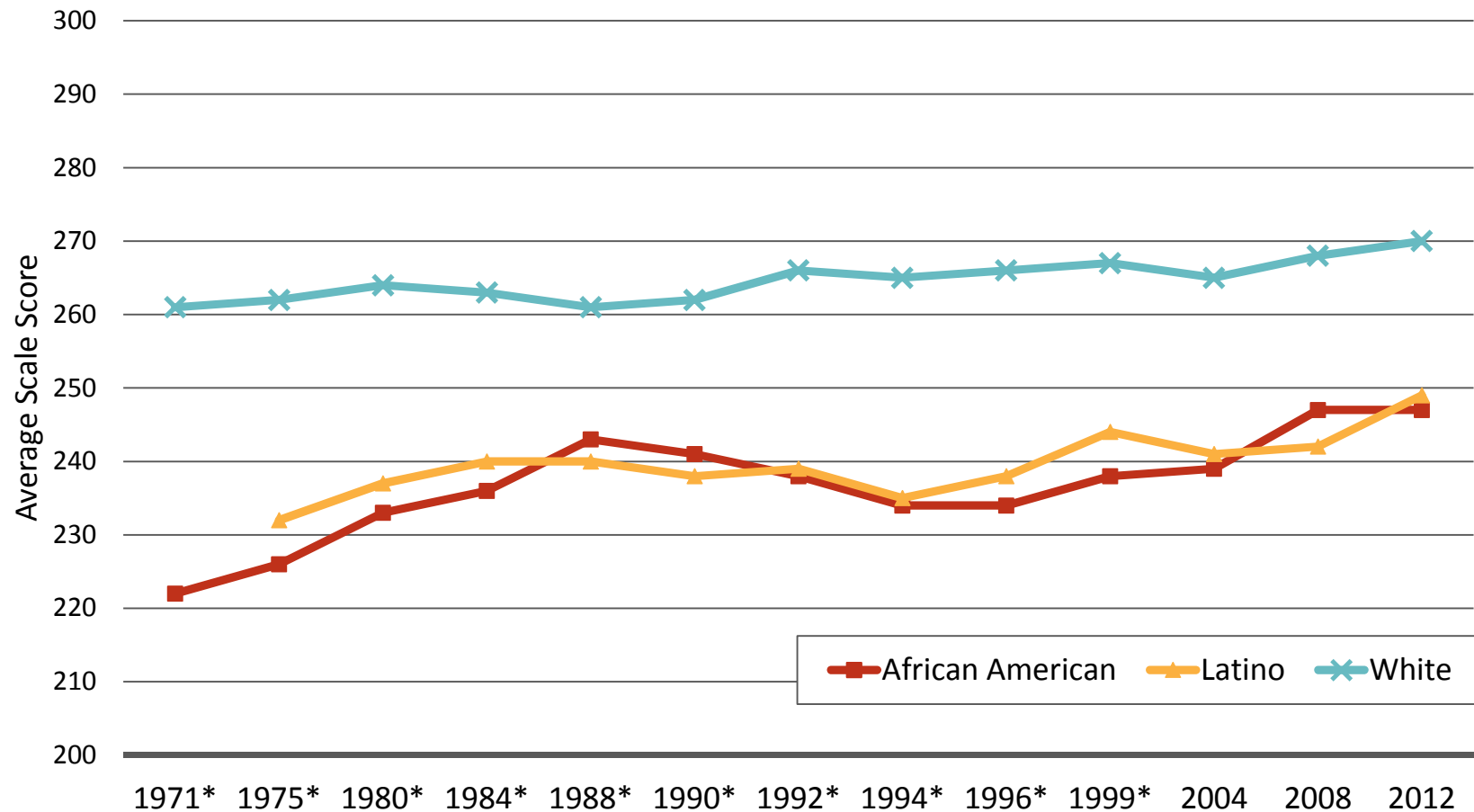




Middle grades are up, too.

# Record performance for students of color

## 13 Year Olds – NAEP Reading

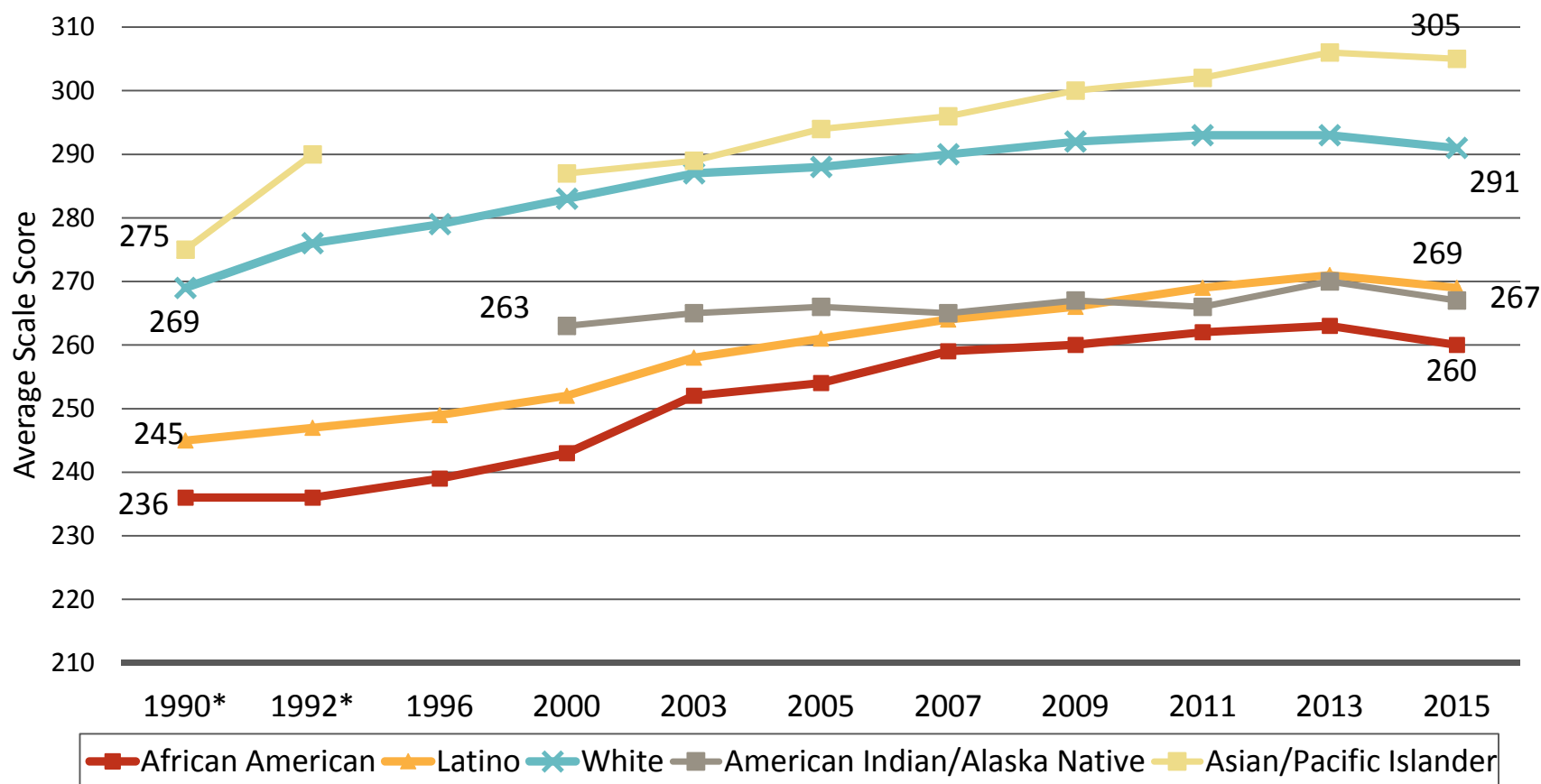


\*Denotes previous assessment format

- National Center for Education Statistics, "The Nation's Report Card: Trends in Academic Progress 2012"

Over the last decade, all groups have steadily improved and gaps have narrowed

### National Public – Grade 8 NAEP Math



\*Accommodations not permitted

Source: NAEP Data Explorer, NCES (Proficient Scale Score = 299)

e:



Also big progress in California for  
some groups of children.

# NAEP Grade 8 Reading – African American Students

States with the Biggest Gains in Mean Scale Scores  
(2003 – 2015)

State	Gain
Nevada	16
Florida	12
California	9
Tennessee	8
Indiana	8

Note: On average, mean scale scores in reading for African American eighth-grade students increased by 4 points from 2003 to 2015.  
Source: National Center for Education Statistics, NAEP Data

# NAEP Grade 8 Reading – Low-Income Students

States with the Biggest Gains in Mean Scale Scores  
(2003 – 2015)

State	Gain
Arizona	12
California	11
Florida	11
Connecticut	11
Maryland	10
Georgia	10
Massachusetts	10

Note: On average, mean scale scores in reading for low-income eighth-grade students increased by 7 points from 2003 to 2015.  
Source: National Center for Education Statistics, NAEP Data

# NAEP Grade 8 Math – African American Students

States with the Biggest Gains in Mean Scale Scores  
(2003 – 2015)

State	Gain
Arkansas	16
New Jersey	16
California	15
Rhode Island	14
Georgia	14
Arizona	13


Note: On average, mean scale scores in math for American-African eighth-grade students increased by 8 points from 2003 to 2015.  
Source: National Center for Education Statistics, NAEP Data



## Bottom Line:


When we really focus on something, we make progress!





Clearly, much more remains to be done  
in elementary and middle school

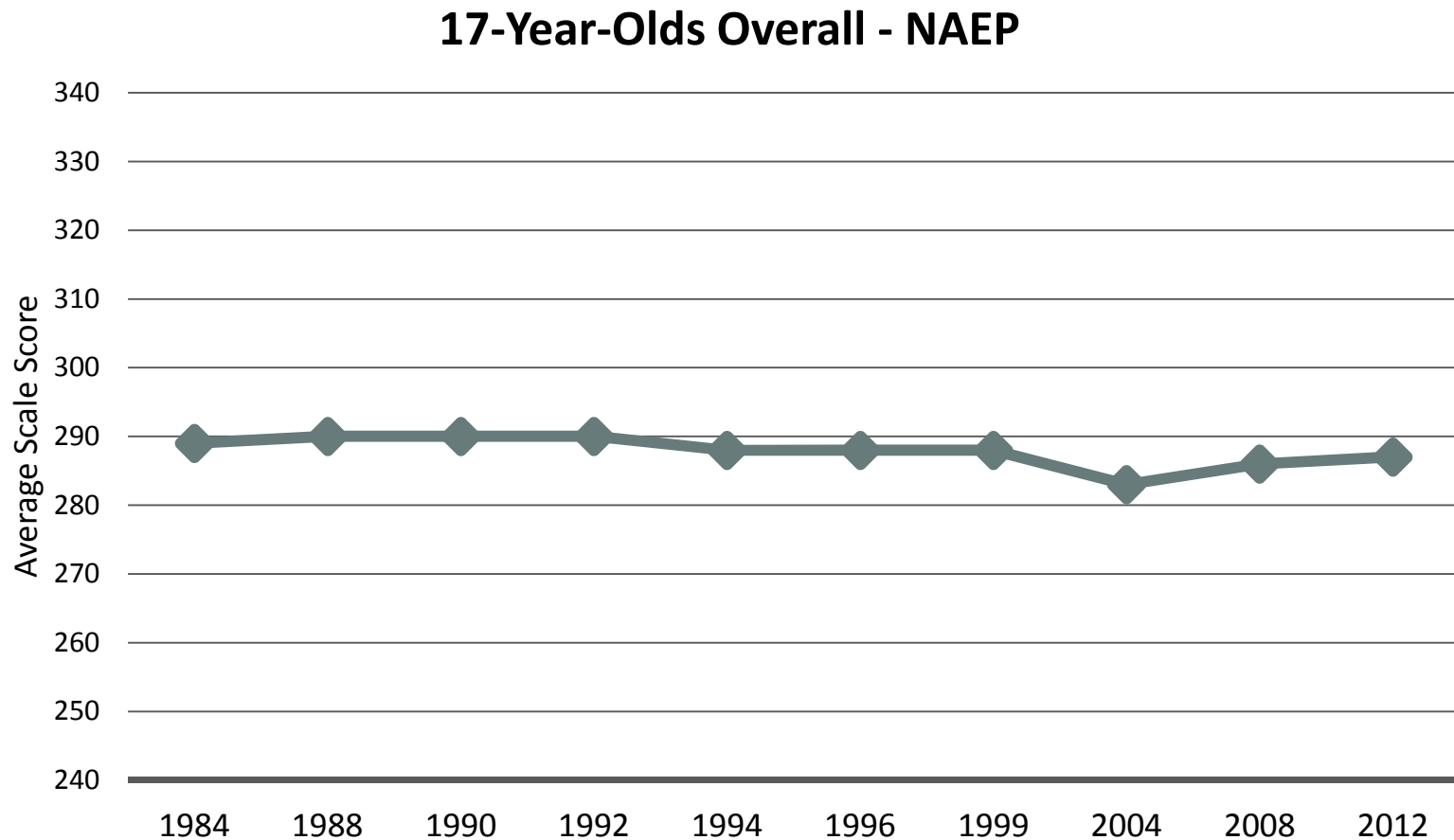
Too many youngsters still enter high  
school way behind.



But at least we have some traction on elementary and middle school problems.

The same is NOT true  
of our high schools.

Achievement is flat in reading for students overall.

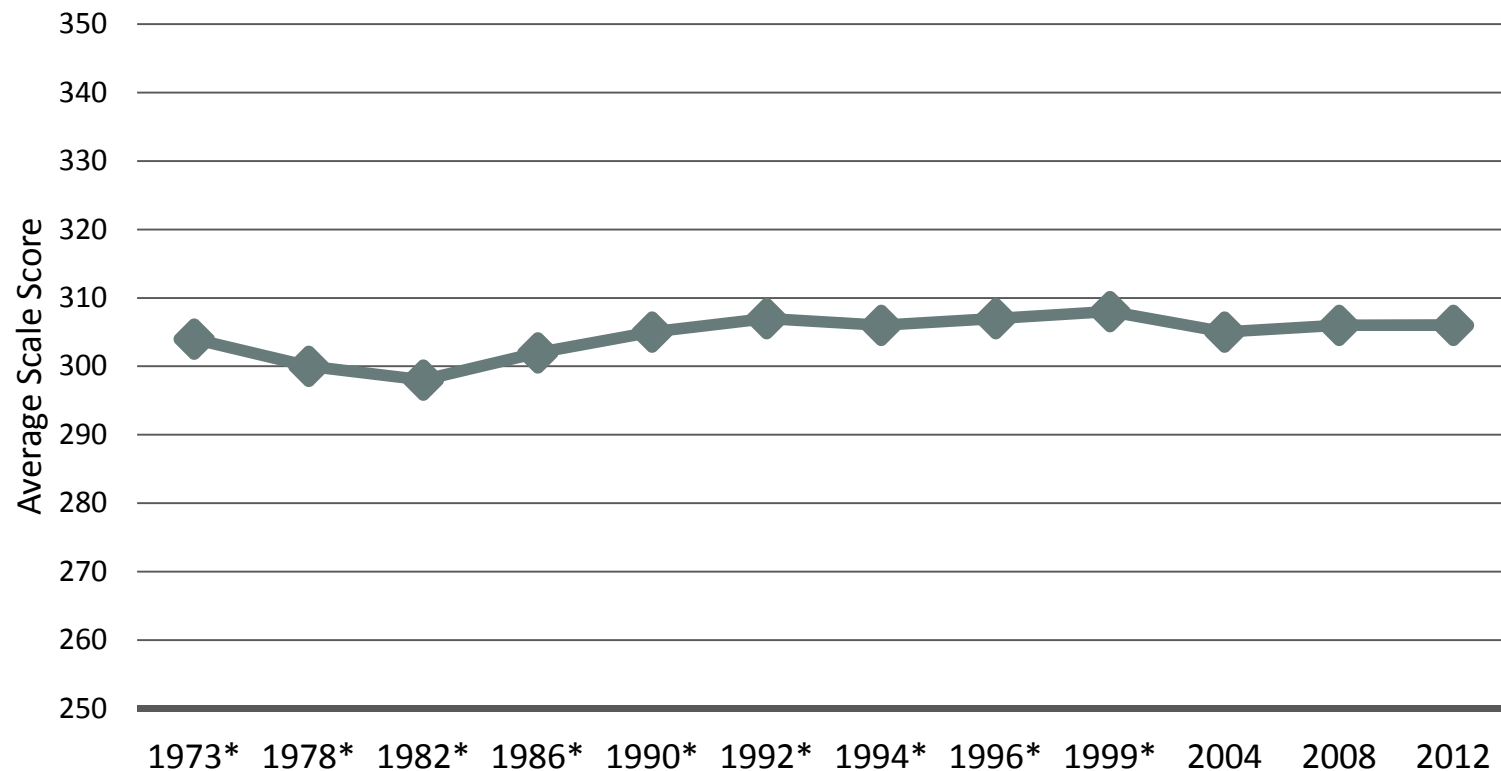


Source: NAEP Long-Term Trends, NCES (2004)

e:

Math achievement for students overall is flat over time.


