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# Education Policies to Promote Diversity at School: The Experience of the United States

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cnesco  
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Québec

- History of Racial Segregation and Racial Desegregation through compulsory busing
- The New Integration by Socioeconomic Status and Public School Choice (Magnets/Charters)
  - Socioeconomic vs. Racial Integration
  - Choice vs. Compulsion
  - Examples of School Districts
  - Student Outcomes under Socioeconomic Integration
  - Politics of Socioeconomic Integration

## > U.S.A. History of Racial Segregation/Desegregation

- 1870s-1954 De Jure Racial Segregation/Jim Crow Laws. Plessy v. Ferguson “separate but equal.”
- 1954 – Brown v. Board of Education – separate is inherently unequal
- 1954-1969 – Massive resistance
- 1969 – Compulsory busing to desegregate by race.

## > The Demise of Compulsory Racial Desegregation

- 1974 – Milliken v. Bradley. Wealthy suburban areas exempt from urban desegregation.
  - White flight to suburbs possible.
  - Urban racial integration often involved low-income black and white students.
- 1990s – Supreme Court made it easier to end desegregation efforts and be declared “unitary.”
- 2007- Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle – Supreme Court struck down voluntary efforts to integrate using race.

## > The New Integration

- Emphasize socioeconomic status rather than race.
- Emphasize public school choice (magnet schools, charter schools, etc.) to achieve integrated schooling.



## Trend: Socioeconomic Status over Race in Integration Plans

- Legal Concerns with Race do not apply to Socioeconomic Status.
- Social science research suggests socioeconomic status of peers matters more than race in boosting academic achievement.
- Racial diversity is important for promoting social cohesion, but socioeconomic integration will produce considerable racial integration.

## > Evidence on Socioeconomic Integration vis a vis race

- Research: Academic benefits of integration not from proximity to whiteness but middle-class environment
  - Racial Desegregation in Charlotte vs. Boston (1970s)
  - Roosevelt Perry Elementary in Louisville.
- Socioeconomic integration produces significant racial diversity in a manner that's perfectly legal
- Among 4th graders nationally, 24% whites eligible free and reduced lunch; 70% African Americans; 73% Latinos

## > Integration through Choice

- Magnet Schools and Charter Schools
  - Poll parents now using private school and living in suburbs, as well as parents of city students to see what themes or pedagogical approaches are popular.
  - Build partnerships between particular magnet schools and well-regarded institutions (universities, museums, military facilities, sports teams, private sector institutions)
- Universal Choice with fairness guidelines to ensure economic integration
  - Franchise popular and over-chosen schools.
- Inter-District School Choice (suburbs and cities) in Boston, Hartford, Milwaukee, St. Louis etc.



## > Examples of Socioeconomic Integration

- 80 U.S. Districts, educating 4 million students, using socioeconomic status as a factor in student assignment. Examples:
- Cambridge, MA. All schools should fall within + or – 10 percentage points of district average for free and reduced price lunch (40%).
- Chicago, IL. 85% low-income so begin by integrating a subset of magnet and selective schools, with the goal of integrating more as middle-class return.

