

# Why It Matters Who Your Classmates Are: A National Perspective

Great Schools in Wake Coalition

Richard D. Kahlenberg

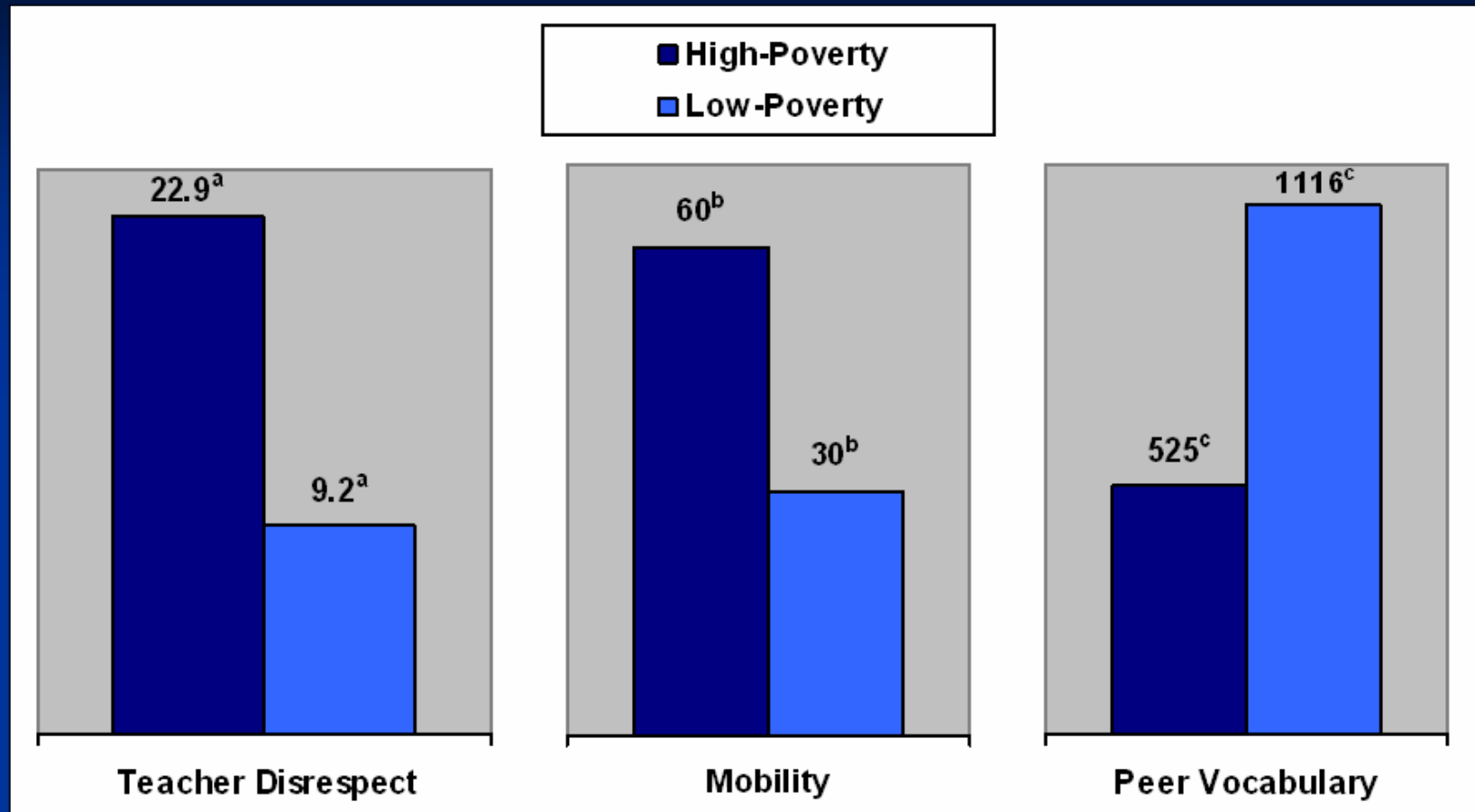
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North Carolina State University

# 40 Years of Research

- 1966 Coleman Report: SES of family the biggest predictor of achievement; SES of school the second biggest predictor.
- 2006 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) for 15 year olds in science showed a “clear advantage in attending a school whose students are, on average, from more advantaged socioeconomic backgrounds.” Finland least economically segregated
- 2006 Douglas Harris CAP study: Math data from 18 million students found minority students have greater gains in racially integrated schools and that “a substantial portion of the ‘racial composition’ effect is really due to poverty and peer achievement.”