### 17-Year-Olds Overall - NAEP



\* Denotes previous assessment format

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, NAEP 2008 Trends in Academic Progress

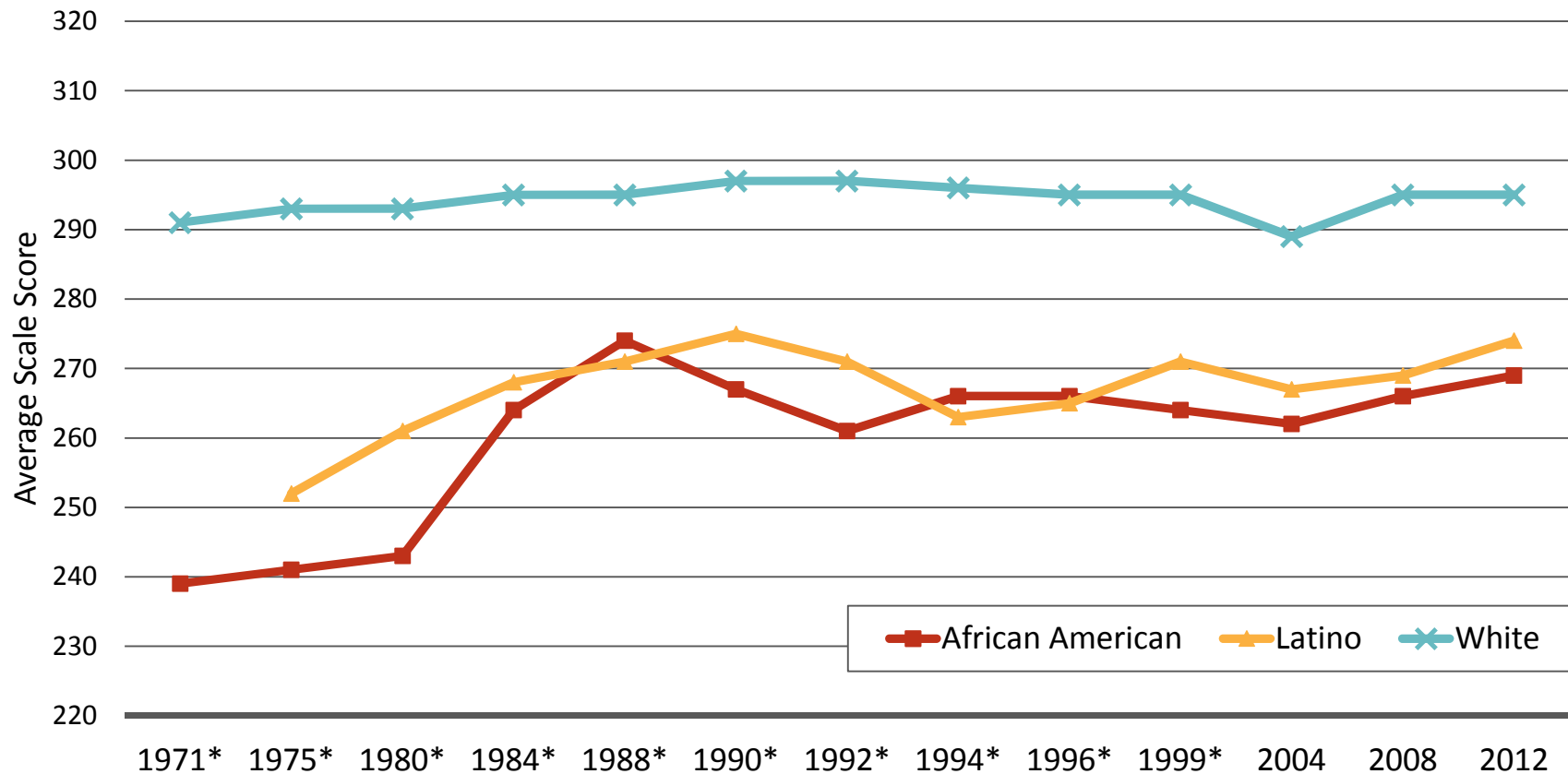
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And despite earlier  
improvements, gaps between  
groups haven't narrowed much  
since the late 80s and early 90s.

# Reading: Not much gap narrowing since 1988.

## 17 Year Olds – NAEP Reading



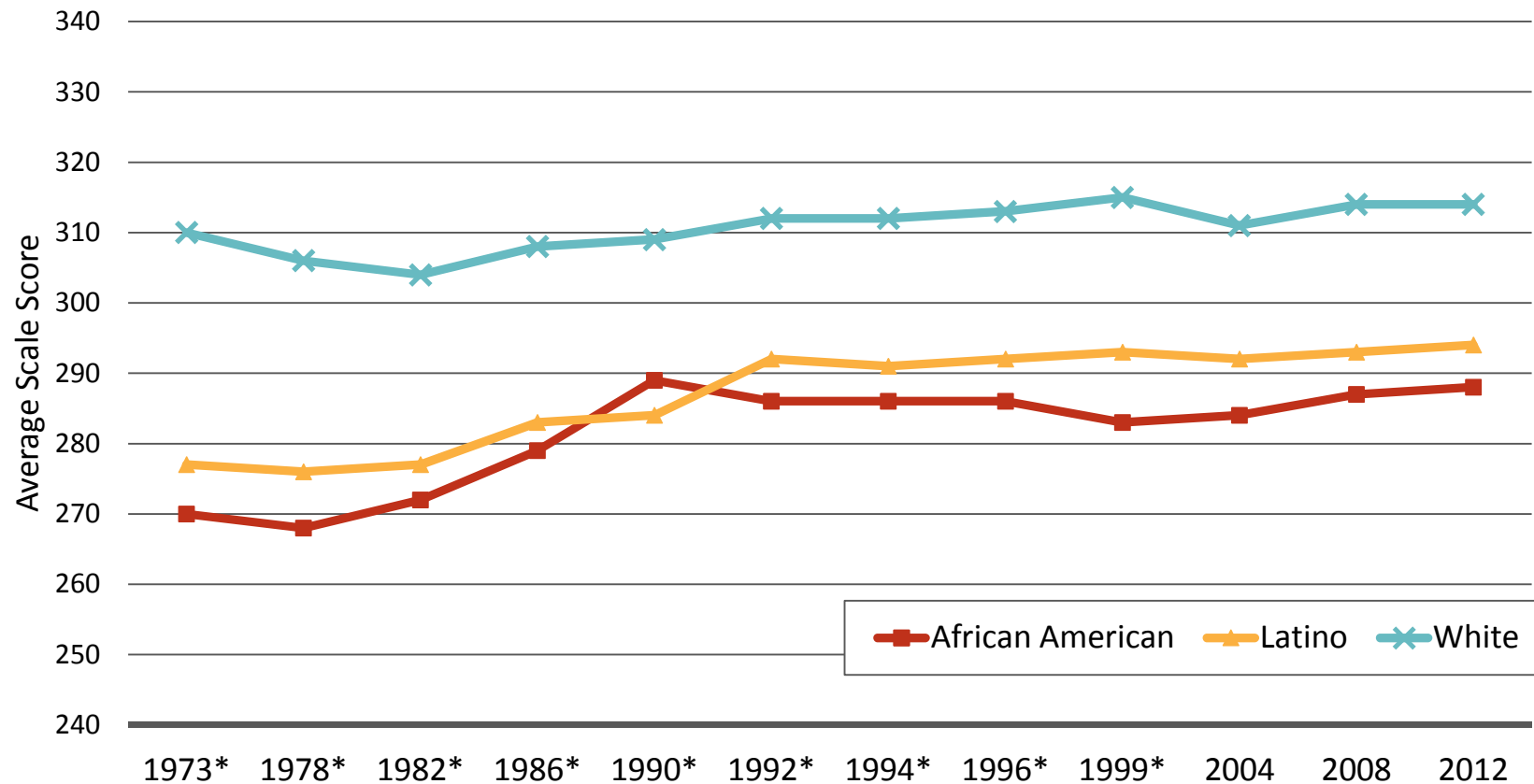
\*Denotes previous assessment format

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, "The Nation's Report Card: Trends in Academic Progress 2012"

e:

# Math: Not much gap closing since 1990.


## 17 Year Olds – NAEP Math



\*Denotes previous assessment format

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, "The Nation's Report Card: Trends in Academic Progress 2012"

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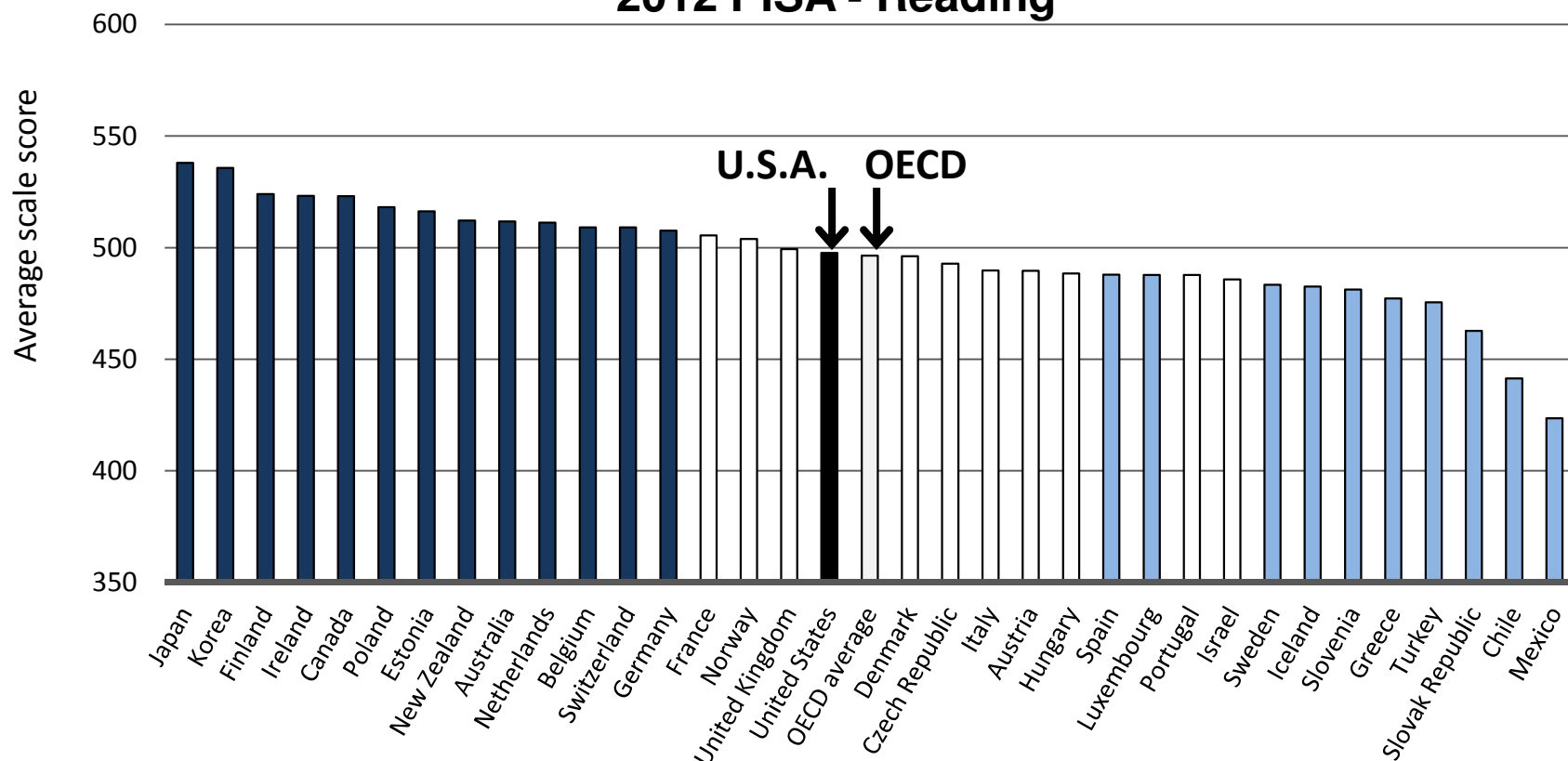


Moreover, no matter how you cut the data, our students aren't doing well compared with their peers in other countries.



# Of 34 OECD Countries, U.S.A. Ranks 17<sup>th</sup> in Reading

2012 PISA - Reading



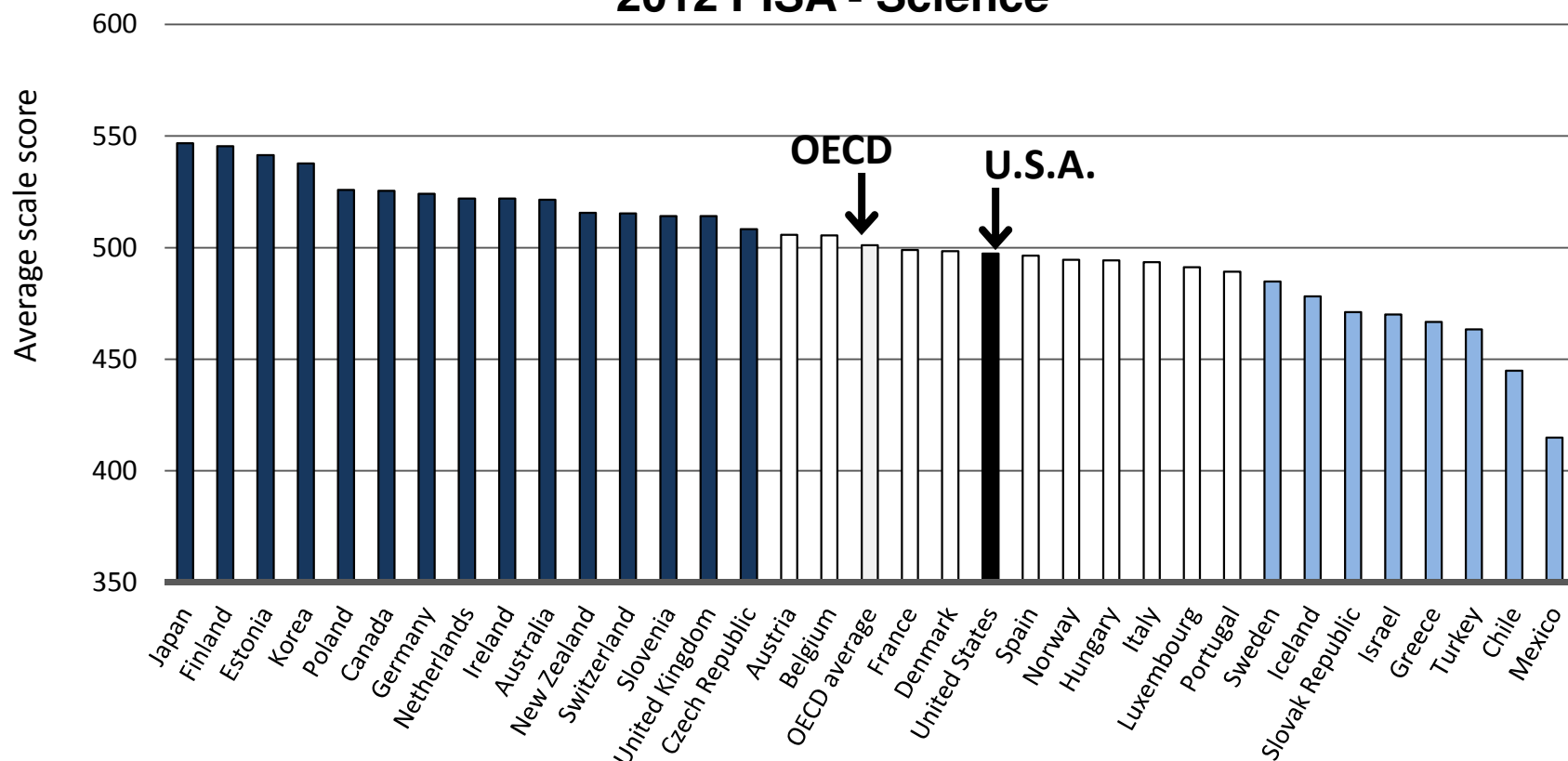
■ Higher than U.S. average □ Not measurably different from U.S. average ■ Lower than U.S. average

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2013, [http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pisa/pisa2012/pisa2012highlights\\_5a.asp](http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pisa/pisa2012/pisa2012highlights_5a.asp).

e:

# Of 34 OECD Countries, U.S.A. Ranks 20<sup>th</sup> in Science

2012 PISA - Science



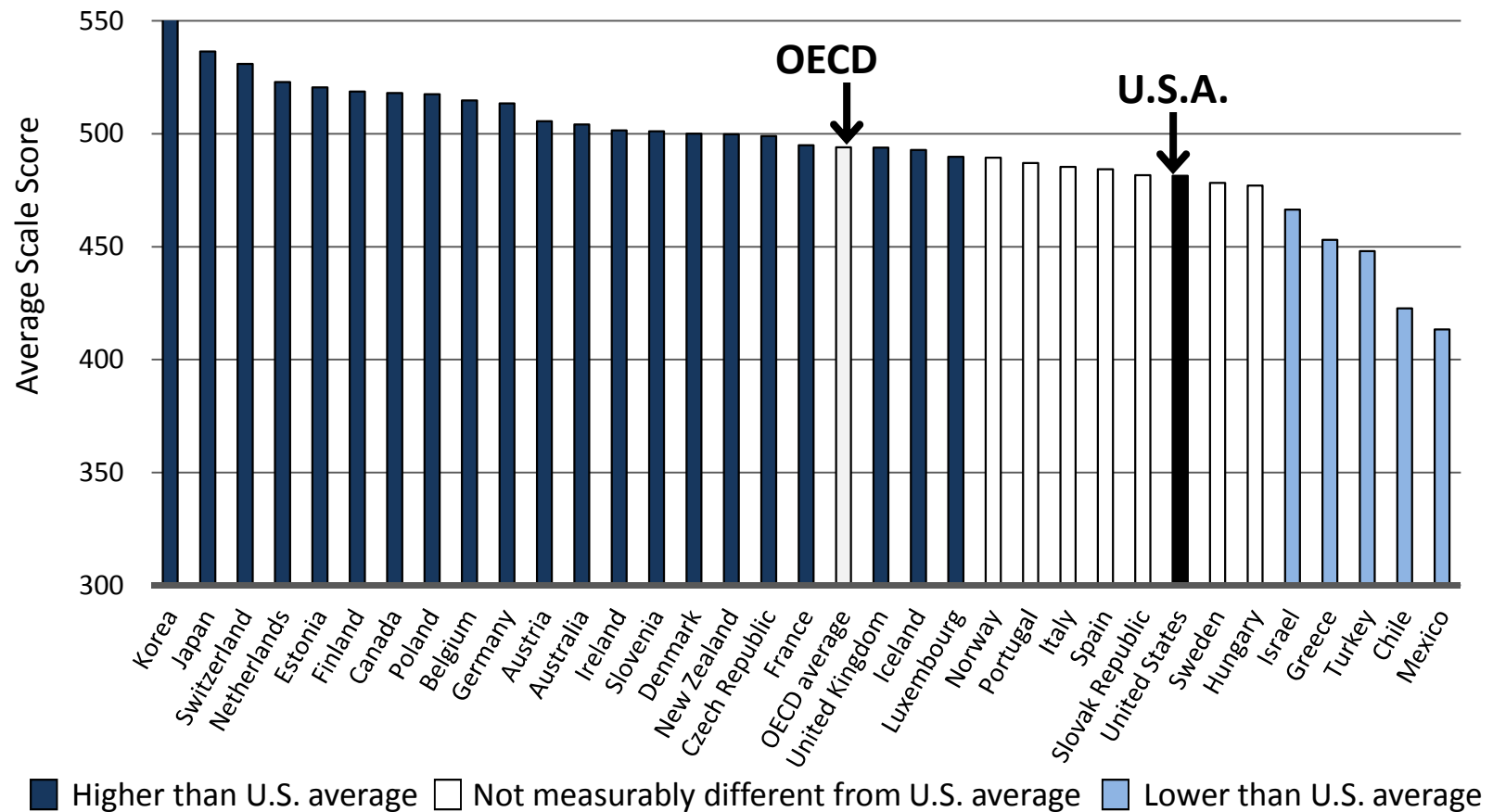
■ Higher than U.S. average □ Not measurably different from U.S. average ■ Lower than U.S. average

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2013, [http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pisa/pisa2012/pisa2012highlights\\_4a.asp](http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pisa/pisa2012/pisa2012highlights_4a.asp).

e:

# Of 34 OECD Countries, U.S.A. Ranks 27<sup>th</sup> in Math Literacy

2012 PISA - Math



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2013, [http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pisa/pisa2012/pisa2012highlights\\_3a.asp](http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pisa/pisa2012/pisa2012highlights_3a.asp).