## > Examples (cont.)

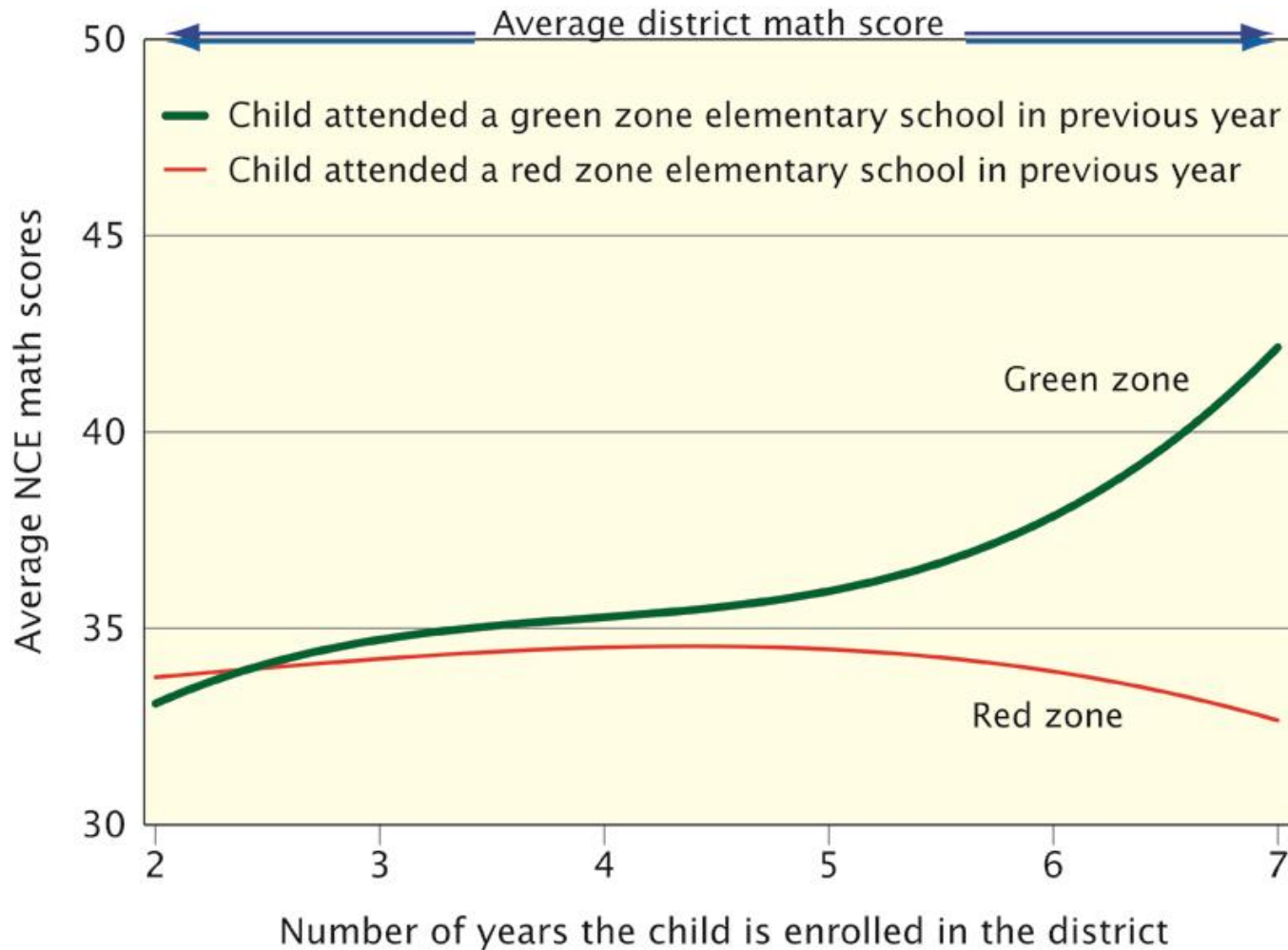
- Montgomery County, MD “inclusionary zoning” housing policies.
- New York State – “turn around” failing schools by creating magnet themes that attract middle class students.

## > Montgomery County, MD Inclusionary Housing

- RAND researcher Heather Schwartz tests the effectiveness to two strategies: extra resources (class size reduction, professional development, extended learning time) in high poverty “red zone” schools (\$2,000 more/pupil) vs. “inclusionary housing” policy that allows low-income students to attend low poverty “green zone” schools with fewer resources.
- Examined 858 children randomly assigned to public housing units scattered throughout Montgomery County and enrolled in Montgomery County public elementary schools 2001-2007.