# Classmate Characteristics, by School or Student SES



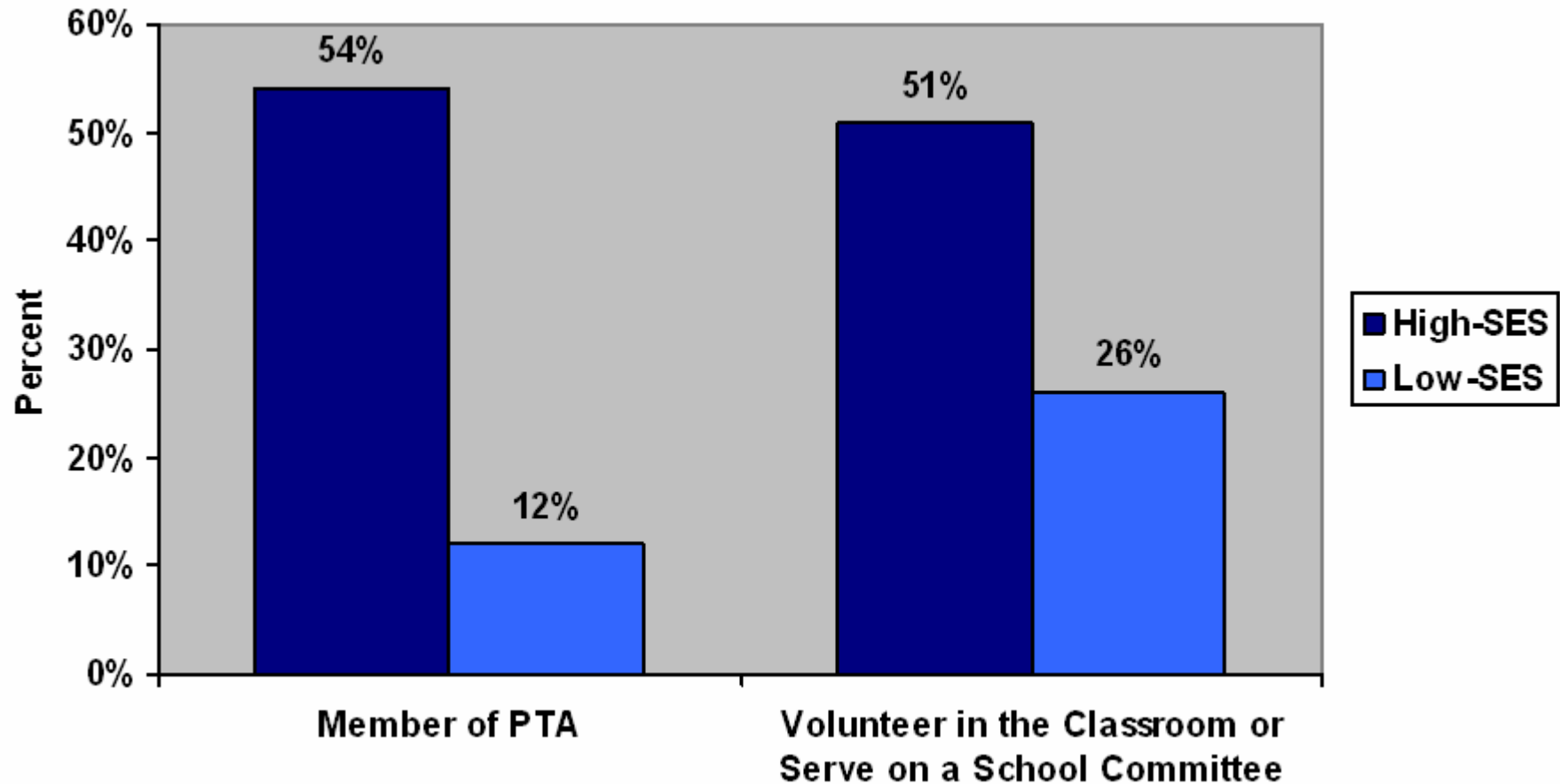
a Percentage of schools reporting student acts of disrespect for teachers in classrooms at least once per week. High-poverty refers to schools with 50 percent or more of their students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch; and low-poverty refers to schools with 20% or less of their students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.

b Percentage of students who have attended two or more schools between first and third grades. High-poverty refers to the study's lowest family income group (family income is less than \$10,000). Low-poverty refers to the study's highest family income group (family income is \$50,000 or more).

c Number of words in student's vocabulary by 36 months of age. High-poverty means child is part of a family receiving welfare, and low-poverty means child is part of a professional family.

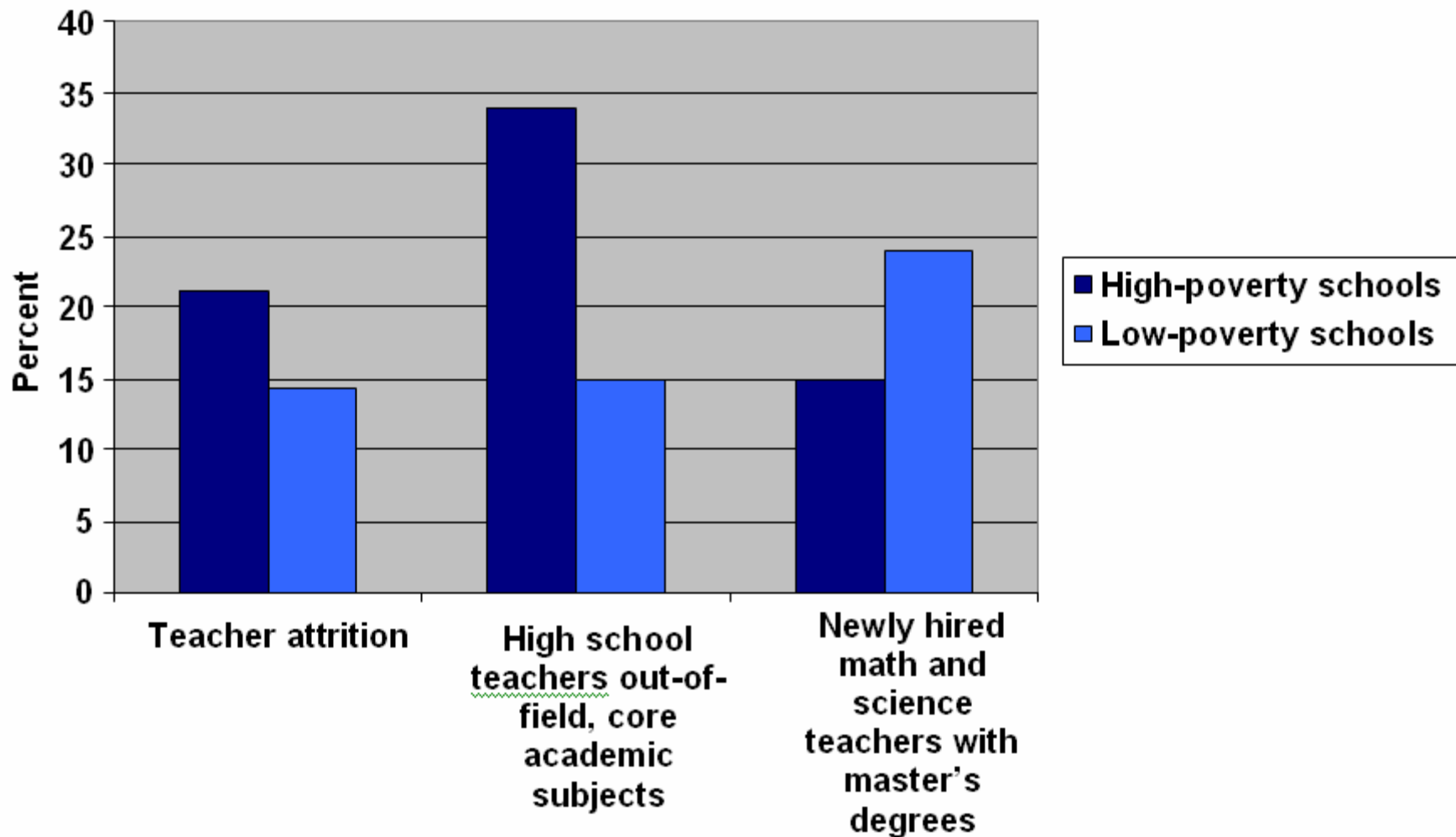
Source: Rachel Dinkes, Emily Forrest Cataldi, and Wendy Lin-Kelly, *Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2008*, National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, D.C., December 2008, Table 7.2, p. 99 (teacher disrespect); U.S. General Accounting Office, *Elementary School Children: Many Change Schools Frequently, Harming Their Education* (Washington, DC: U.S. General Accounting Office, 1994) (mobility); and Paul Barton and Richard Coley, *Windows on Achievement and Inequality* (Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service, 2008), p. 9, Figure 2 (vocabulary).