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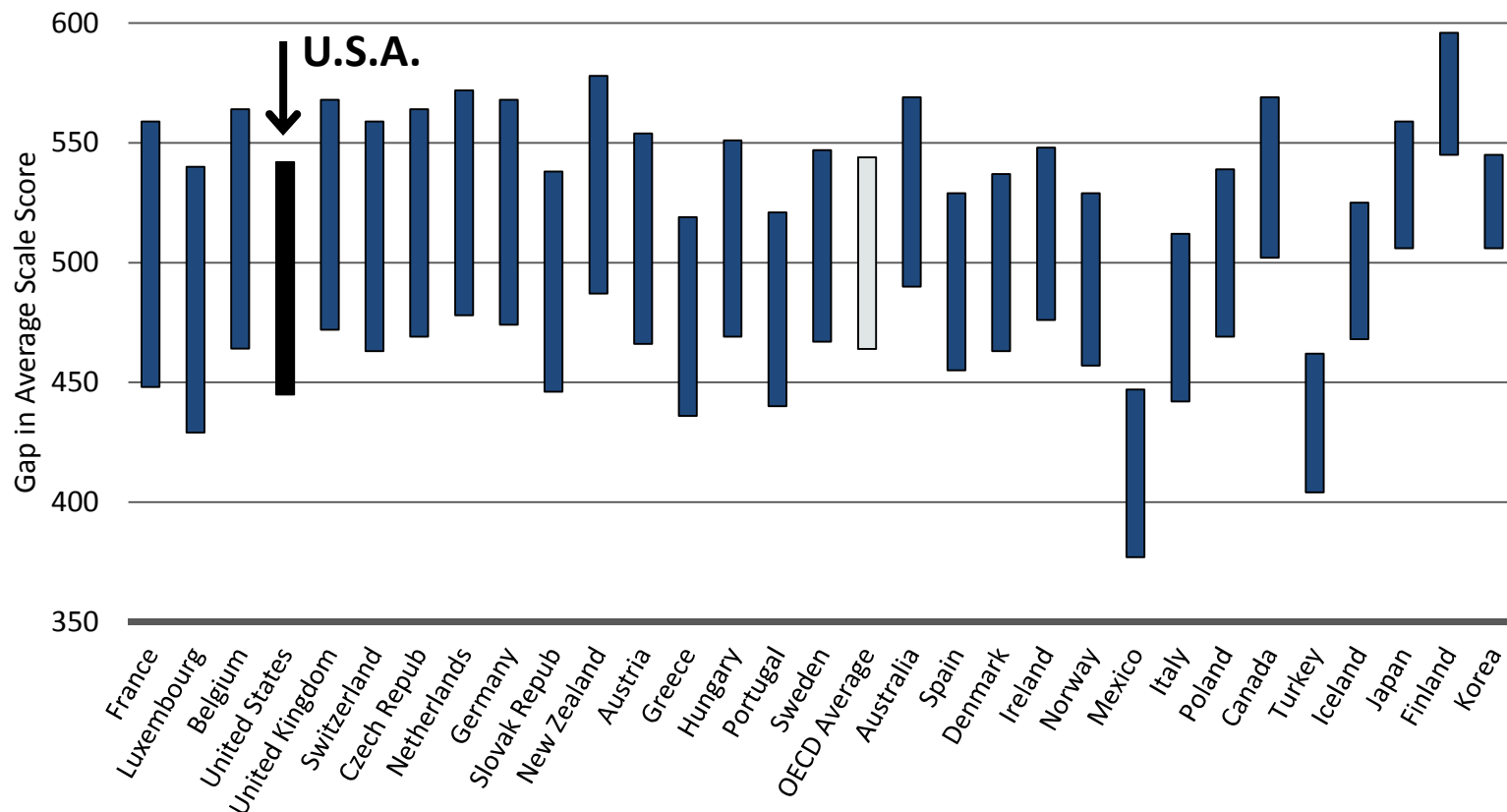


Only place we rank high?

Inequality.

# Among OECD Countries, U.S.A. has the 4<sup>th</sup> Largest Gap Between High-SES and Low-SES

Students  
2006 PISA - Science

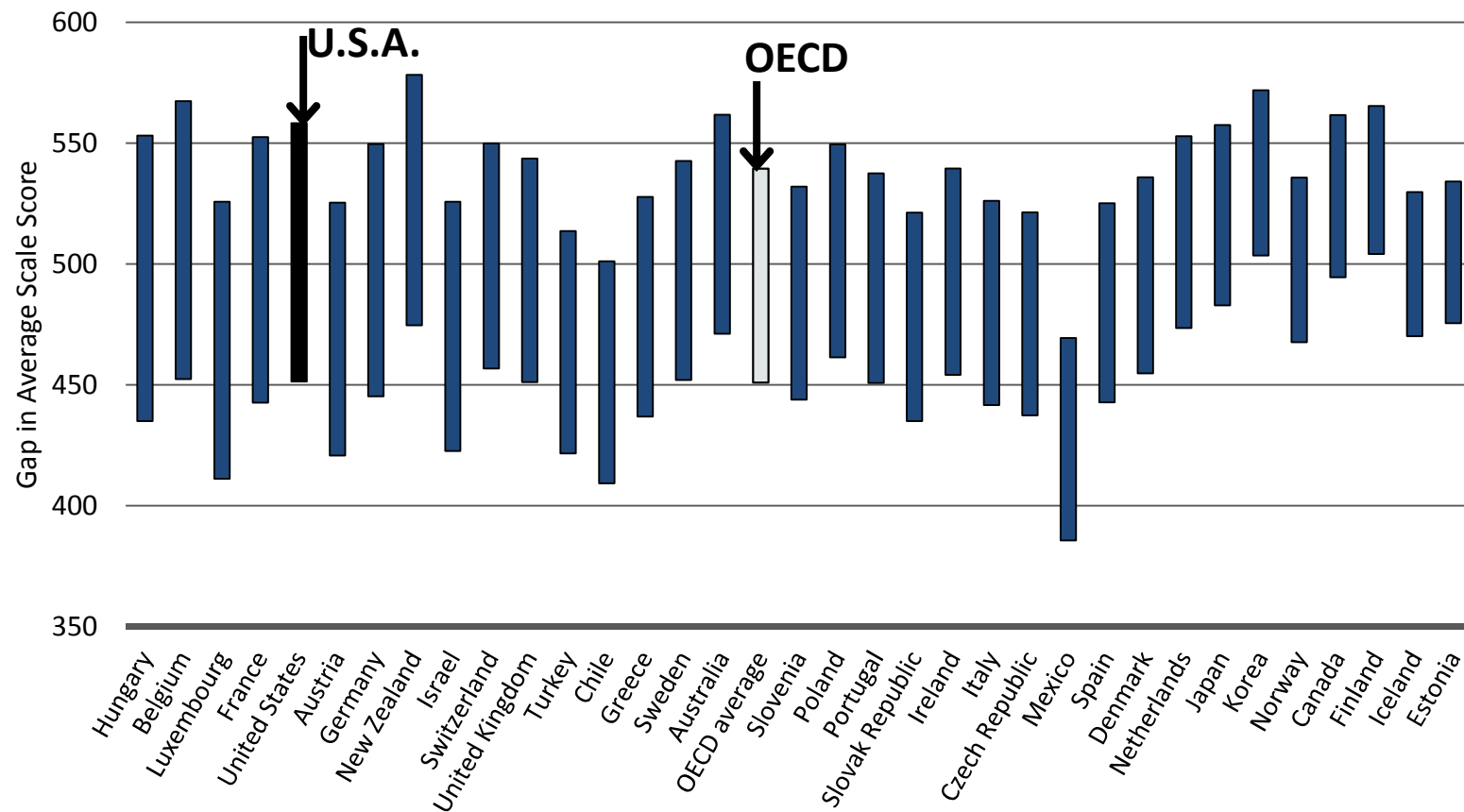


Source: PISA 2006 Results, OECD, table 4.8b

e:


# Among OECD Countries, U.S.A. has the 5<sup>th</sup> Largest Gap Between High-SES and Low-SES Students

2009 PISA – Reading



Source: PISA 2009 Results, OECD, Table II.3.1

e:



Gaps in achievement begin before  
children arrive at the schoolhouse door.


But, rather than organizing our educational  
system to ameliorate this problem, we organize  
it to exacerbate the problem.



# How?

By giving students who arrive with less,  
less in school, too.






Some of these “lesser” are a  
result of choices that  
policymakers make.

# National Inequities in State and Local Revenue Per Student

	Gap
High Poverty vs. Low Poverty Districts	-\$1200 per student
High Minority vs. Low Minority Districts	-\$2,000 per student

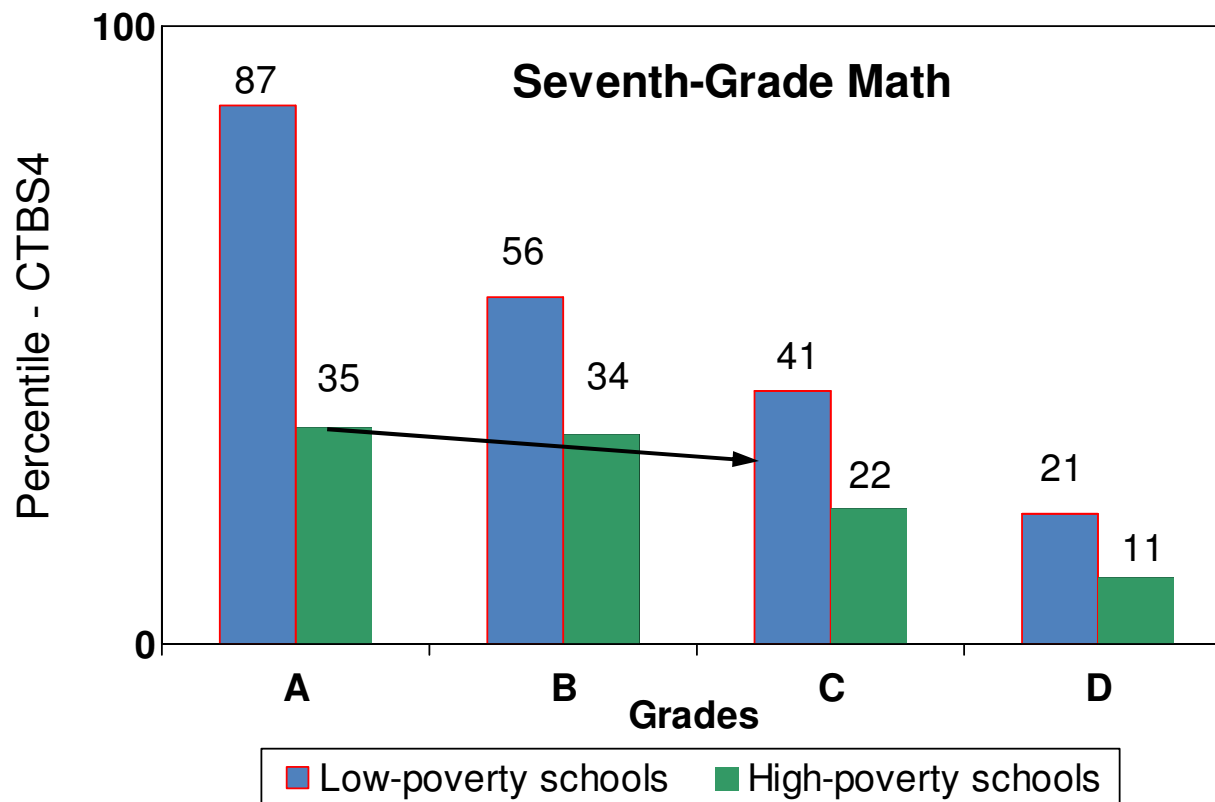


In truth, though, some of the most devastating “lessees” are a function of choices that we educators make.


Choices we make about what to  
expect of whom.....



Students in poor schools receive As for work that would earn  
Cs in affluent schools.

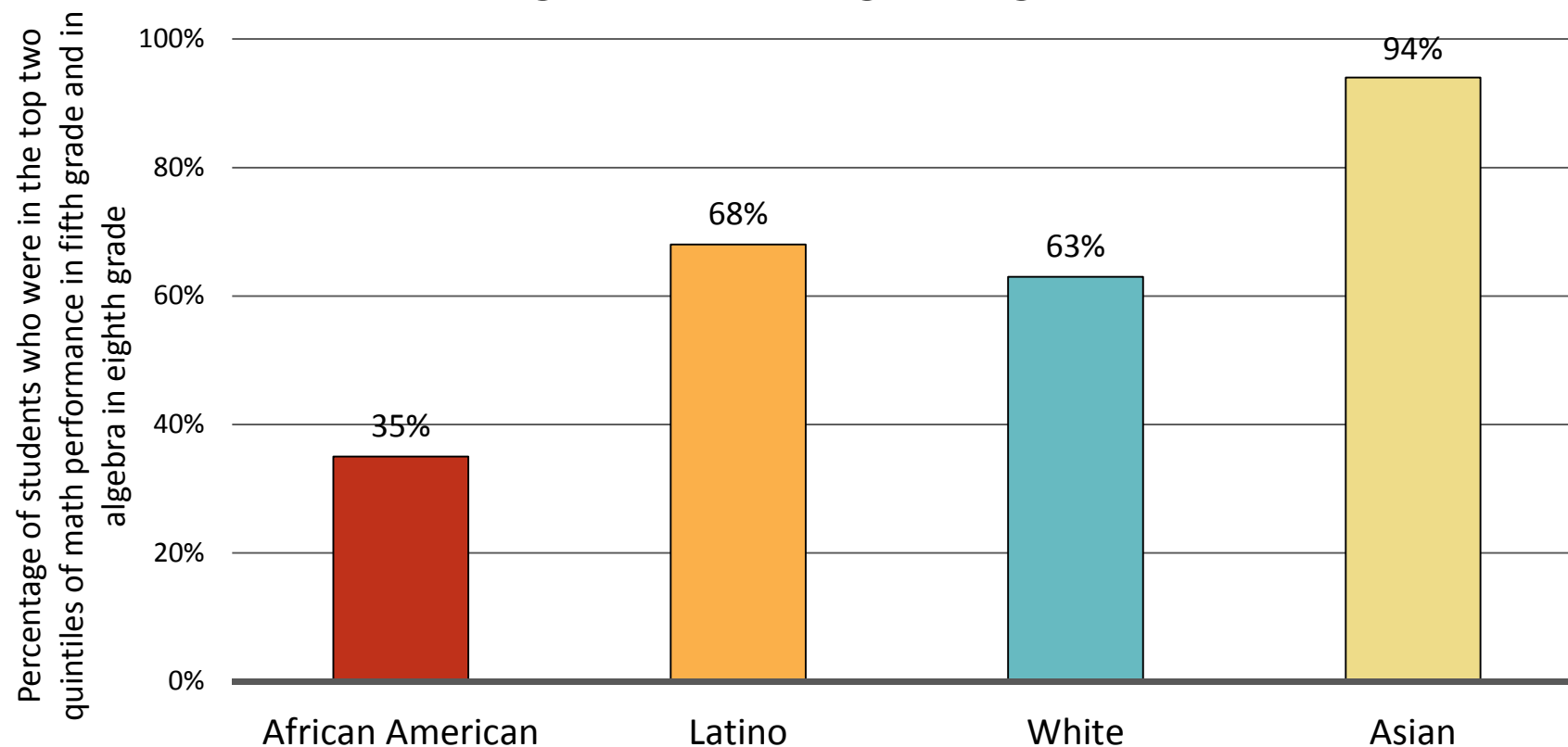


Source: Prospects (ABT Associates, 1993), in "Prospects: Final Report on Student Outcomes", PES, DOE, 1997.



Choices we make about what to  
teach whom...

Even African-American students with *high math performance* in fifth grade are unlikely to be placed in algebra in eighth grade



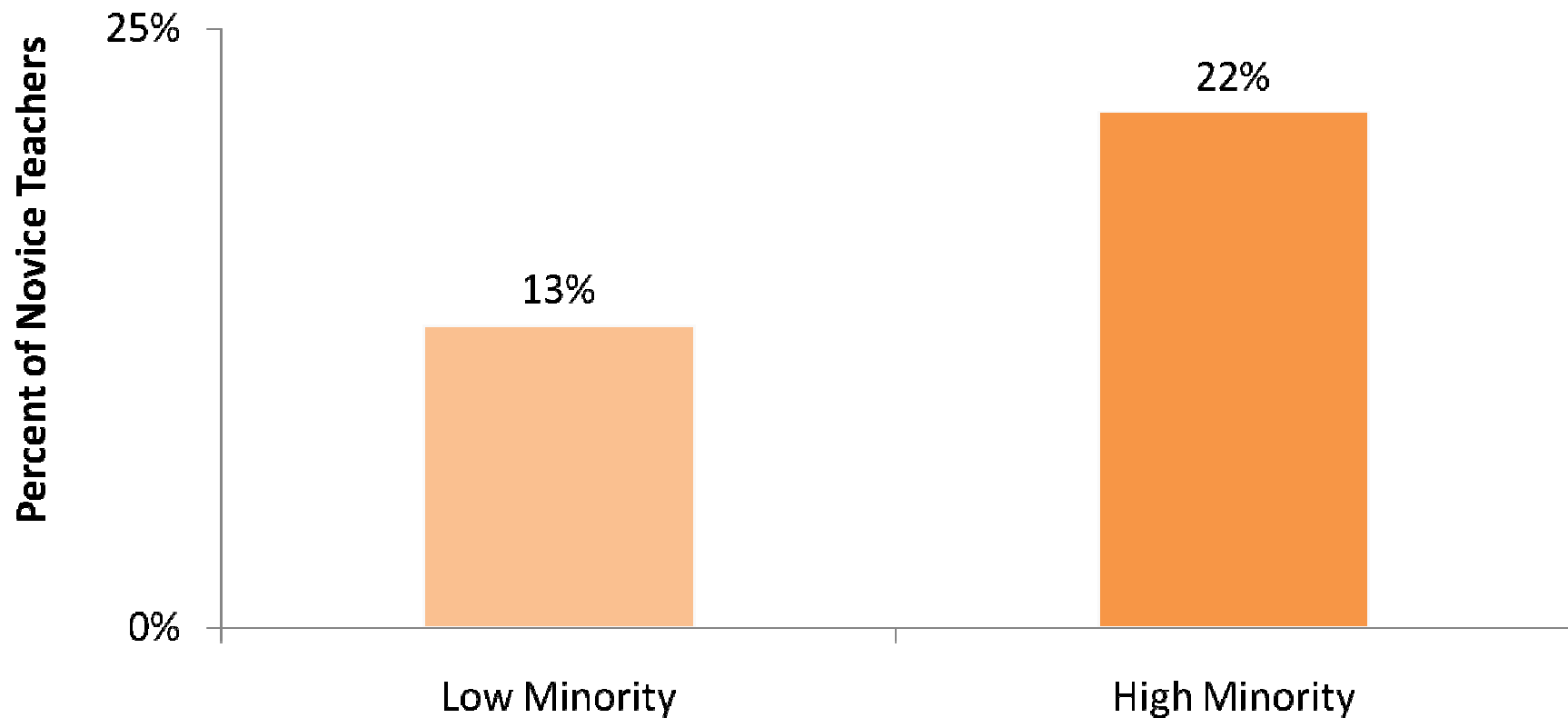
Source: NCES, "Eighth-Grade Algebra: Findings from the Eighth-Grade Round of the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 1998-99 (ECLS-K)" (2010).