# Public Housing Students in Green Zone Schools Outperformed Those in Red Zone Schools



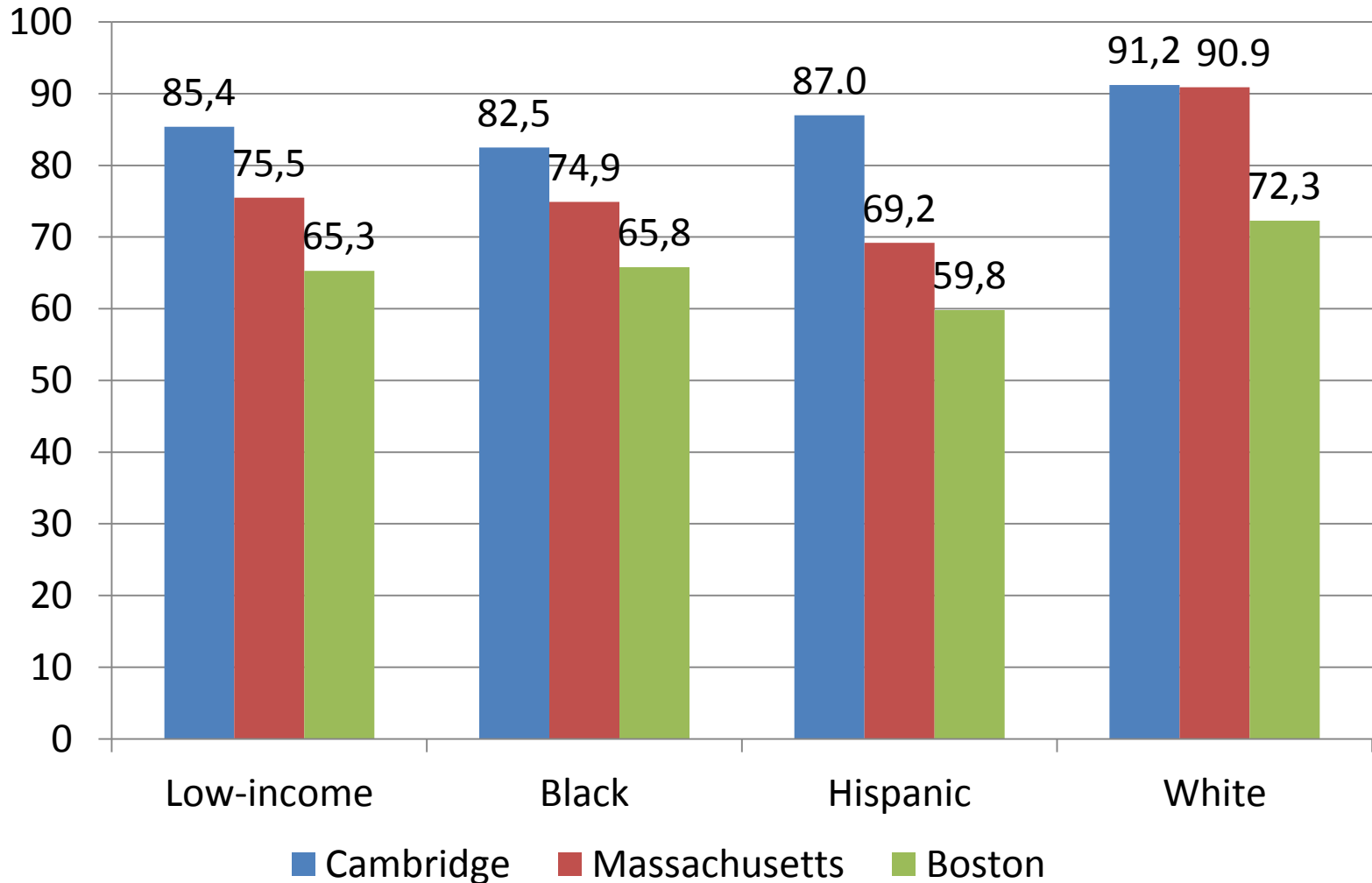
Source: Heather Schwartz, "Housing Policy Is School Policy." in *The Future of School Integration* (New York: The Century Foundation, 2012), p. 45, Figure 2.6.

## > Montgomery County MD

- Low-income public housing students in low poverty schools performed at .4 of a standard deviation better in math than low-income public housing students in higher poverty schools with more resources
- Low-income students in green zone schools cut their large initial math gap with middle-class students in half. The reading gap was cut by one-third
- Most of the effect (2/3) was due to attending low-poverty schools, and some (1/3) due to living in low-poverty neighborhoods