# Parental Involvement, by Student SES



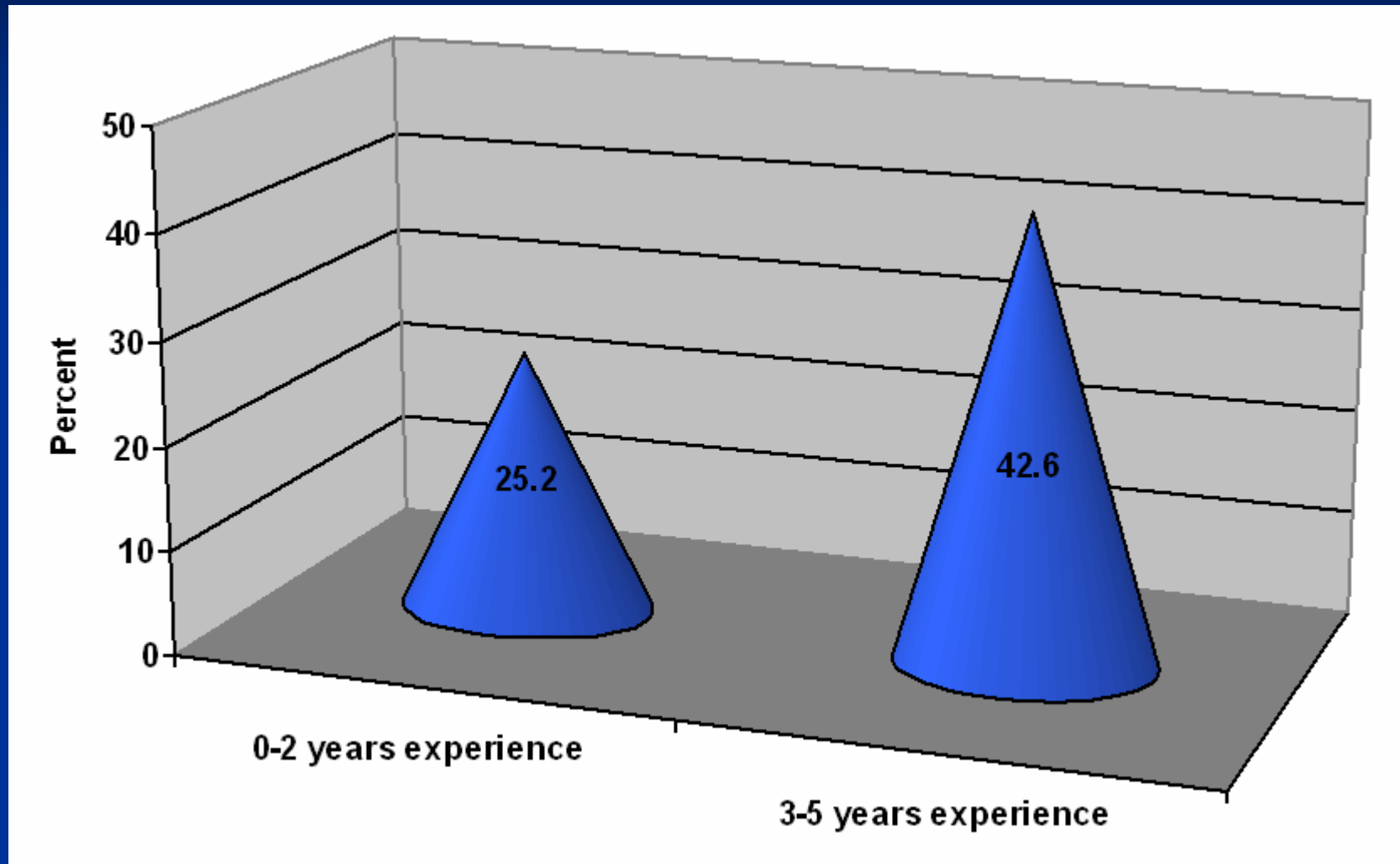
*Source:* 1988 National Educational Longitudinal Study data on PTA membership cited in Richard D. Kahlenberg, *All Together Now* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2001), p. 62; National Center for Education Statistics, *Parent and Family Involvement in Education, 2006-07 School Year*, August 2008, p. 9, Table 3 (volunteer and committee service). NCES considers students living in households with incomes below the poverty threshold to be poor, or low-SES. Both studies gauge parental involvement based on the socioeconomic status of students—not schools.

# Teaching Quality, by School SES



Source: U.S. Department of Education, *The Condition of Education 2008* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2008), p. 51; Richard M. Ingersoll, cited in "Parsing the Achievement Gap," Educational Testing Service, 2003, p. 11; Linda Darling-Hammond, "Doing What Matters Most: Investing in Quality Teaching," National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 1997, pp. 25–27.