And choices we make about  
*who* teaches whom...



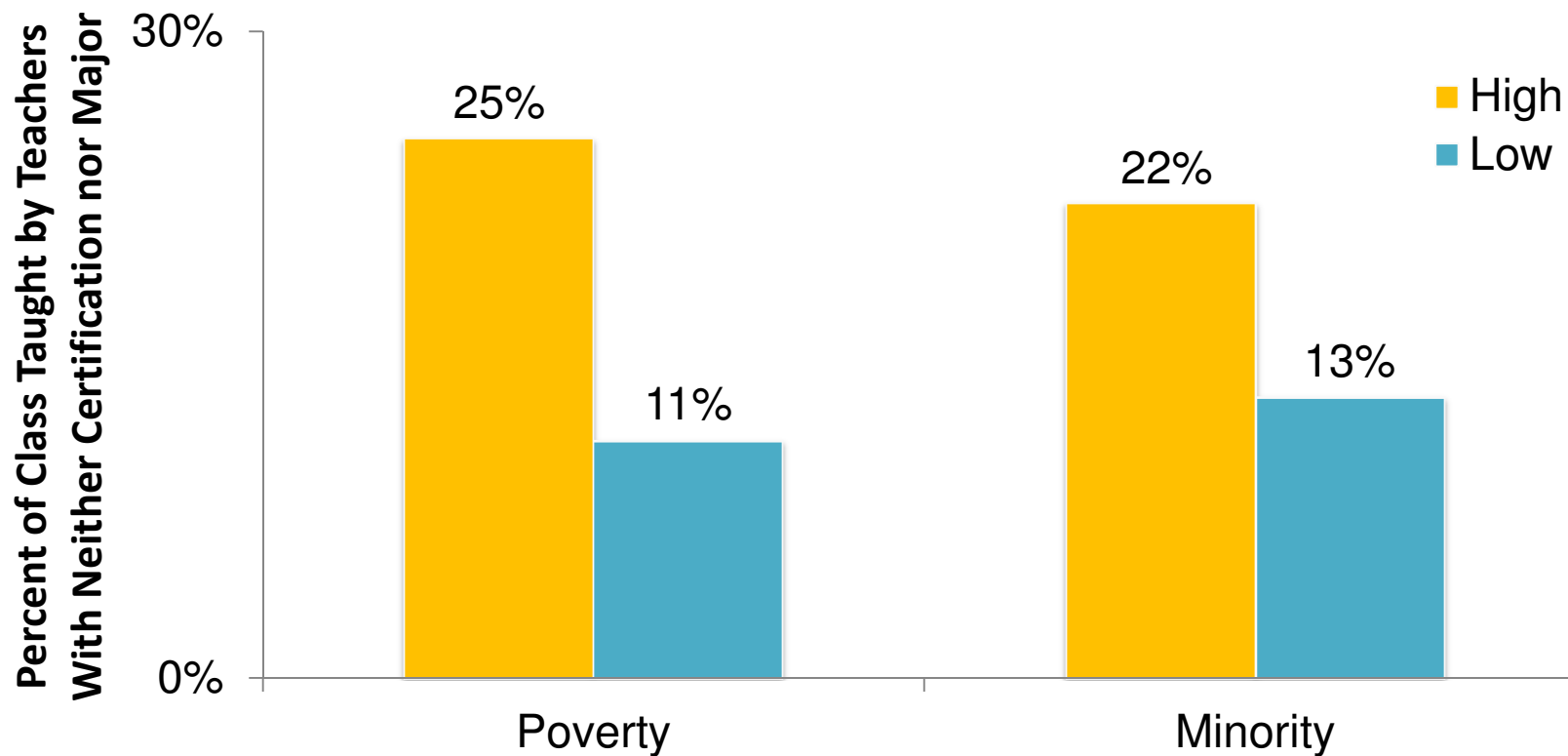
Students at high-minority schools more likely to be taught by novice\* teachers.



Note: High minority school: 75% or more of the students are Black, Hispanic, American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian or Pacific Islander. Low-minority school: 10% or fewer of the students are non-White students. Novice teachers are those with three years or fewer experience.

Source: Analysis of 2003-2004 Schools and Staffing Survey data by Richard Ingersoll, University of Pennsylvania 2007.

**Math** classes at high-poverty, high-minority secondary schools are more likely to be taught by out-of-field\* teachers.



Note: High-poverty school: 55 percent or more of the students are eligible for free/reduced-price lunch. Low-poverty school :15 percent or fewer of the students are eligible for free/reduced-price lunch. High-minority school: 78 percent or more of the students are black, Hispanic, American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian or Pacific Islander. Low-minority school : 12 percent or fewer of the students are non-white students with neither certification nor major. Data for secondary-level core academic classes (math, science, social studies, English) across the U.S.

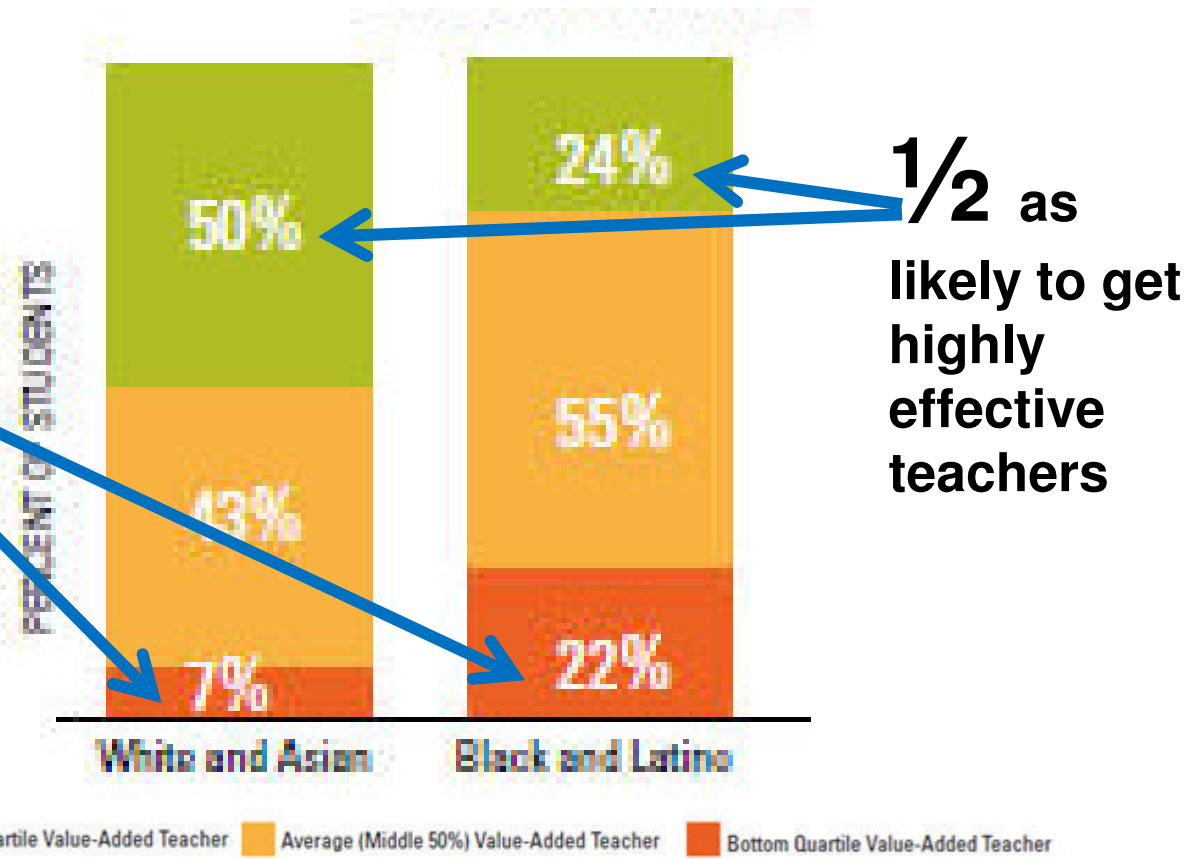
Source: Education Trust Analysis of 2007-08 Schools and Staffing Survey data.

# Los Angeles: Black, Latino students have fewer highly effective teachers, more weak ones.

## READING/LANGUAGE ARTS

Latino and black students are:

**3X** as likely to get low-effectiveness teachers




**1/2** as likely to get highly effective teachers

Source: Education Trust—West, *Learning Denied*, 2012.



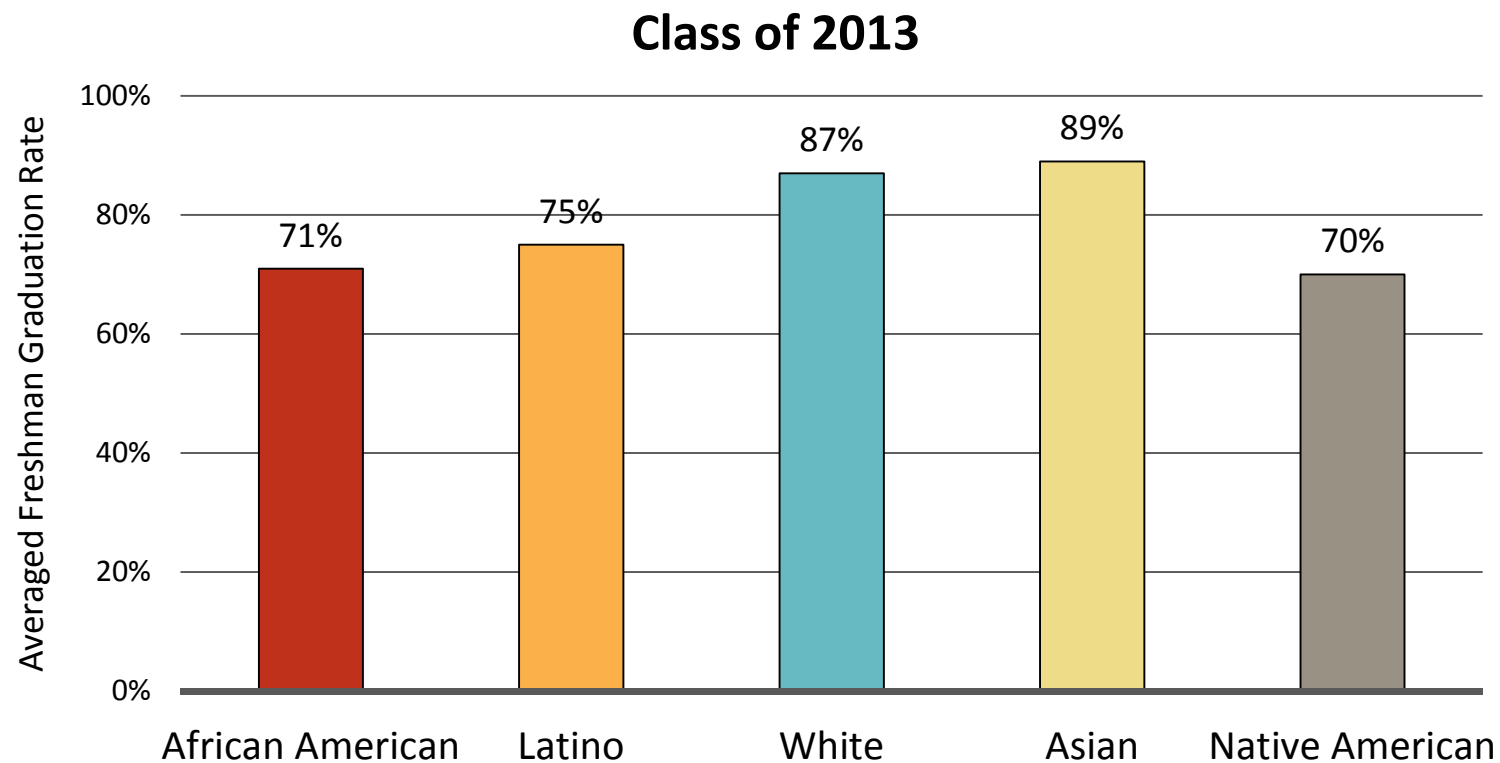
The results are devastating.

Kids who come in a little behind, leave a  
**lot** behind.



And these are the students who  
remain in school through 12<sup>th</sup>  
grade.

Students of color are less likely to graduate from high school on time.



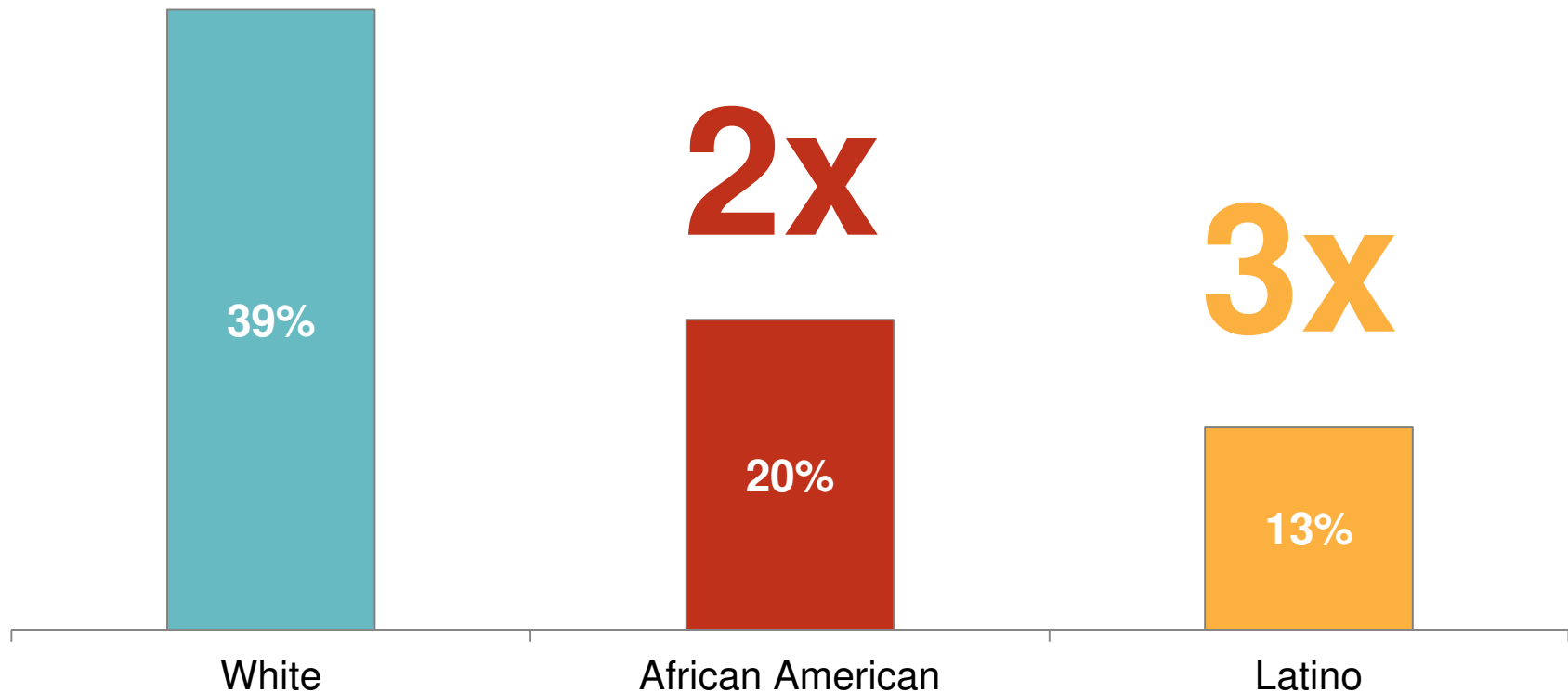
Source: National Center for Education Statistics, "Public School Graduates and Dropouts from the Common Core of Data: School Year 2008-09" (2011).

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Add those numbers up and throw  
in college entry and graduation,  
and different groups of young  
Americans obtain degrees and  
**very** different rates...

Whites attain bachelor's degrees at twice the rate of blacks and three times the rate of Hispanics.