# Cambridge, Massachusetts, and Boston—Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rates, 2014

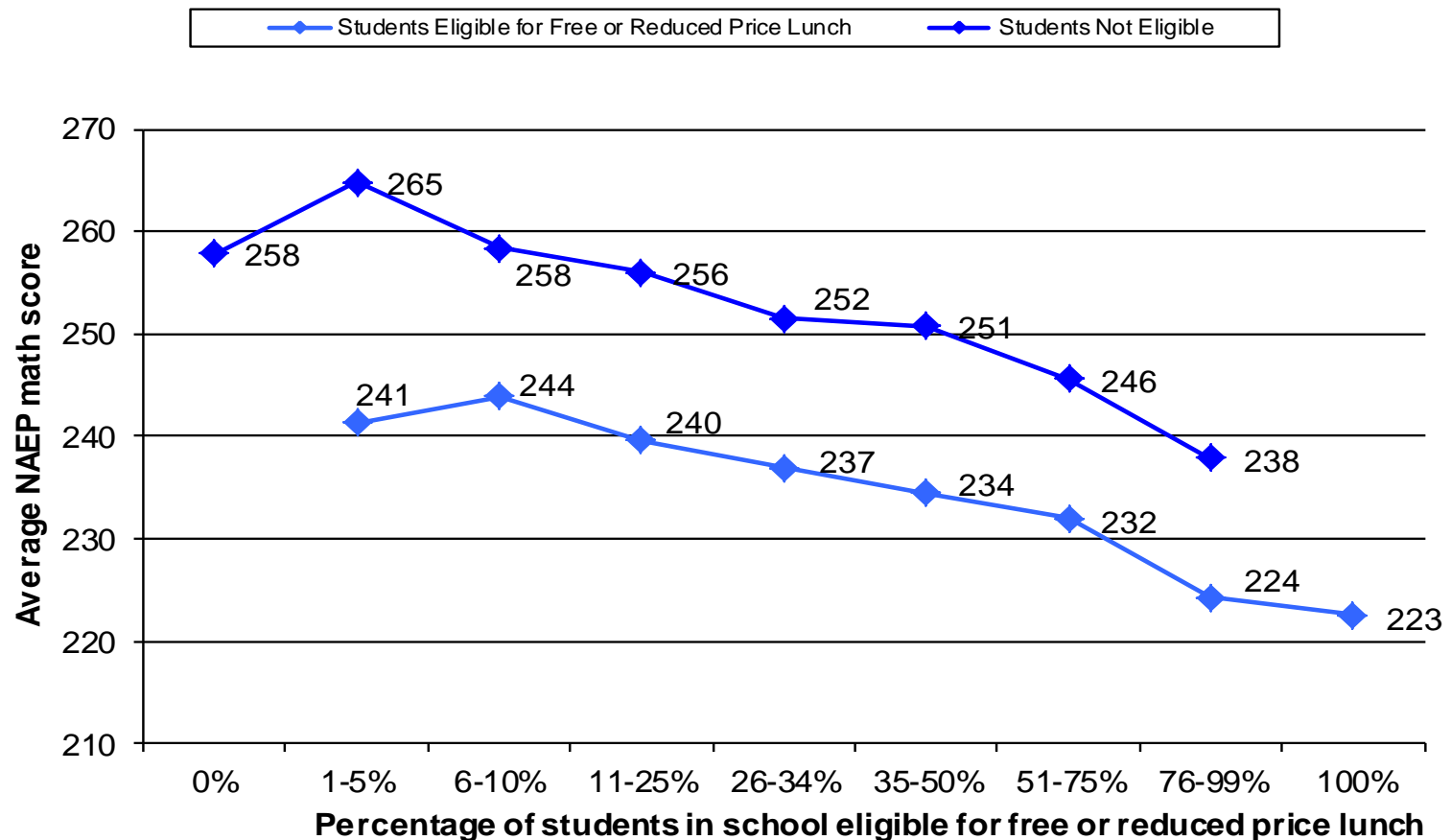


**Source:** Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Cohort 2014 Four-Year Graduation Rates—State Results.