## Salary Increase Needed to Counteract Turnover Effects Caused by Differences in Student Characteristics Between Large Urban and Suburban Districts, by Experience Class of Teacher (for Female, Nonminority Teachers)

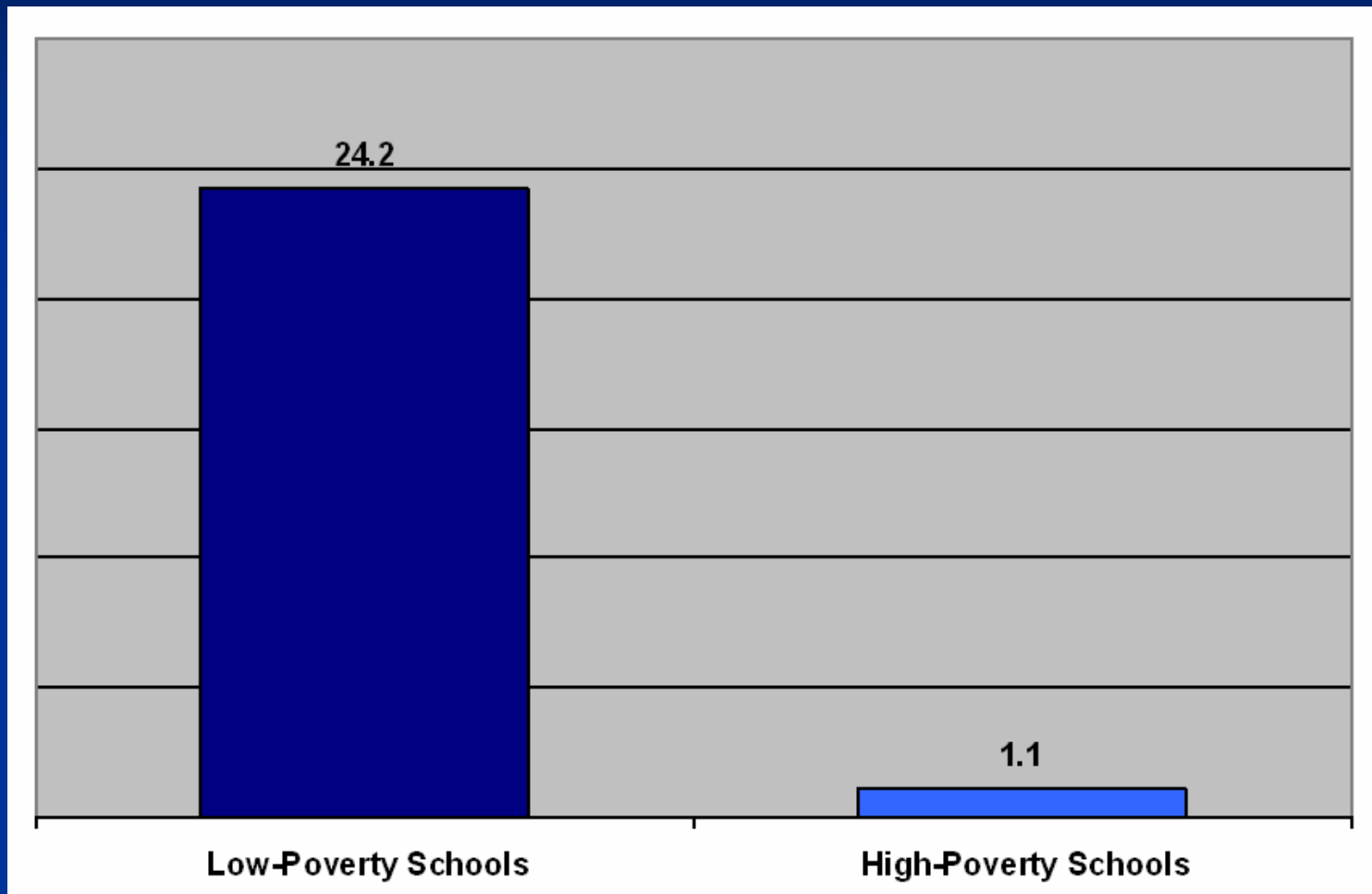


Source: Eric A. Hanushek, John F. Kain, and Steven G. Rivkin, "Why Public Schools Lose Teachers," *Journal of Human Resources* 39:2 (2004): 326-54.

# KIPP

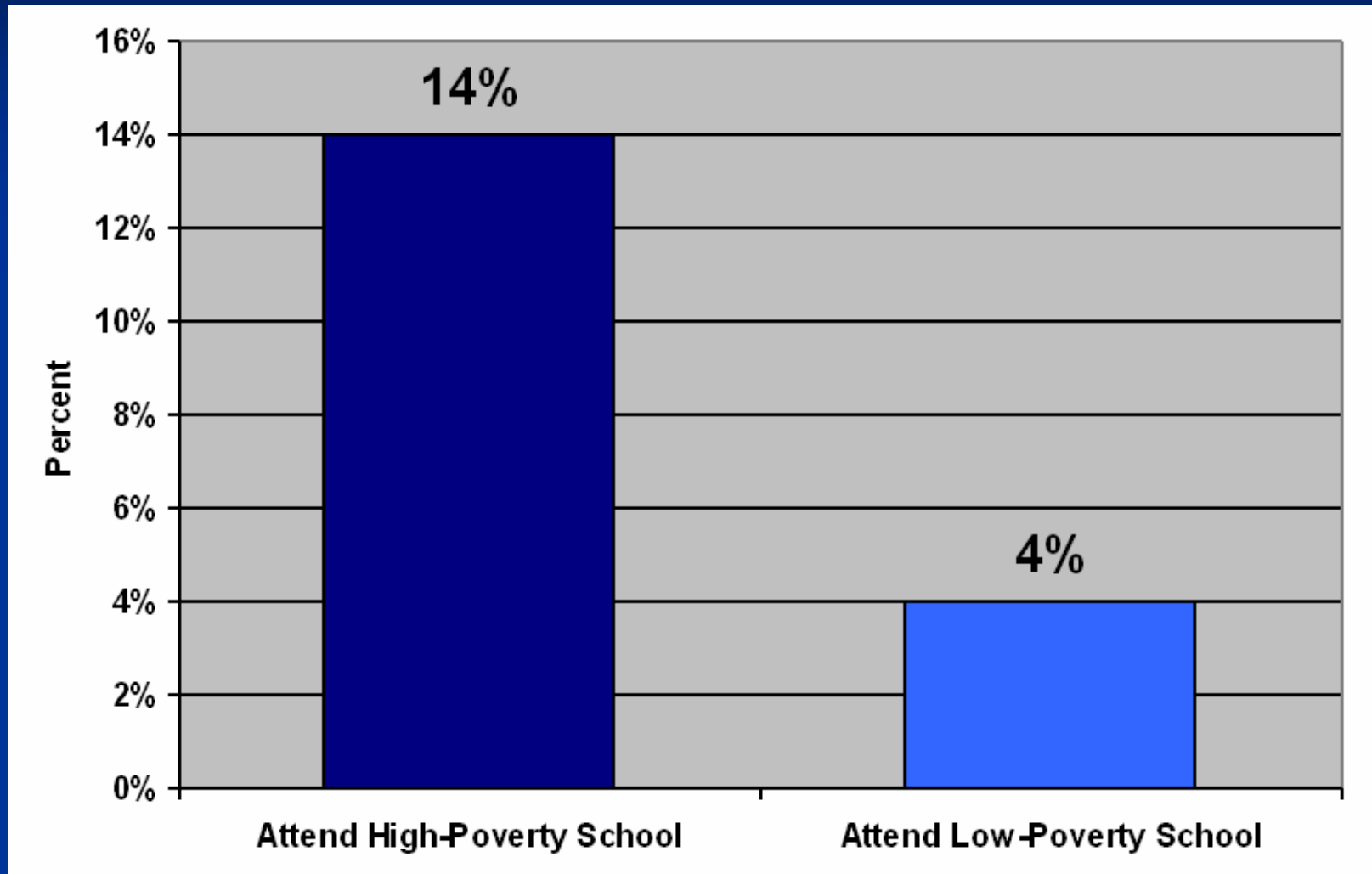
- Tremendously Successful High Poverty Schools
- Scalable to Turnaround?
  - Self-selected students. Takeover Failed.
  - 60% Attrition in San Francisco schools.
  - Parents who sign statements committing to read to their children every night
  - Crazy hours for teachers; 49% attrition in San Francisco area schools.
  - Generous funding