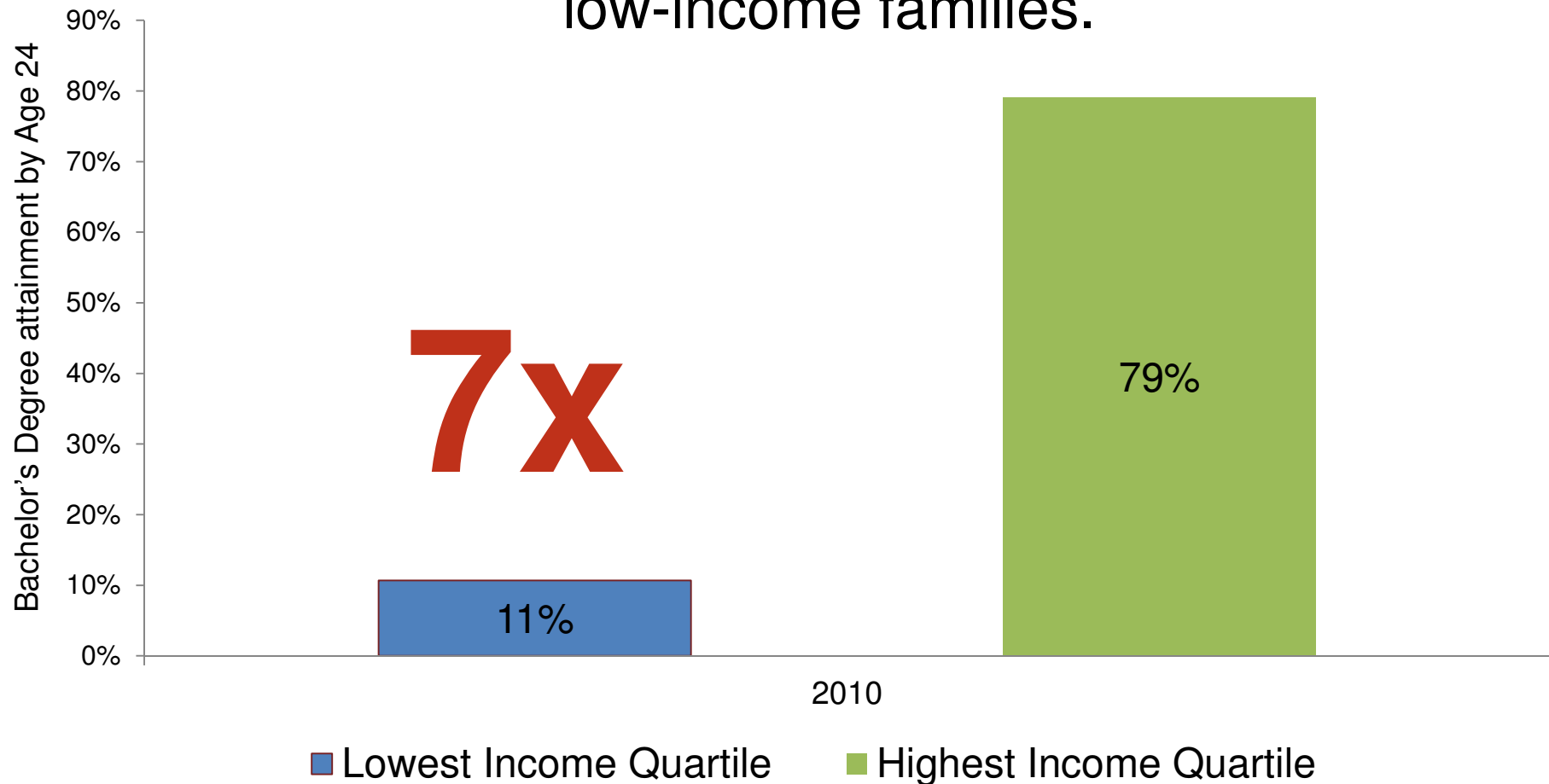
**Bachelor's Degree Attainment of Young Adults  
(25-29-year-olds), 2011**




Source: NCES, *Condition of Education* 2010 and U.S. Census Bureau, Educational Attainment in the United States: 2011.



Young people from high-income families earn bachelor's degrees at seven times the rate of those from low-income families.

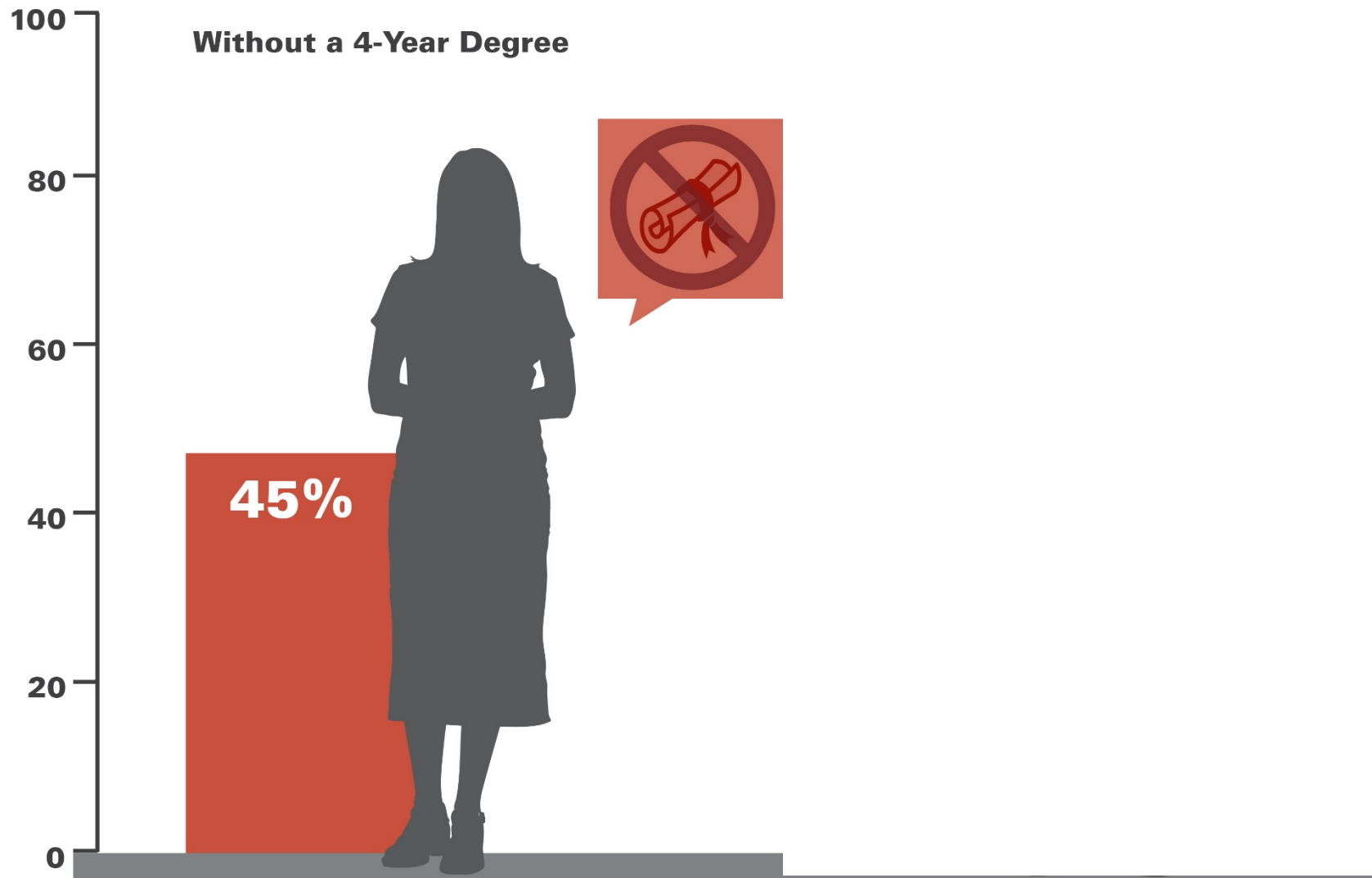


Source: Postsecondary Education Opportunity, "Bachelor's Degree Attainment by Age 24 by Family Income Quartiles, 1970 to 2010."



These numbers are not good news for  
our country—or for the lives of the young  
people in question.

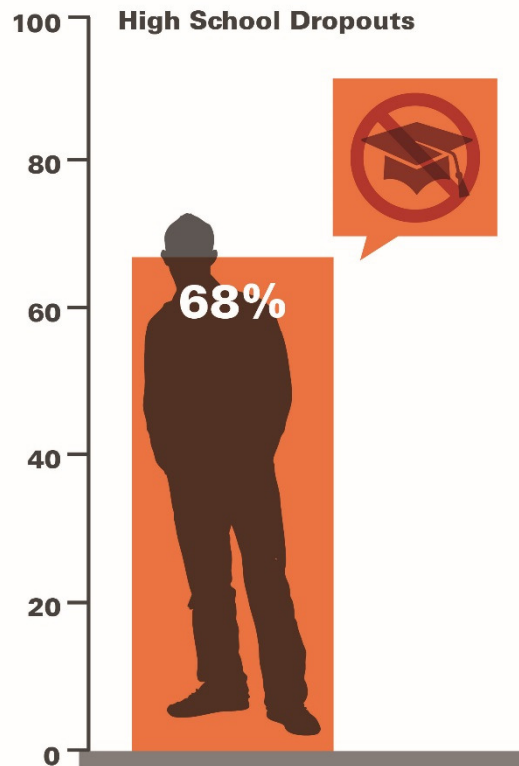
# Chances of Staying at the Bottom If You're Born at the Bottom



Source: Haskins, Holzer, and Lerman. Promoting Economic Mobility by Increasing Postsecondary Education.  
Economic Mobility Project, Pew Charitable Trusts, 2009

# Among black men, education makes a huge difference in life outcomes

## Cumulative Risk of Imprisonment by Age 34 for Young Black Men:



Source: Bruce Western and Becky Pe






# What Can We Do?

An awful lot of Americans have decided  
that we can't do much.

# What We Hear Many Educators Say:

- They're poor
- Their parents don't care
- They come to schools without breakfast
- Not enough books
- Not enough parents




Let's be clear, these things do  
matter.



# Child Poverty in the US, 2013

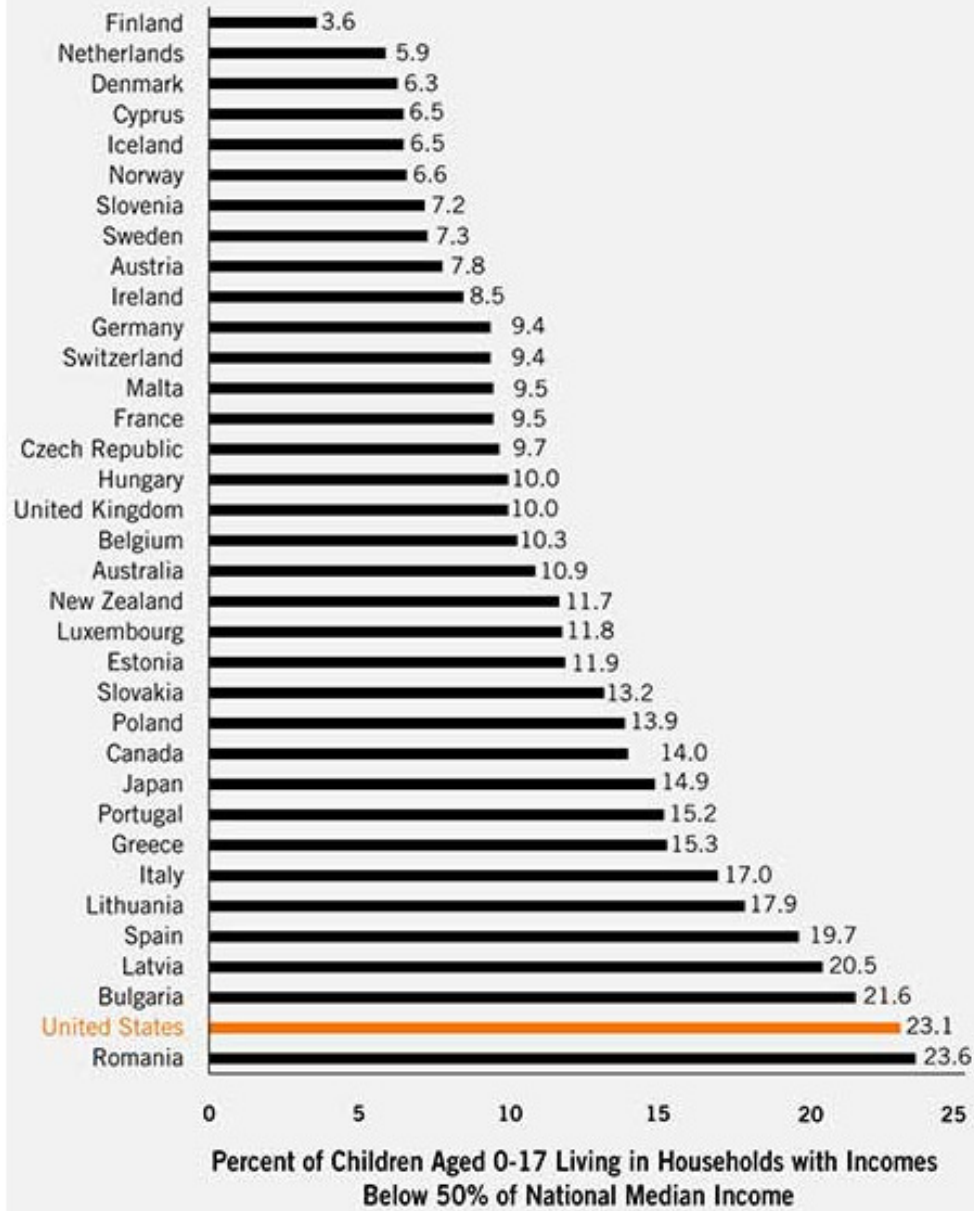
White	13.4%
Black	36.9%
Hispanic	30.4%
Asian	9.6%
ALL	19.9%

Source: US Census Bureau




And let's also be clear: tolerating high child poverty rates is a policy choice. Though we remain the richest nation on earth...

## U.S. Ranks Second to Last in Child Poverty



Source: Unicef, 2013

Yet, how **we** as educators  
respond to the effects of that  
choice ***is a choice, too.***



We can choose to go along with what has become *conventional wisdom* in our profession—that, until we fix poverty, there's not much we educators can do...

Or we can *choose differently*.

...joining colleagues in schools all over this country that serve very poor kids but get very good results.

# George Hall Elementary School

## Mobile, Alabama

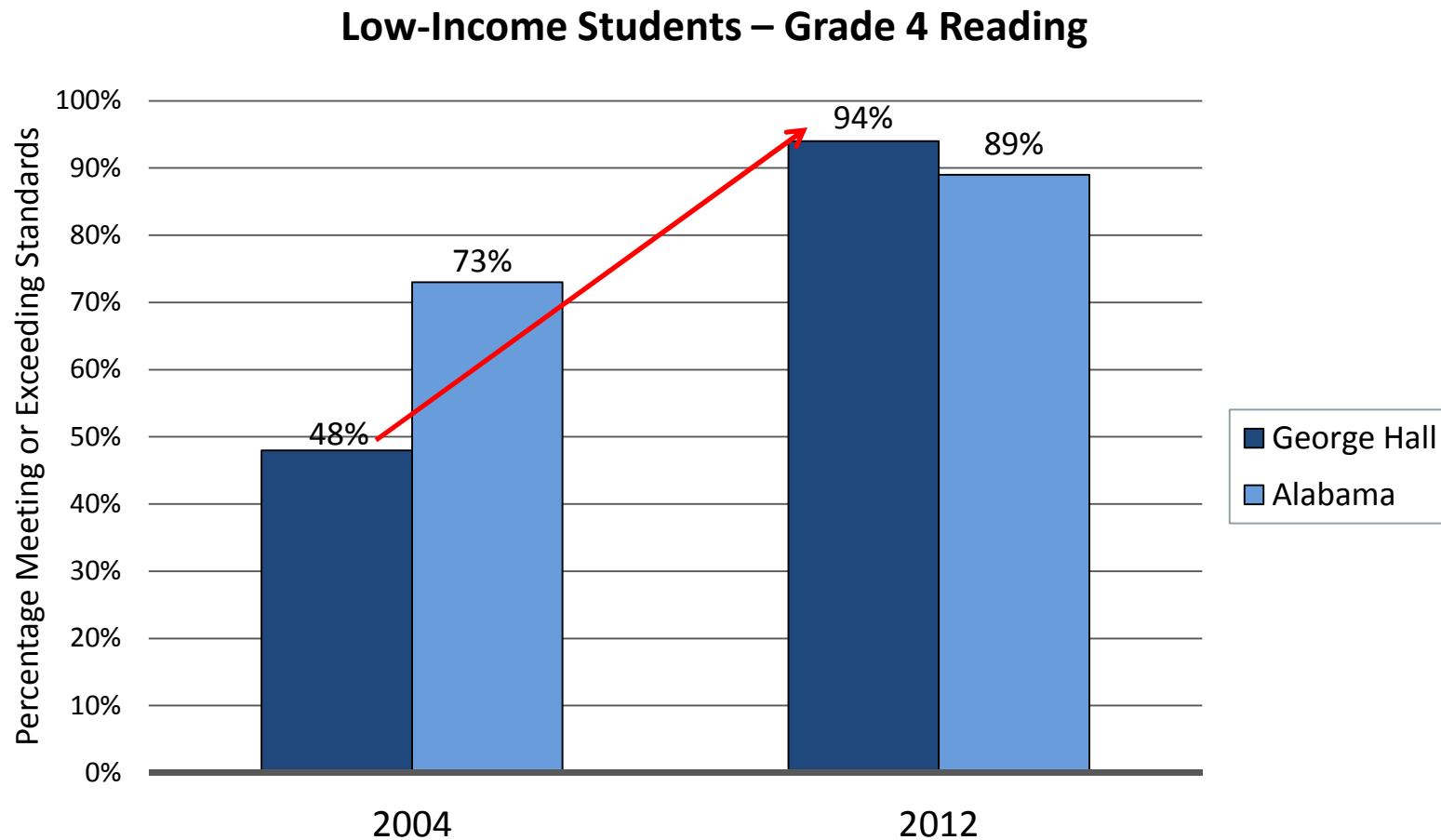
- 545 students in grades PK-5
  - 99% African American
- 98% Low Income



Note: Enrollment data are for 2011-12 school year  
Source: Alabama Department of Education