# Poverty Concentrations and Achievement

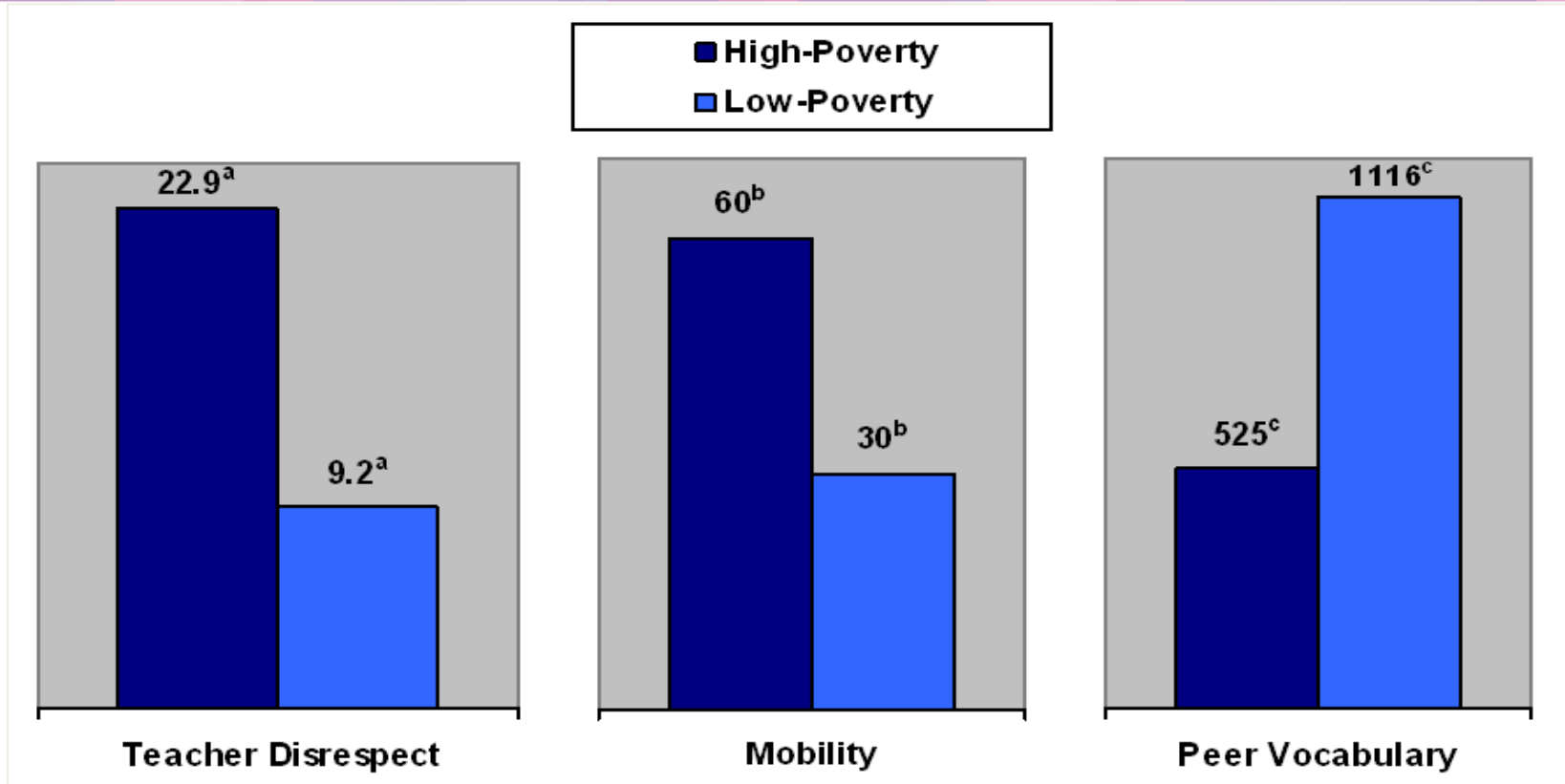
- National Assessment of Educational Progress 2011, Fourth Grade Math Results



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessments of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2011 Math Assessment, Grade 4.