# Percentage of Schools That are Persistently High-Performing, by SES



*Note:* High-poverty is defined as at least 50 percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch; low-poverty is defined as fewer than 50 percent eligible. High-performing is defined as being in the top third in the state in two subjects, in two grades, and over a two-year period.  
*Source:* Douglas N. Harris, "Ending the Blame Game on Educational Inequity: A study of 'High Flying' Schools and NCLB," Educational Policy Studies Laboratory, Arizona State University, March 2006, p. 20.

## Chance of Adult Poverty, by School SES (Controlling for Individual Ability and Family Home Environment)



Source: Claude S. Fischer et al., *Inequality by Design: Cracking the Bell Curve Myth* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), p. 84.

# Important to Stay the Course

- 2007: 51 of 149 schools out of compliance with 40% free and reduced price lunch cap, up from 7 schools in 2000.
- Damaging to student achievement, particularly when schools are significantly out of compliance (60% + free and reduced price lunch). All subgroups do worse.

## Wake County High Poverty Schools (60%+ Low-income) Percentage of Students At or Above Grade Level in Reading and Math (2007-08)

School (Percentage Low-income), 2008-09	All	Black	Hispanic	White	Low-Income	Middle Class
Brentwood Elementary (69.8%)	35.3	26.0	27.6	73.9	34.3	38.0
Creech Rd Elementary (64.3%)	34.7	25.7	34.1	56.1	25.8	51.2
Fox Rd Elementary (60.5%)	42.6	35.5	31.6	64.9	30.3	58.2
Smith Elementary (68.1%)	35.3	30.9	25.5	51.2	28.7	52.1
Wakelon Elementary (66.7%)	30.3	28.7	24.6	42.7	22.3	44.5
<b>District Average</b>	<b>61.0</b>	<b>33.4</b>	<b>35.1</b>	<b>78.7</b>	<b>31.3</b>	<b>74.5</b>

*Source:* Wake County Public School System, “School General Information, 2008-09”; Reports of Supplemental Disaggregated State, School System (LEA) & School Performance Data, 2007-08; End of Grade (Reading and Mathematics) Grades 3 through 8.

*Notes:* “Low-income”= Students eligible for free- and reduced-price lunch; Shaded cells=Below district average (28 of 30 cells)

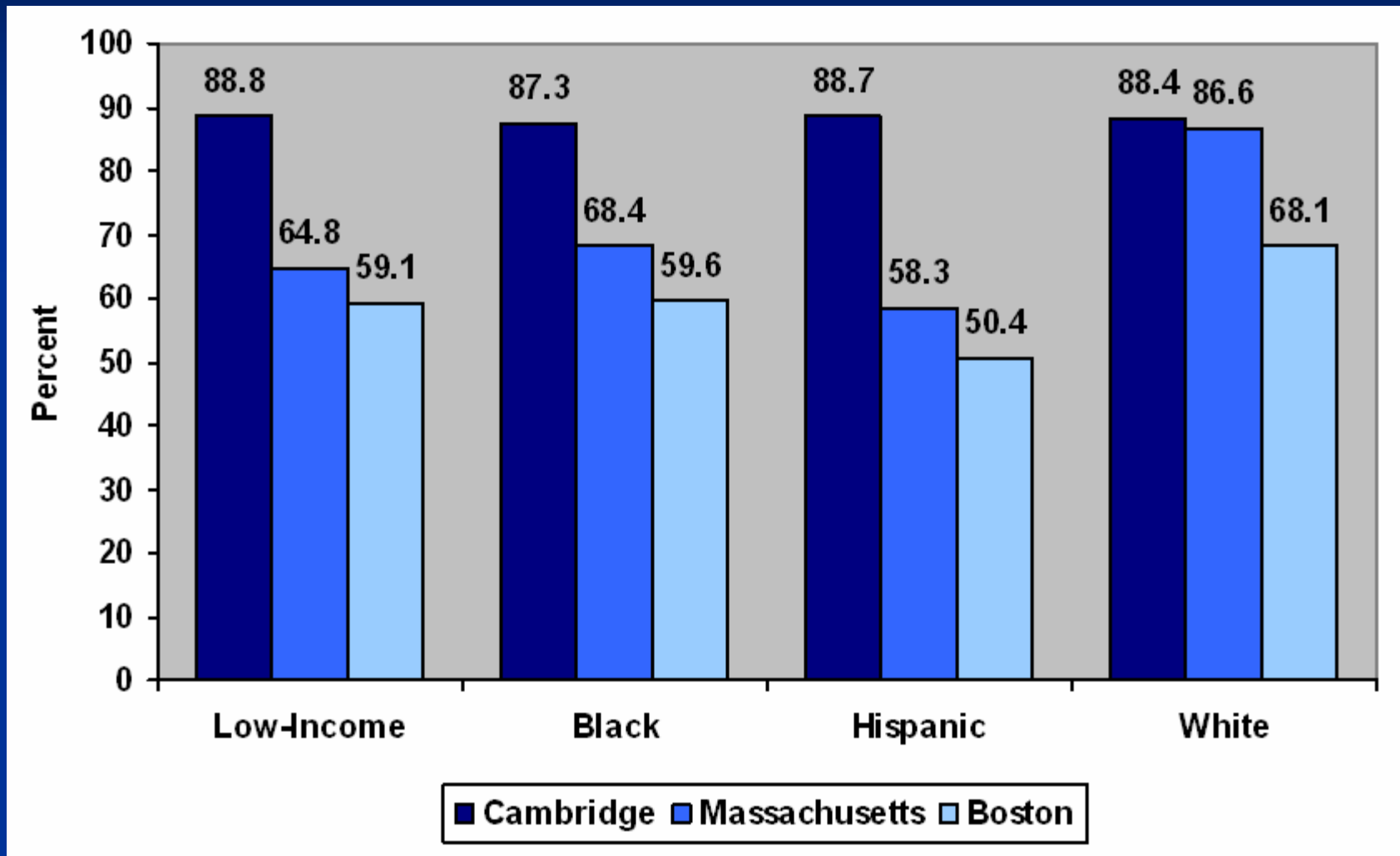
# Effect of Socioeconomic Integration on Middle-Class Students