 **DISPELLING THE MYTH**  
*2009 Award Recipient*

# Big Improvement at George Hall Elementary

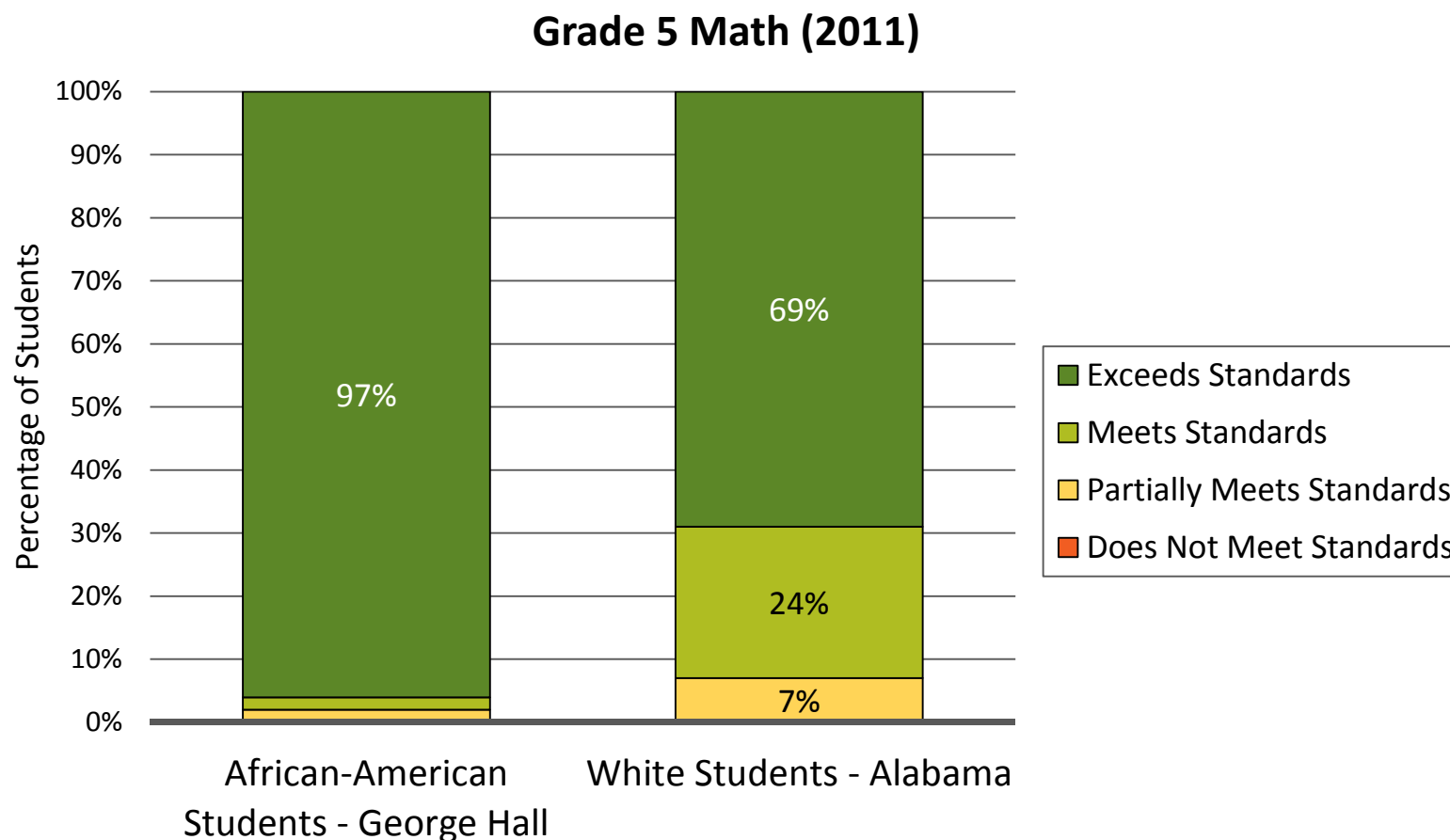


Source: Alabama Department of Education

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# Exceeding Standards: George Hall students outperform white students in Alabama



Source: Alabama Department of Education

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# Halle Hewetson Elementary School

## Las Vegas, NV

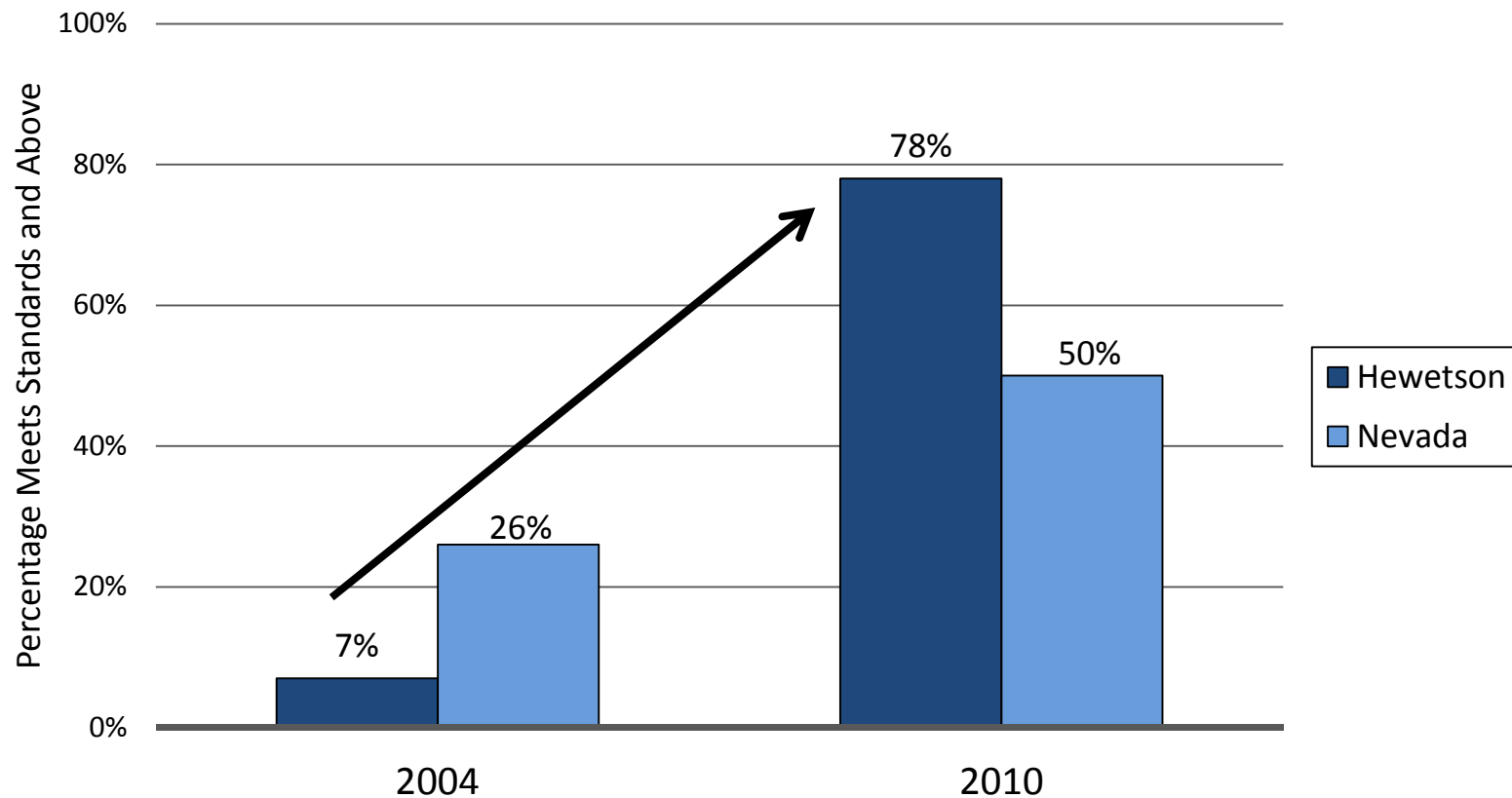
- 962 students in grades PK – 5
  - 85% Latino
  - 7% African American
- 100% Low Income
- 71% Limited English Proficient



Note: Data are for 2010-2011 school year  
Source: Nevada Department of Education

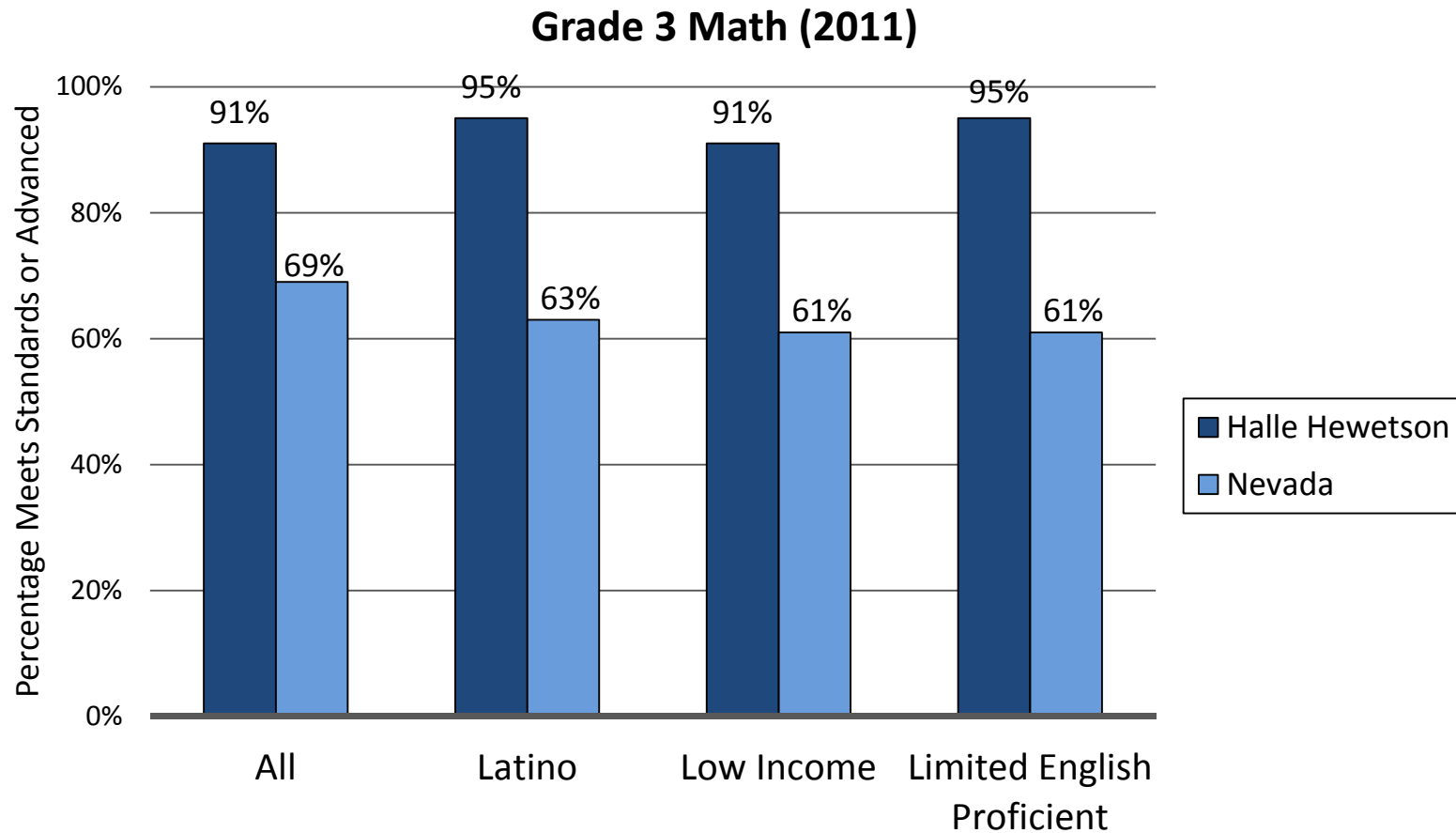
# Big Improvement at Halle Hewetson Elementary

## Latino Students – Grade 3 Reading



Source: Nevada Department of Education

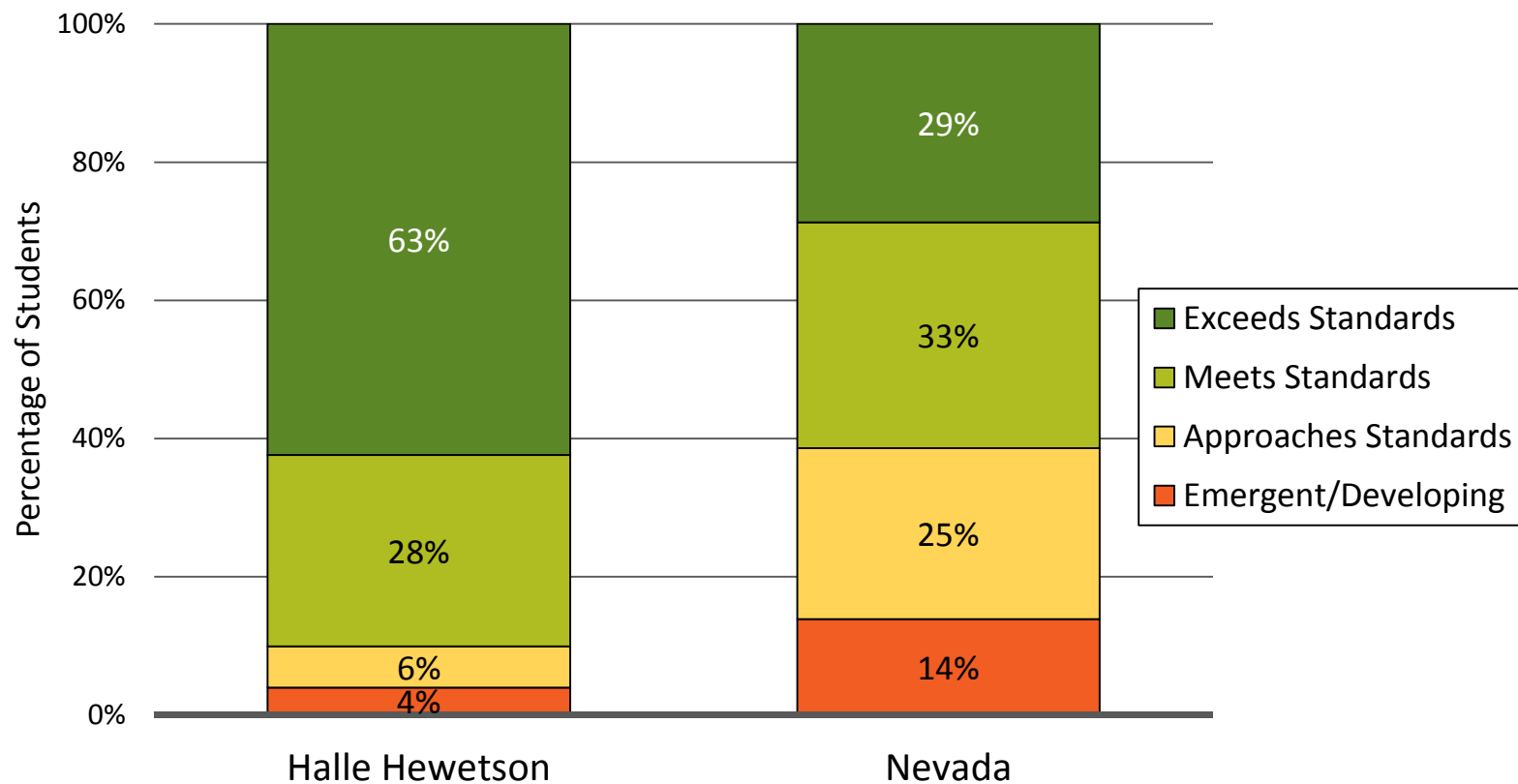
# High Performance Across Groups at Halle Hewetson Elementary



Source: Nevada Department of Education

# Exceeding Standards at Halle Hewetson Elementary

Low-Income Students – Grade 3 Math (2011)



Source: Nevada Department of Education

# Elmont Memorial High School

## Elmont, New York

2011-2012 School Year

- 1,907 students in grades 7-12
  - 78% African American
  - 12% Latino

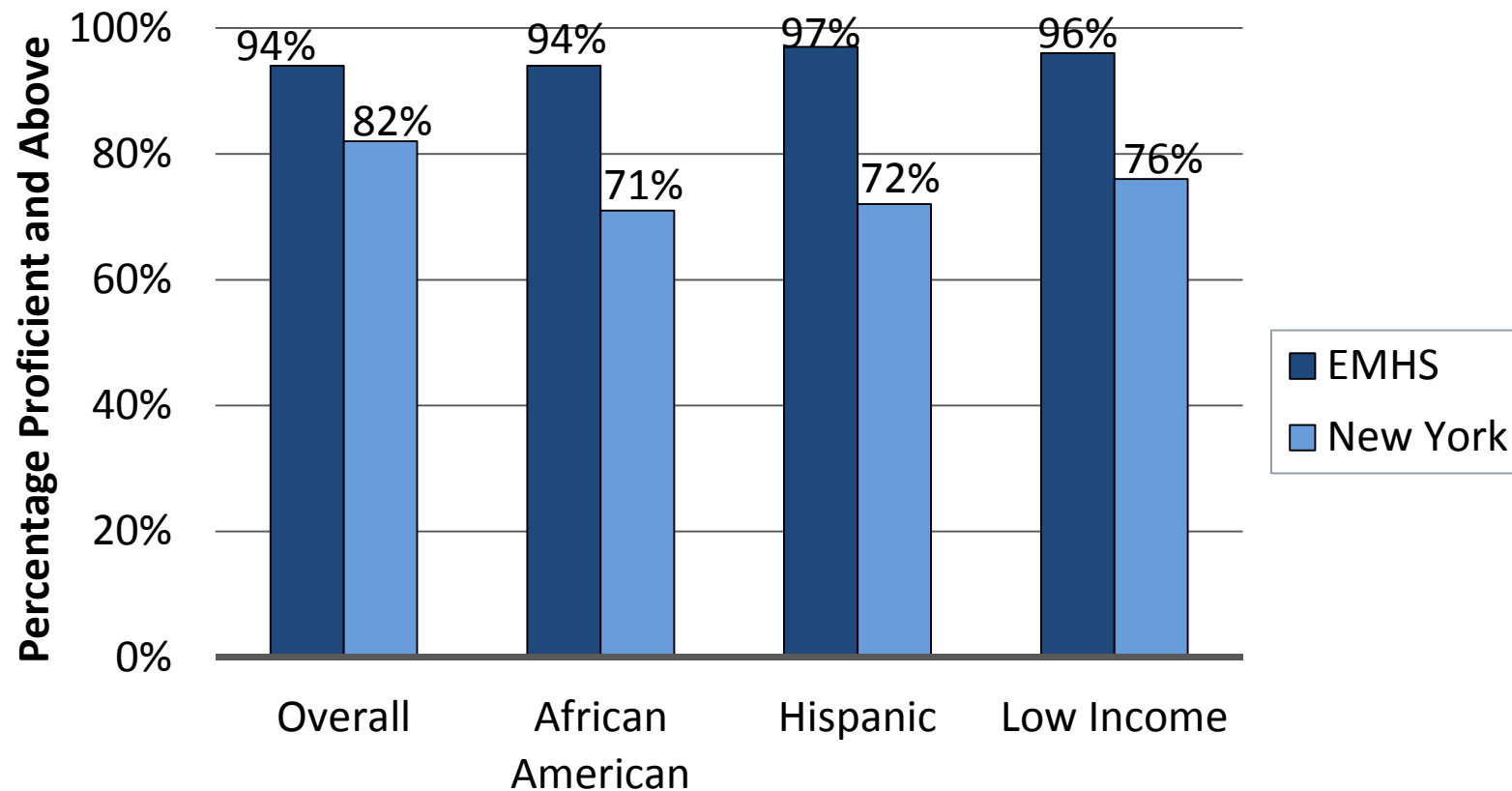


Source: New York Department of Education

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# High Performance by ALL Students at Elmont Memorial High School