# 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).

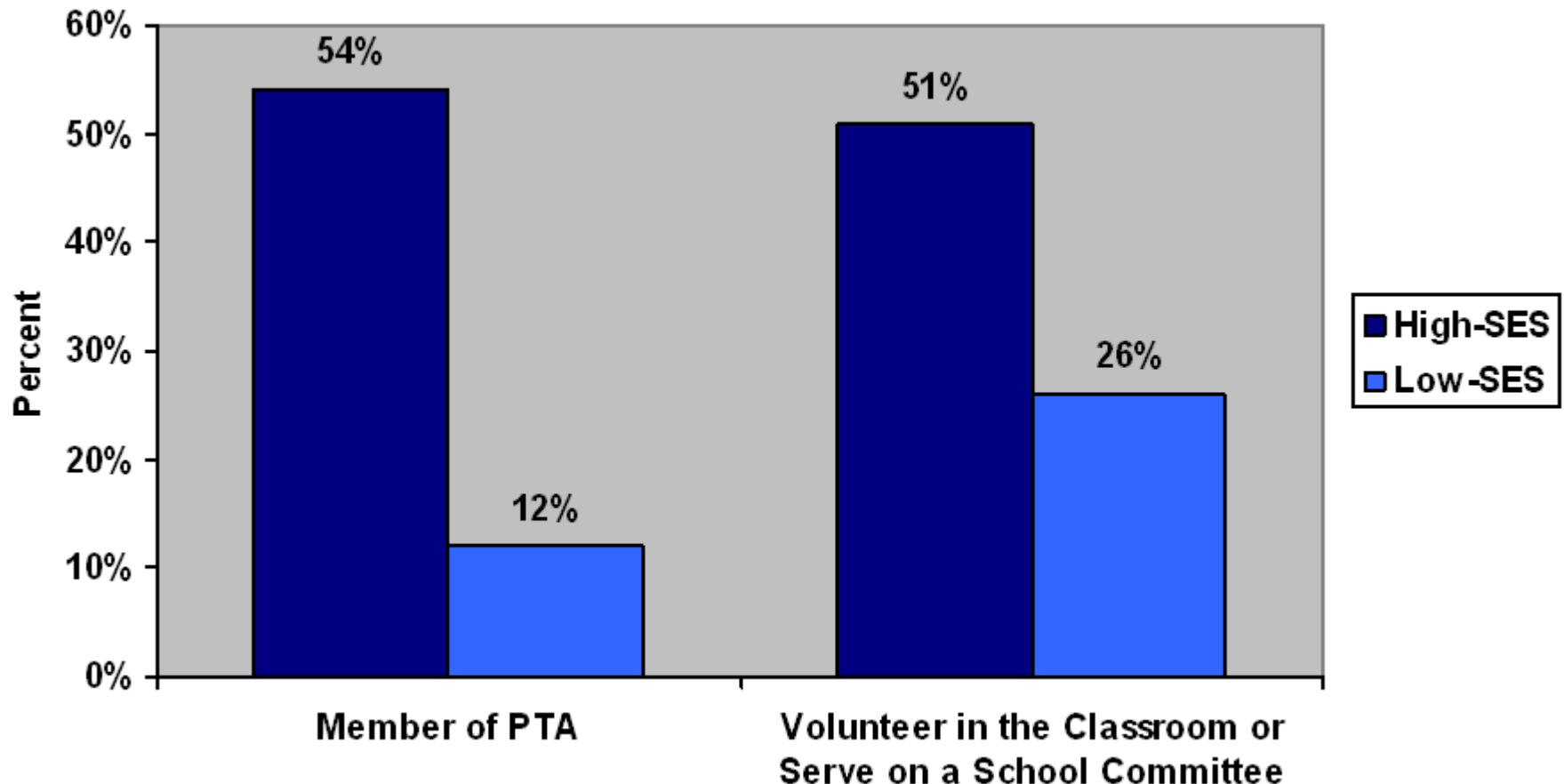
c Number of words in student's vocabulary by 36 months of age. High-poverty means child is part of a family receiving welfare, and low-poverty means child is part of a professional family.

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).