- No research findings of negative effects on academic achievement in integrated environments
- Numbers matter: numerical majority sets tone
- Differential sensitivity to schooling
- Benefits of learning in a diverse environment

# A Way Forward

- “Controlled Choice” (Cambridge) vs. Choice within Community School Zones (Proposed in Wake)
- Superficially Similar: Magnets throughout system
- Major Differences:
  - \* Draw Zones to be Economically Diverse
  - \* Place Magnets Most Popular with Middle Class in Tougher Neighborhoods
  - \* Honor Choice with an Eye to Socioeconomic Integration

# Cambridge, Massachusetts, and Boston Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rates, 2008



Source: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Cohort 2008 Four-Year Graduation Rates – State Results, < [http://www.doe.mass.edu/infoservices/reports/gradrates/08\\_4yr.html](http://www.doe.mass.edu/infoservices/reports/gradrates/08_4yr.html)>.

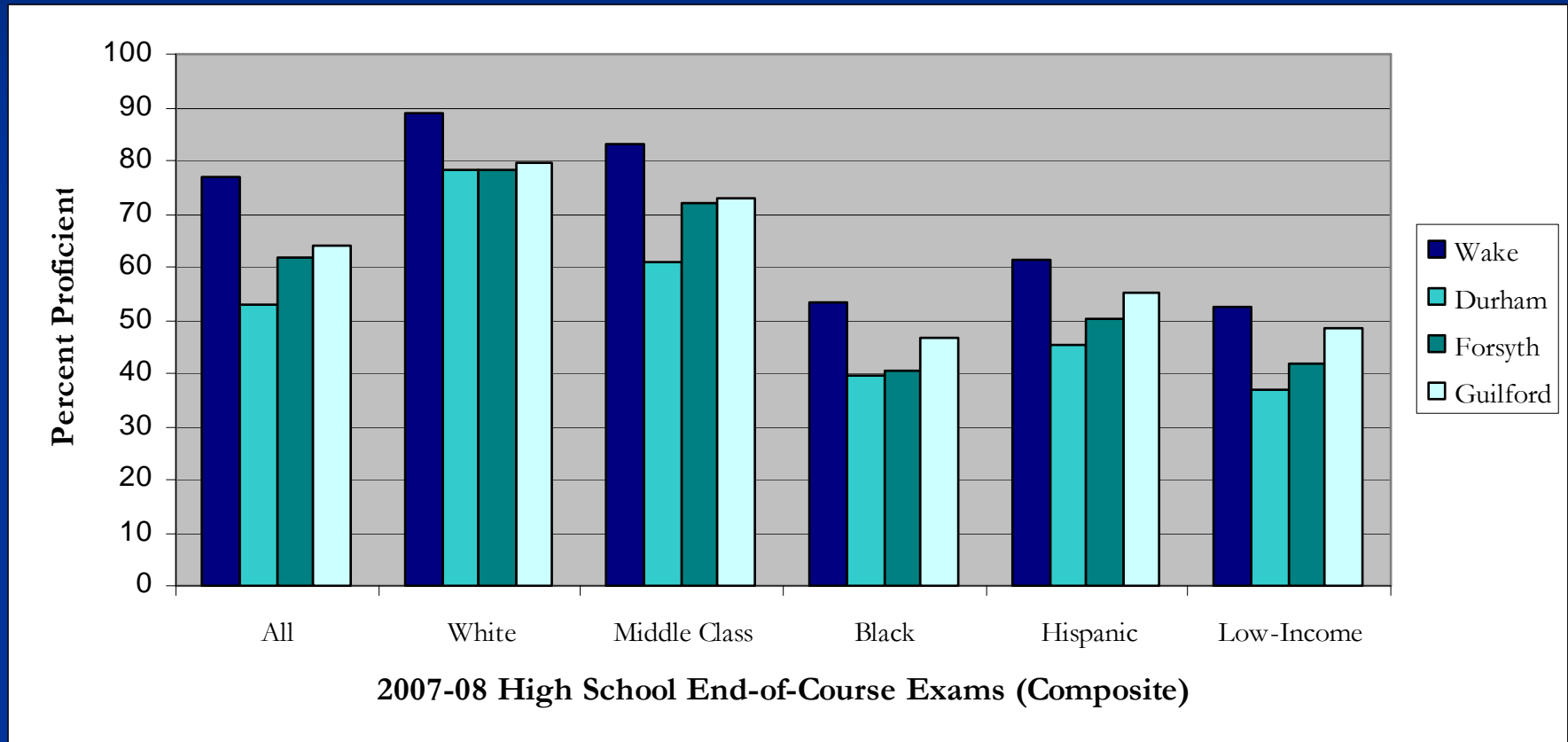
# For More Information

- Richard D. Kahlenberg, *All Together Now: Creating Middle Class Schools through Public School Choice* (Brookings Press, 2001; paperback, 2003).
- *Divided We Fail: Coming Together through Public School Choice: Report of The Century Foundation Task Force on the Common School* (Lowell Weicker, Chair) (Century Foundation Press, 2002).
- Richard D. Kahlenberg, “Turnaround Schools That Work” (Century Foundation, 2009).