## Secondary Level Math (2012)

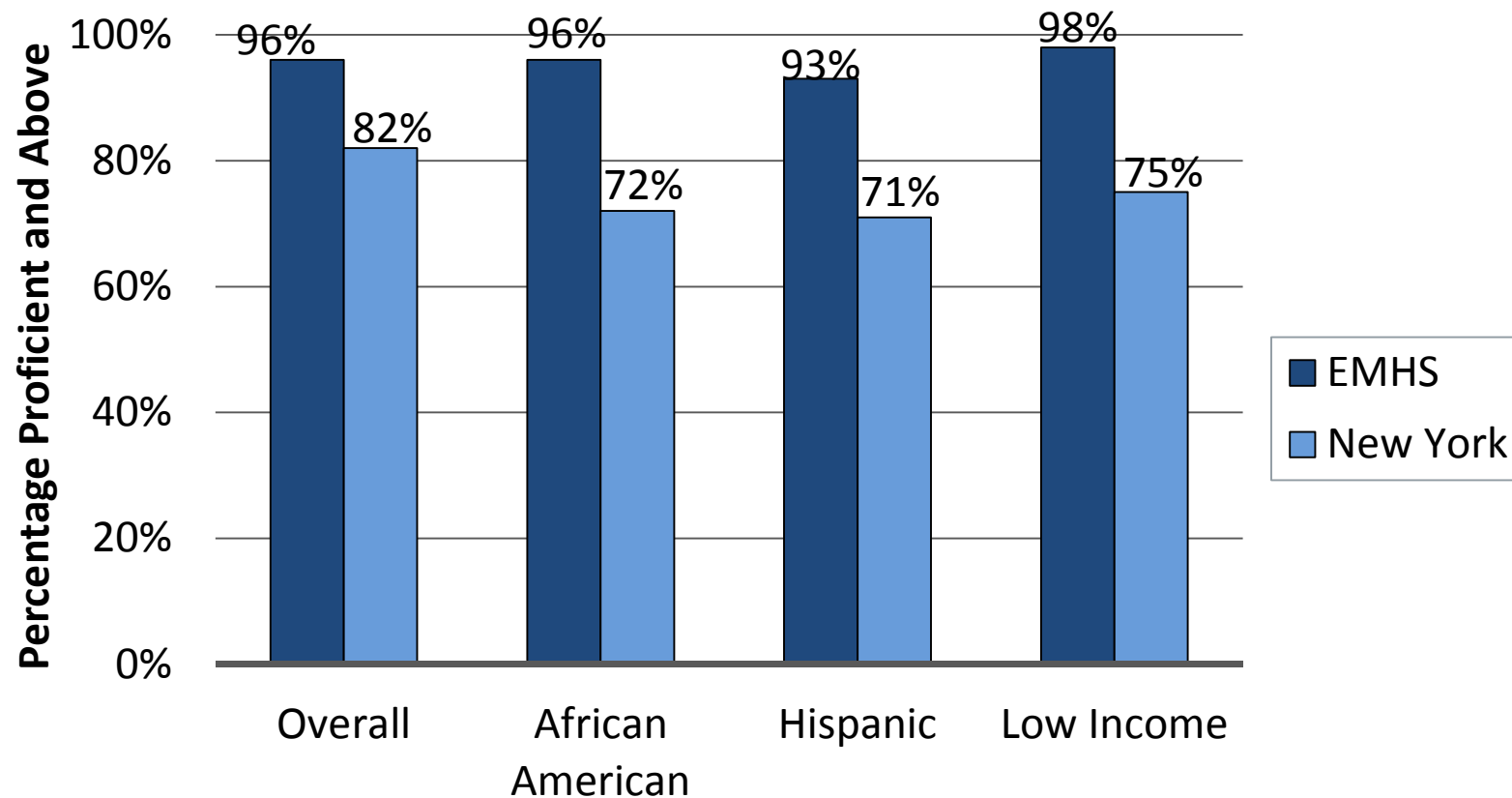


Source: New York Department of Education <https://reportcards.nysed.gov/schools.php?district=800000049235&year=2012>

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# High Performance by ALL Students at Elmont Memorial High School

## Secondary Level English (2012)

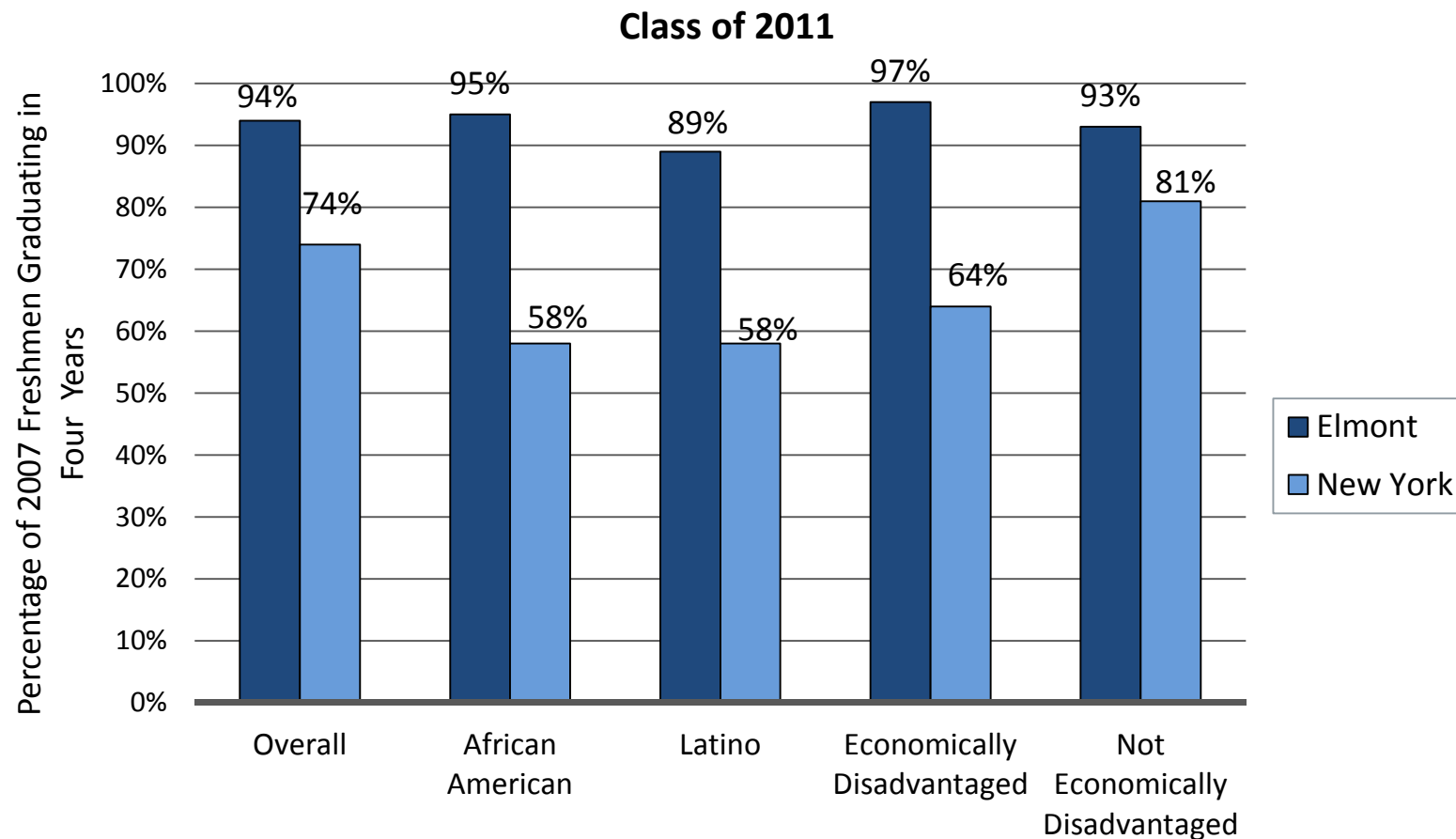


Source: New York Department of Education <https://reportcards.nysed.gov/schools.php?district=800000049235&year=2012>

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# High Graduation Rates at Elmont Memorial High School

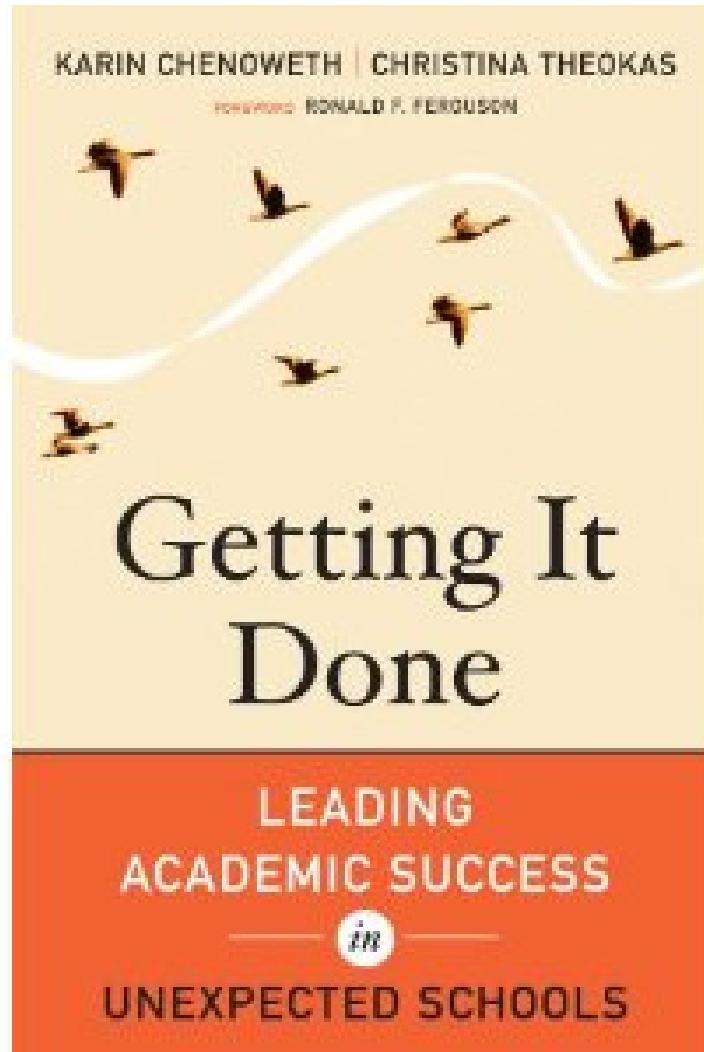


Note: Includes students graduating by June 2011.  
Source: New York State Department of Education

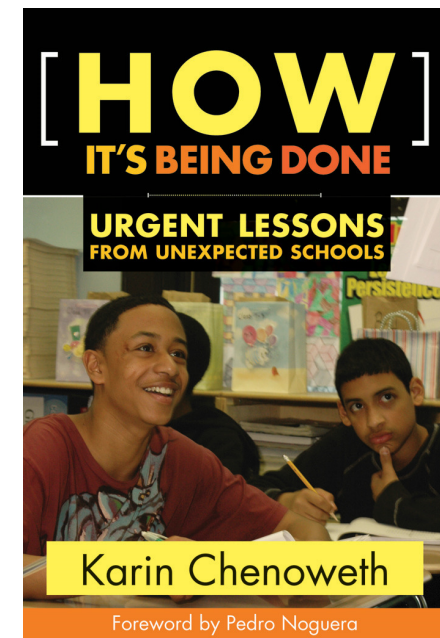
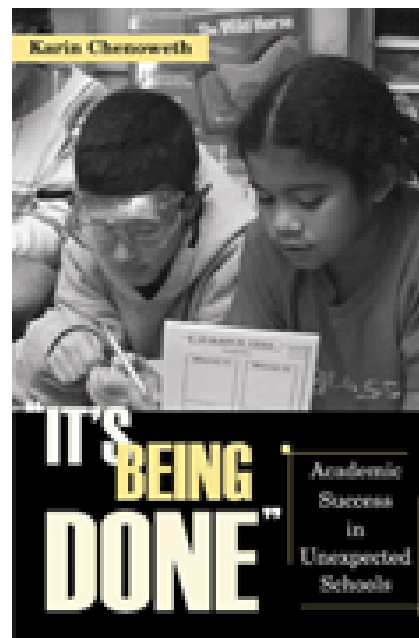
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This is what happens when  
teams of educators choose  
differently.



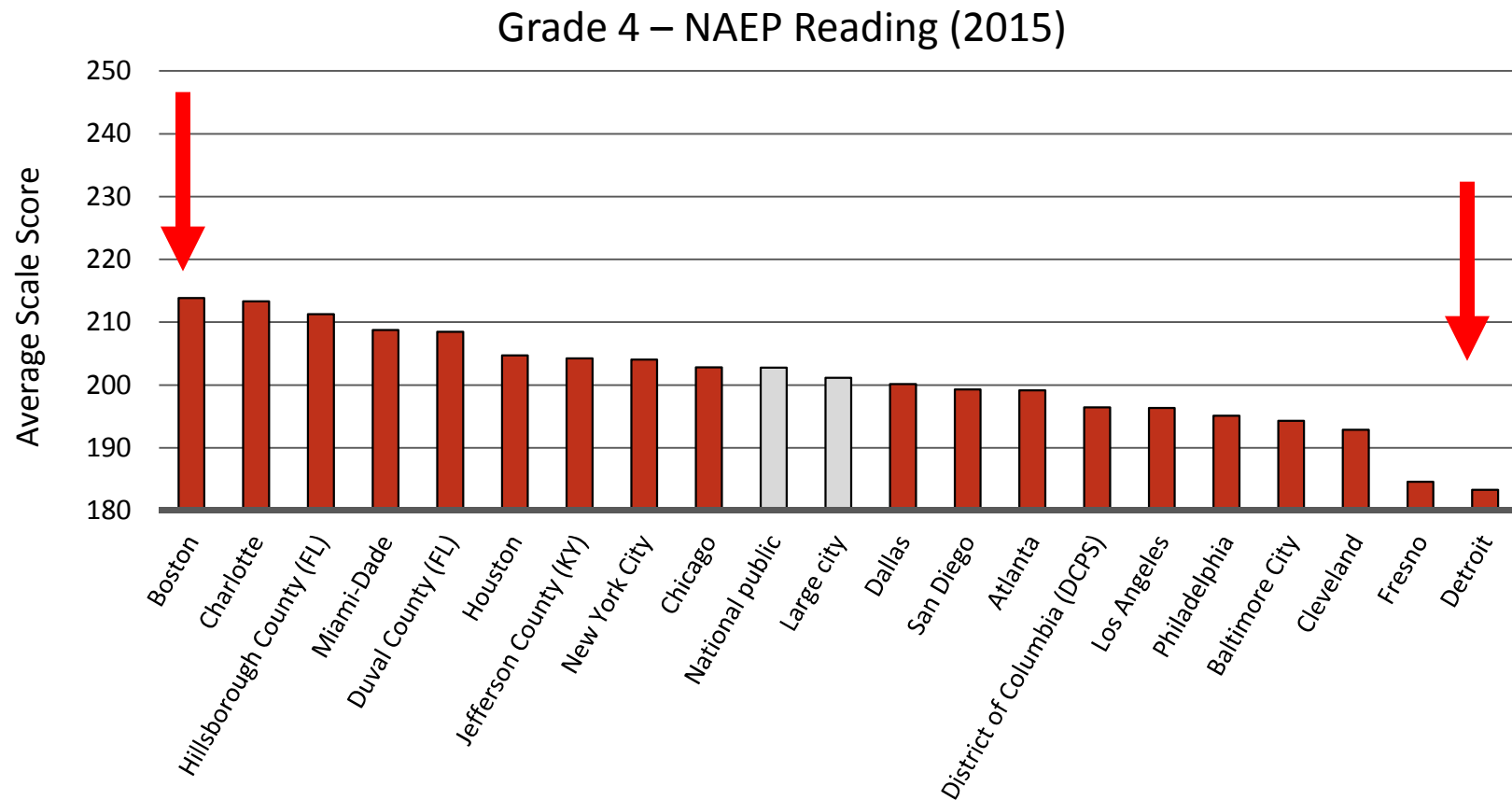
Available from  
Harvard Education  
Press and amazon.com



# Just flukes, outliers?

No. Very big differences at district level, too—even in the progress and performance of the “same” group of students.

# Average Scale Scores, by District Low-Income African American Students

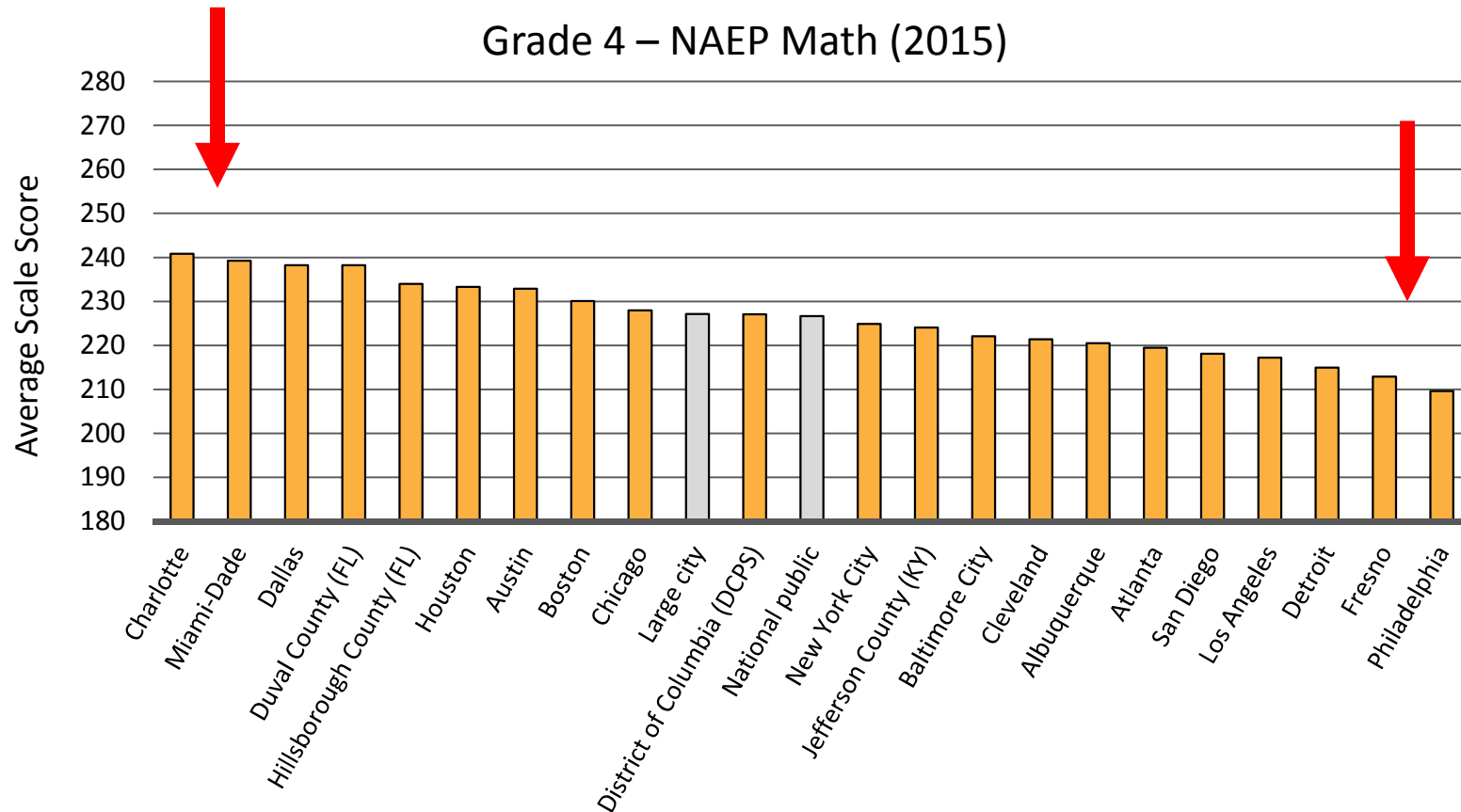


Note: Basic Scale Score = 208; Proficient Scale Score = 238

Source: NAEP Data Explorer, NCES

e:

## Average Scale Scores, by District Low-Income Latino Students



Note: Basic Scale Score = 214; Proficient Scale Score = 249

Source: NAEP Data Explorer, NCES

e:



Bottom Line:  
What We Do Matters!