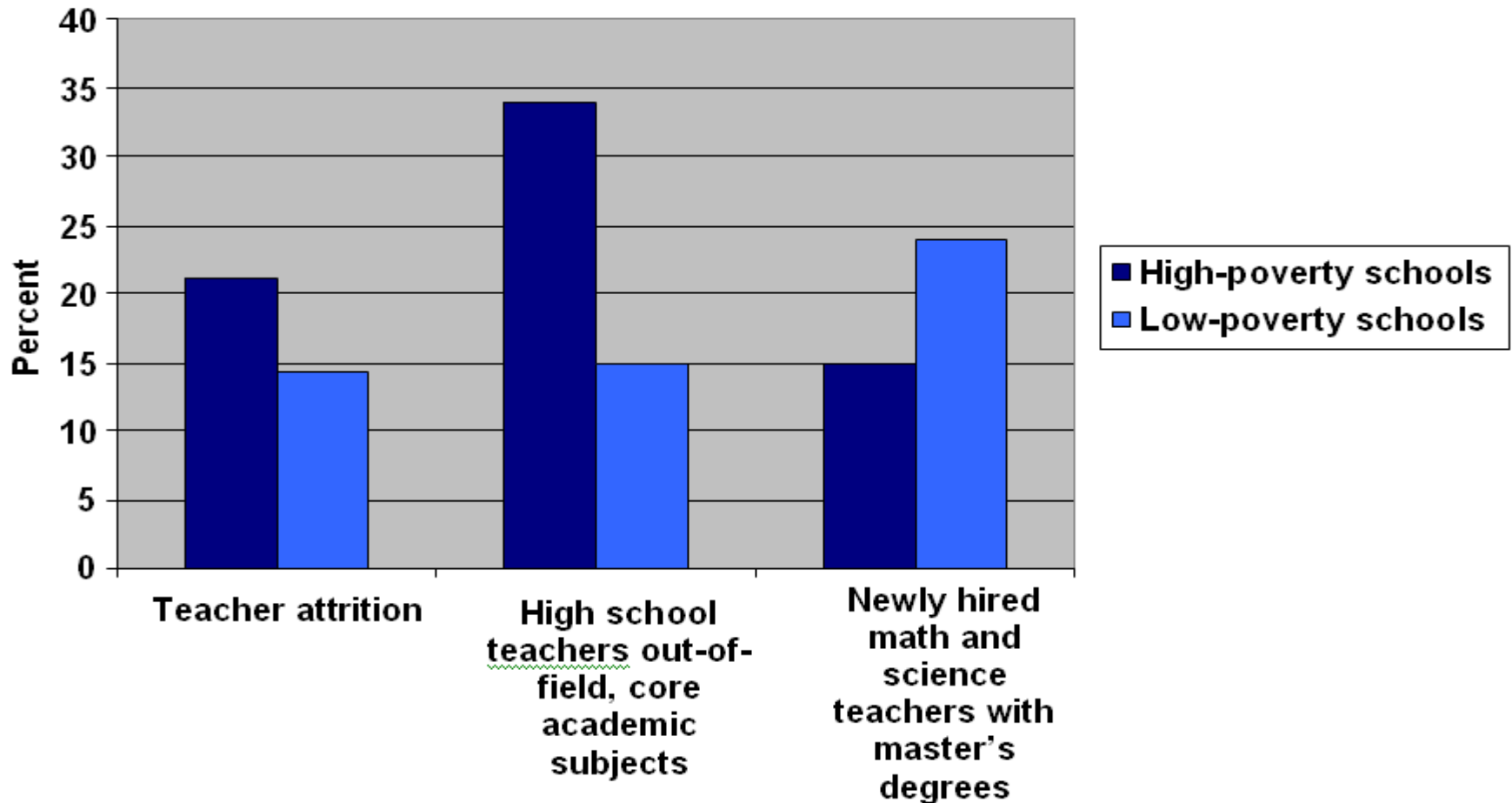


## Parental Involvement, by Student SES



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.

## > Politics of Integration

- Stephen Colbert on Wake County School Integration



[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/01/19/stephen-colbert-wake-county-schools\\_n\\_811048.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/01/19/stephen-colbert-wake-county-schools_n_811048.html)  
<http://www.colbertnation.com/the-colbert-report-videos/371414/january-18-2011/the-word---disintegration>



# Building Political Support with Key Constituencies

- Teachers Unions (La Crosse, Louisville)
- Civil Rights Groups
- Faith Groups
- Business Groups (St. Louis, Wake County)

## > For More Information

- Richard D. Kahlenberg, *All Together Now: Creating Middle Class Schools through Public School Choice* (Brookings Press, 2001; paperback, 2003).
- *The Future of School Integration: Socioeconomic Diversity as an Education Reform Strategy*, ed. by Richard D. Kahlenberg (Century Foundation, 2012).
- Richard D. Kahlenberg and Halley Potter, *A Smarter Charter: Finding What Works for Charter Schools and Public Education* (Teachers College Press, 2014).



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