# Contact Information

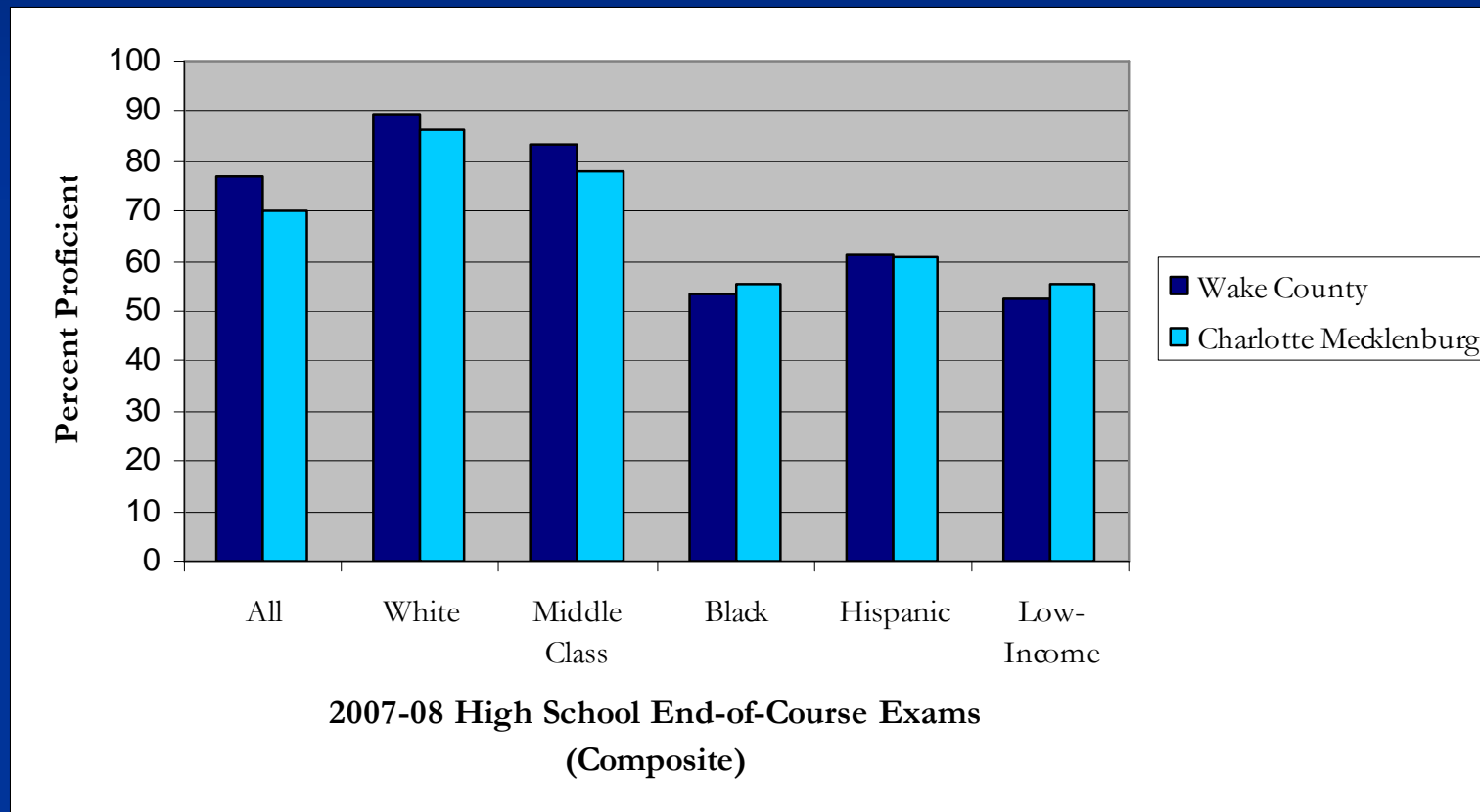
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# Wake County vs. Most Other Large North Carolina School Districts



*Source: North Carolina Public Schools, Report of Supplemental Disaggregated State, School System (LEA) and School Performance Data for 2006-08, High School End of Course Exams (Composite)*

# Wake County vs. Charlotte Mecklenburg High School End-of-Course Exams



*North Carolina Public Schools, Reports of Supplemental Disaggregated State, Schools System (LEA) and School Performance Data for 2006-2008, High School End of Course Exams (Composite)*