Over the next 40 minutes, we're going to take a trip to 2 very different schools.


In one of those schools, you will see many of the practices that we see in every one of the schools across the country that is hitting it out of the park for poor kids...



- Rigorous academic expectations for all students;
- Nothing about teaching or learning left to chance;
- Coherent supports for students;
- Principal not the only leader in the school.




But most of all, what you will see is  
educators who understand the enormous  
power they have to shape children's  
lives.




They know that it's not about heroic  
individuals.


That path, as we all know, is  
unsustainable.



But they have seen the awesome power  
of the collective—some describe it as the  
“huddle”—to lift children up.



As educators, we have enormous power  
to pave the path upward for far more  
children...

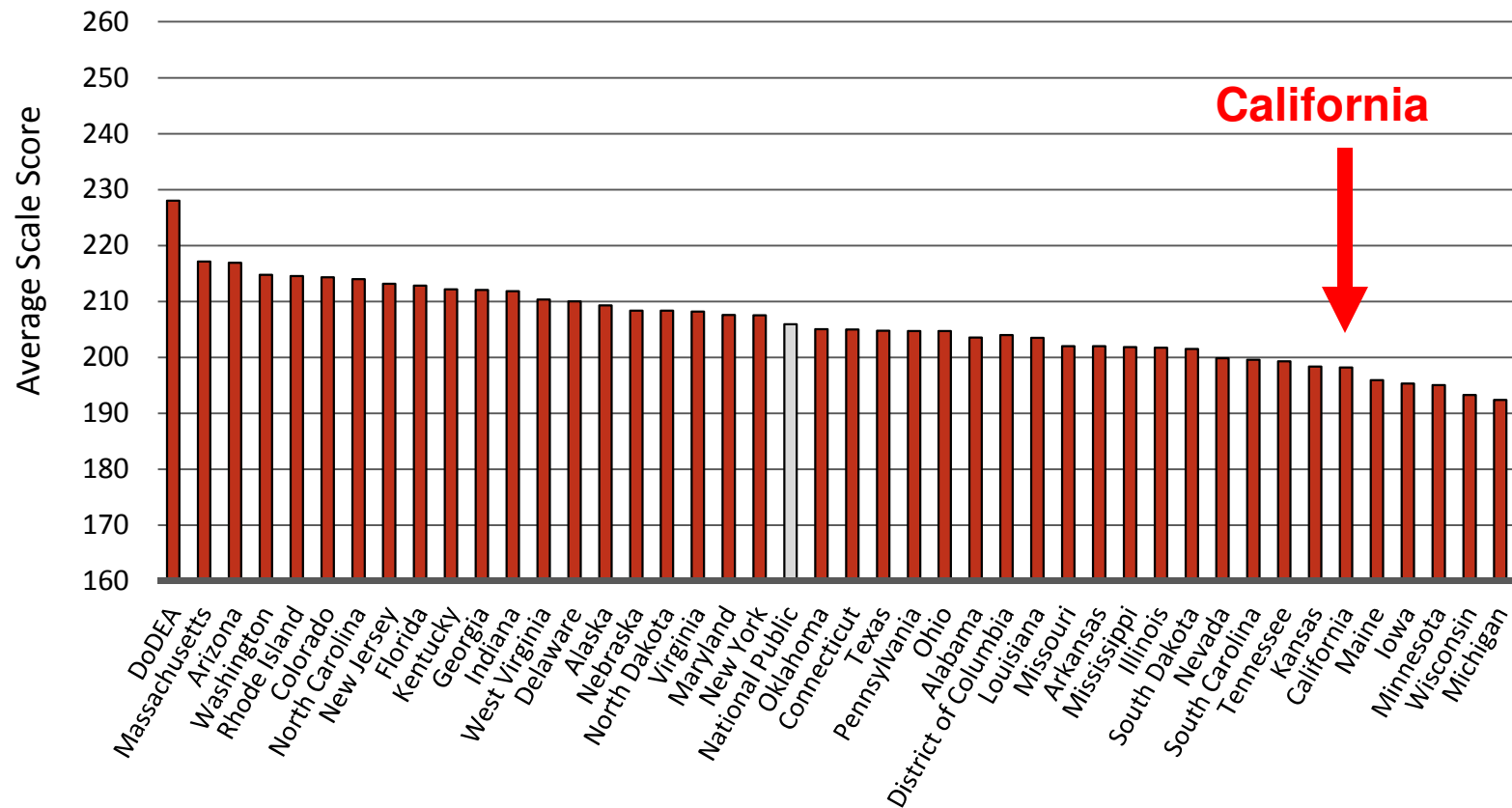


And, as the following data on children of color in California make clear, they need us to exercise that power.

# Scale Scores by State – African American Students

## California, 6<sup>th</sup> from bottom

### Grade 4 – NAEP Reading (2015)

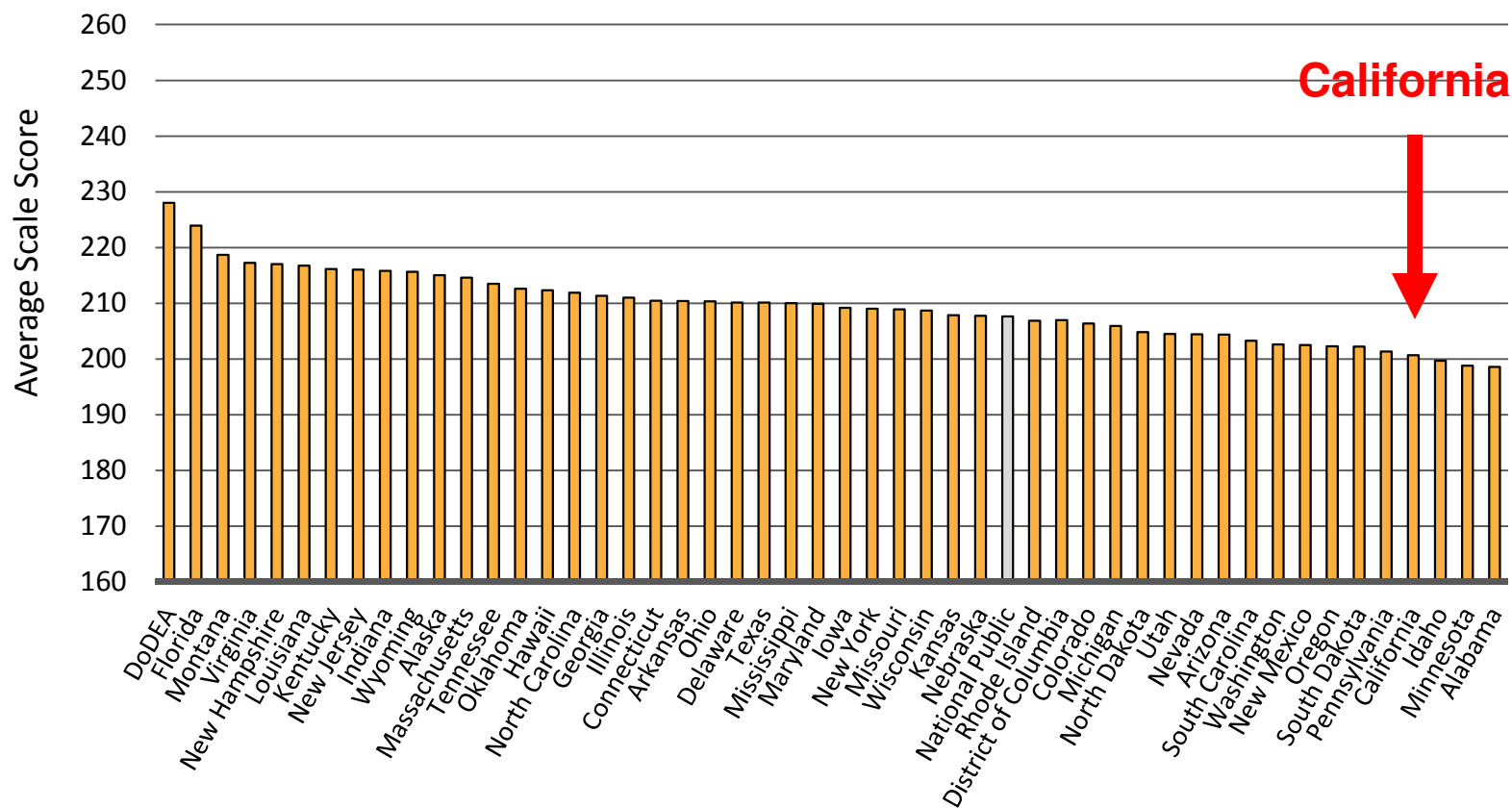


- NAEP Data Explorer, NCES (Proficient Scale Score = 238; Basic Scale Score = 208)

# Scale Scores by State – Latino Students

## California, 4<sup>th</sup> from bottom

### Grade 4 – NAEP Reading (2015)



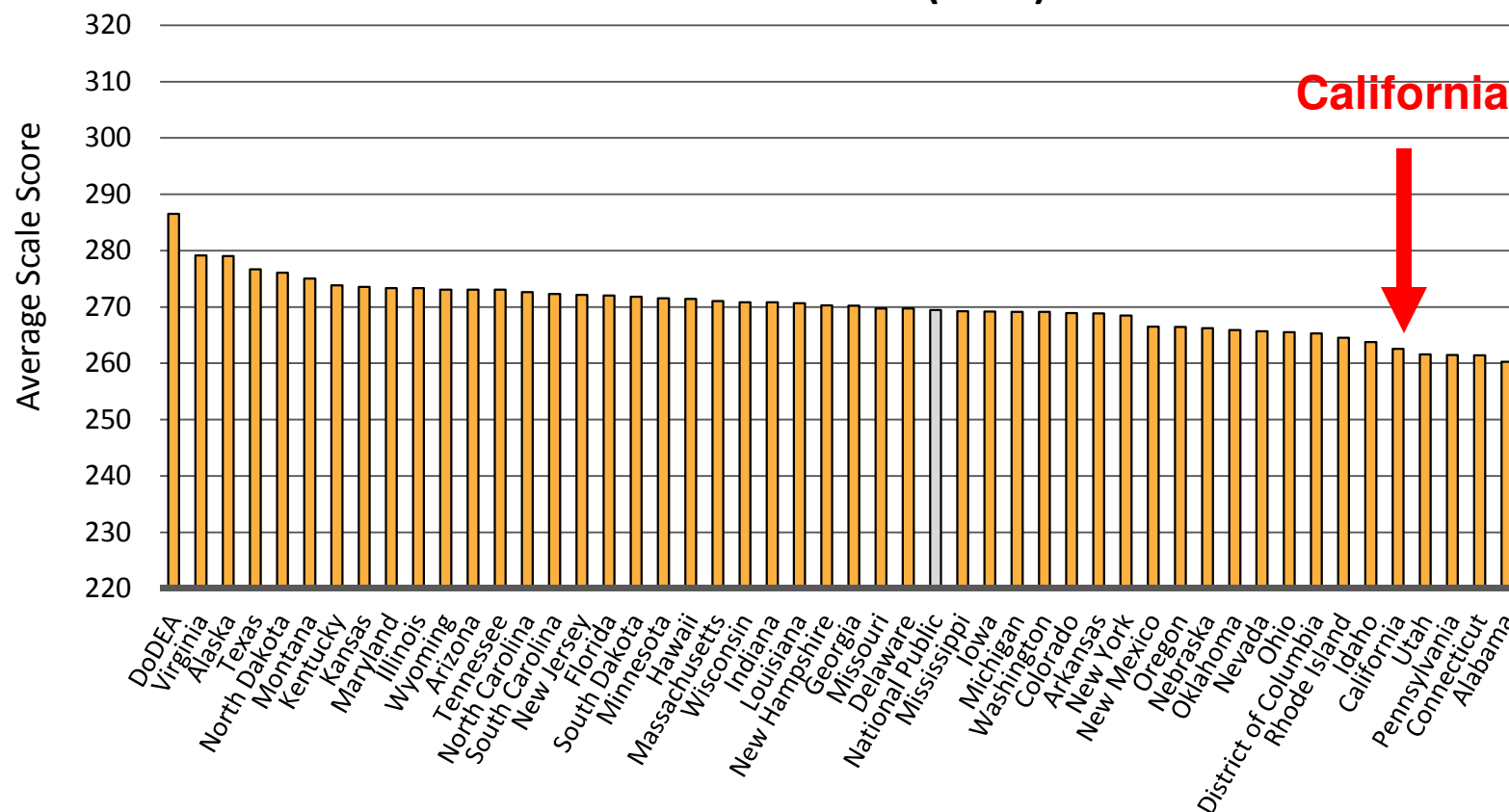
- NAEP Data Explorer, NCES (Proficient Scale Score = 238; Basic Scale Score = 208)



# Scale Scores by State – Latino Students

## California, 5<sup>th</sup> from bottom

Grade 8 – NAEP Math (2015)

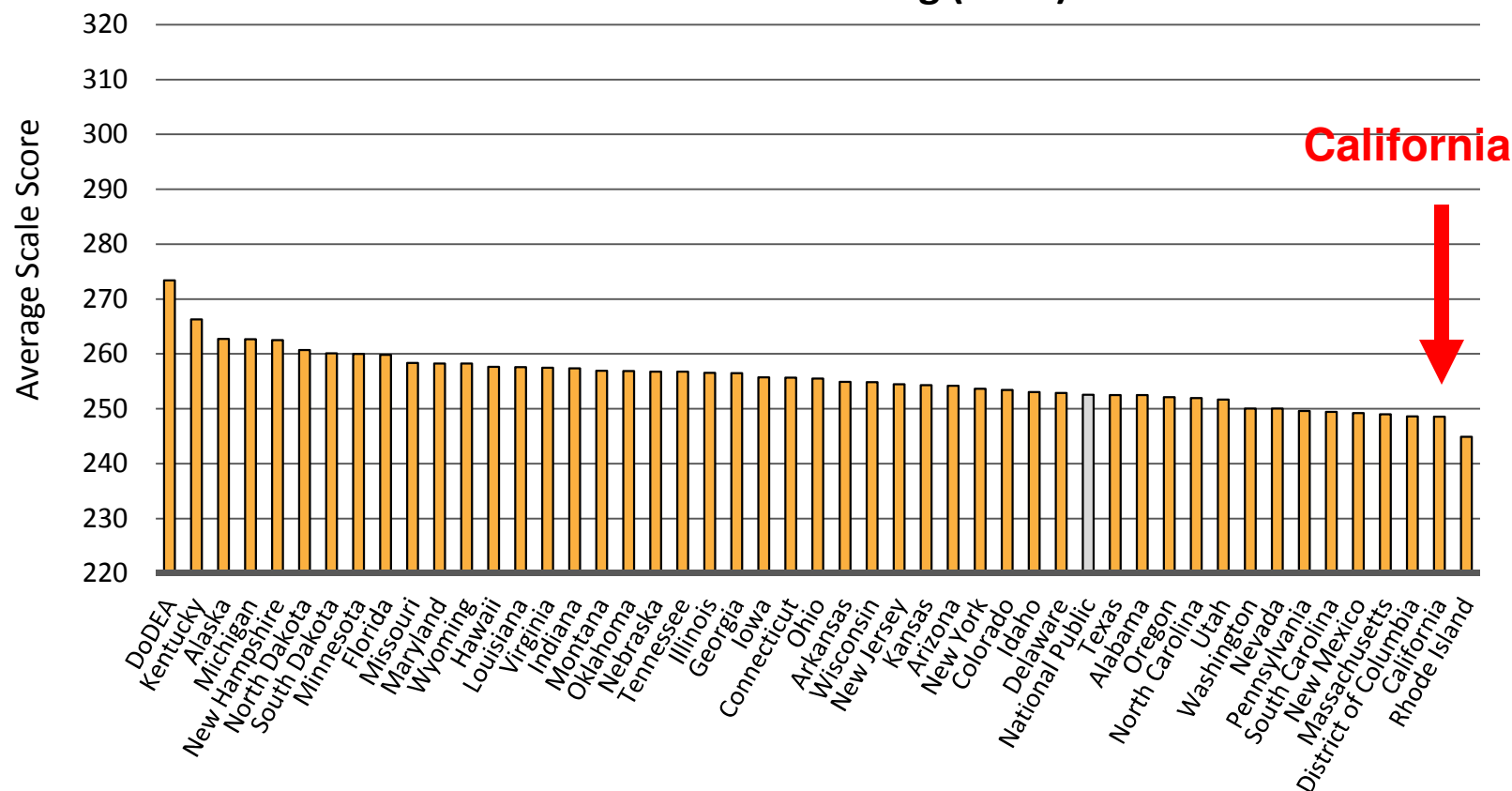


Source: NAEP Data Explorer, NCES (Proficient Scale Score = 299; Basic Scale Score = 262)

# Scale Scores by State – Latino Students

## California, next to last

Grade 8 – NAEP Reading (2015)



Source: NAEP Data Explorer, NCES (Proficient Scale Score = 281; Basic Scale Score = 243)

e:

# CATALYST

This school year, Catalyze change.



Download this presentation or bring *Catalyst* to  
your District

[www.edtrust.org](http://www.edtrust.org)  
[bhaycock@edtrust.org](mailto:bhaycock@edtrust.org)

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