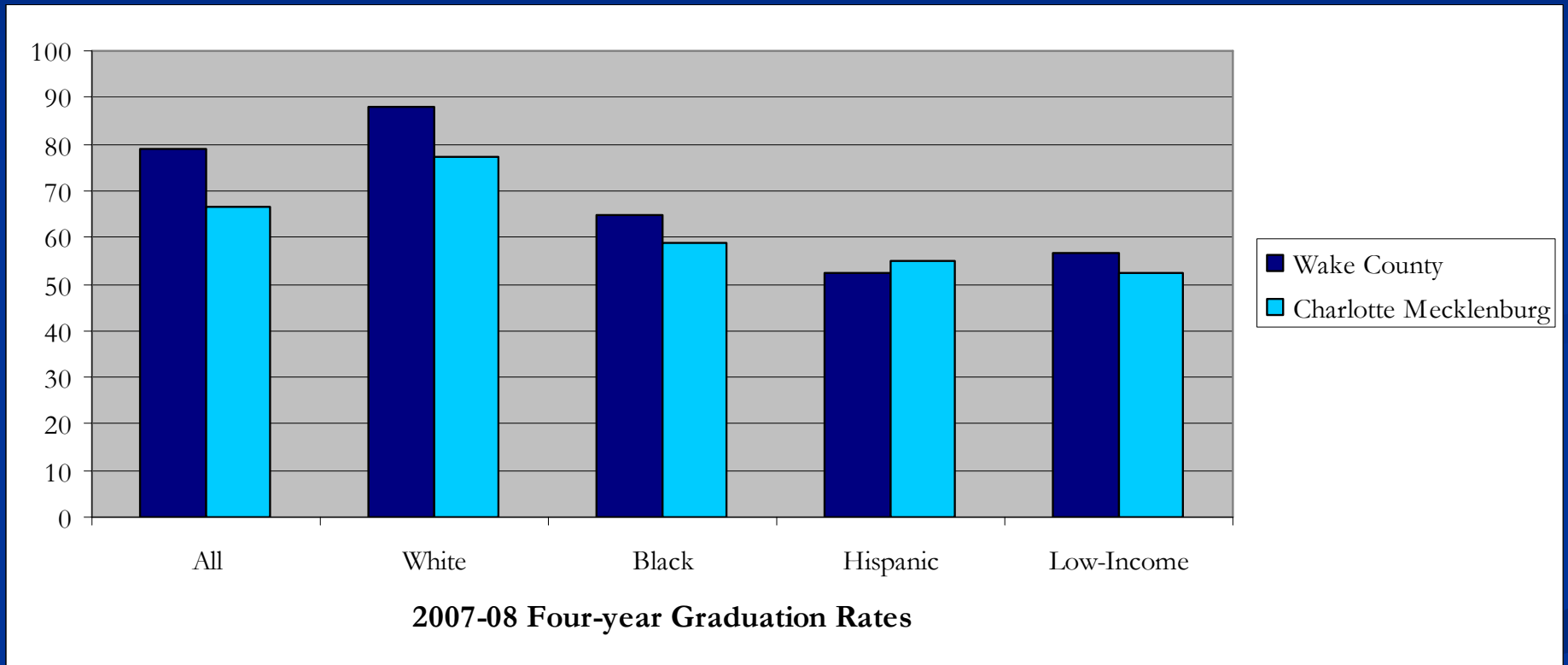
# Wake more bang for the buck

- Charlotte-Mecklenburg: \$8595/pupil
- Wake County: \$8117/pupil
- Difference: \$478/pupil
- If Wake spent as much as Charlotte Mecklenburg per pupil could increase budget by \$65 million

# Wake vs. Charlotte: Pre-K

- Charlotte-Mecklenburg has nationally recognized pre-K program, Bright Beginnings, first instituted in 1997
- Recruits low performing preschoolers and provides them with literacy-rich curriculum, highly trained teachers and low teacher pupil ratio 6.5 hours a day – different than Head Start
- 80% of Title I money goes to Bright Beginnings
- National research – NJ, OK – large academic gains from pre-K

# Wake County vs. Charlotte Mecklenburg: Graduation Rates

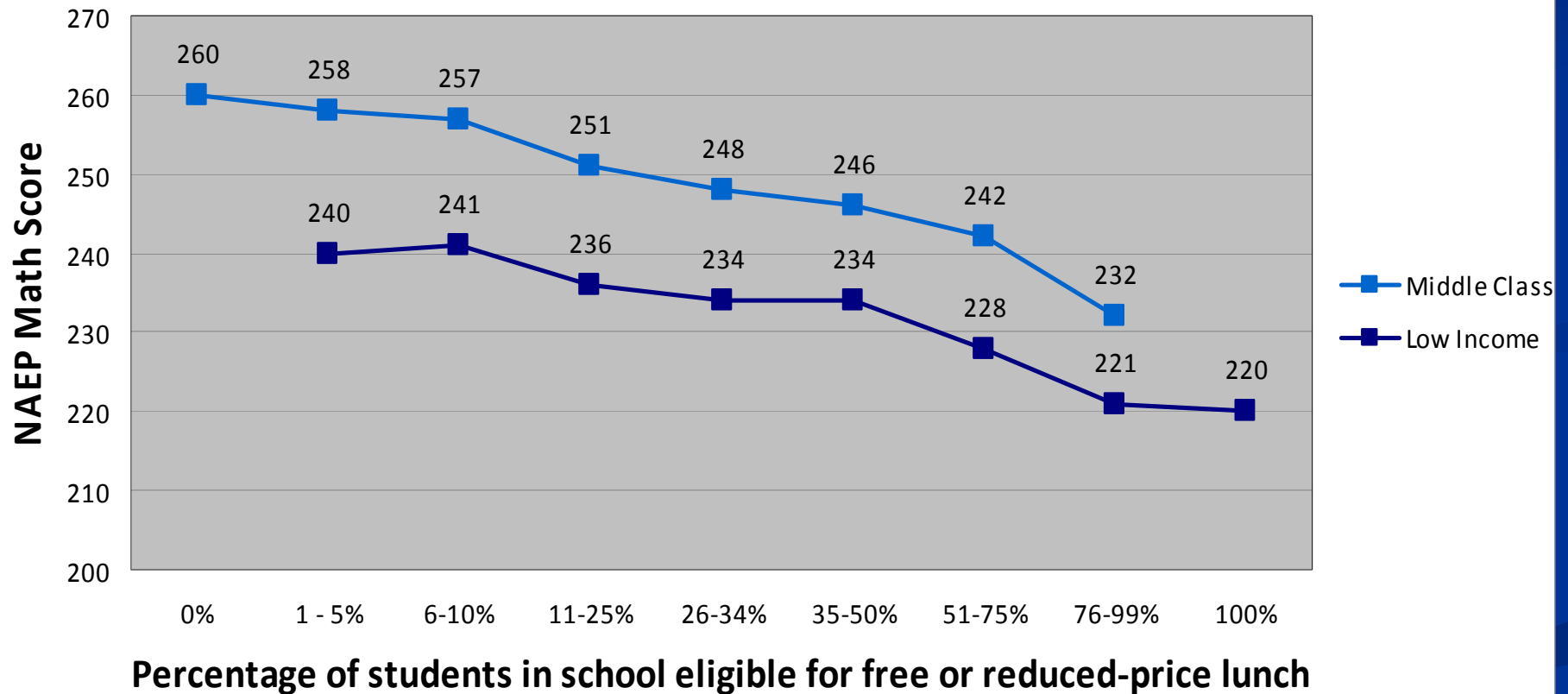


*North Carolina Public Schools, 4-Year Cohort Graduation Rate Report, 2007-08*

# Charlotte vs. Wake : Summary

- Comparable test results with subgroups in 2007-08
- Wake gets more bang for the buck
- Charlotte's Bright Beginnings Pre-K program
- Wake's superior high school graduation rates
- Better job prospects from integrated than segregated schools
- All benefit from diversity

# National Assessment of Educational Progress 2007, 4th Grade Math Results



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessments of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2007 Math Assessment, Grade 4.