

Reimagining Integration Policy in Massachusetts: Socioeconomic and Racial Diversity as an Education Reform Strategy

One Nation Indivisible
Harvard University
Richard D. Kahlenberg
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New Approaches to Integration

- Old Stereotype from 1975: Compulsory Busing for Racial Desegregation within the City of Boston as a Legal Remedy to Segregation.
- New Emphasis:
 - * Choice
 - * Socioeconomic and Racial Integration
 - * Metropolitan Scope
 - * Education Reform Strategy

Current Education Reforms Insufficient

- “Fix” separate high poverty schools with new governance (charters), and by firing principal and teachers, and bring in “new adults”
- In CA, OH, MD and elsewhere, “consistently fallen short of hopes” – Andrew Smarick
- “Mixed early results” of federal turnaround effort.
- A better way: Sen. Harkin - include integration and magnet schools as turnarounds

Alternative Strategy: 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.

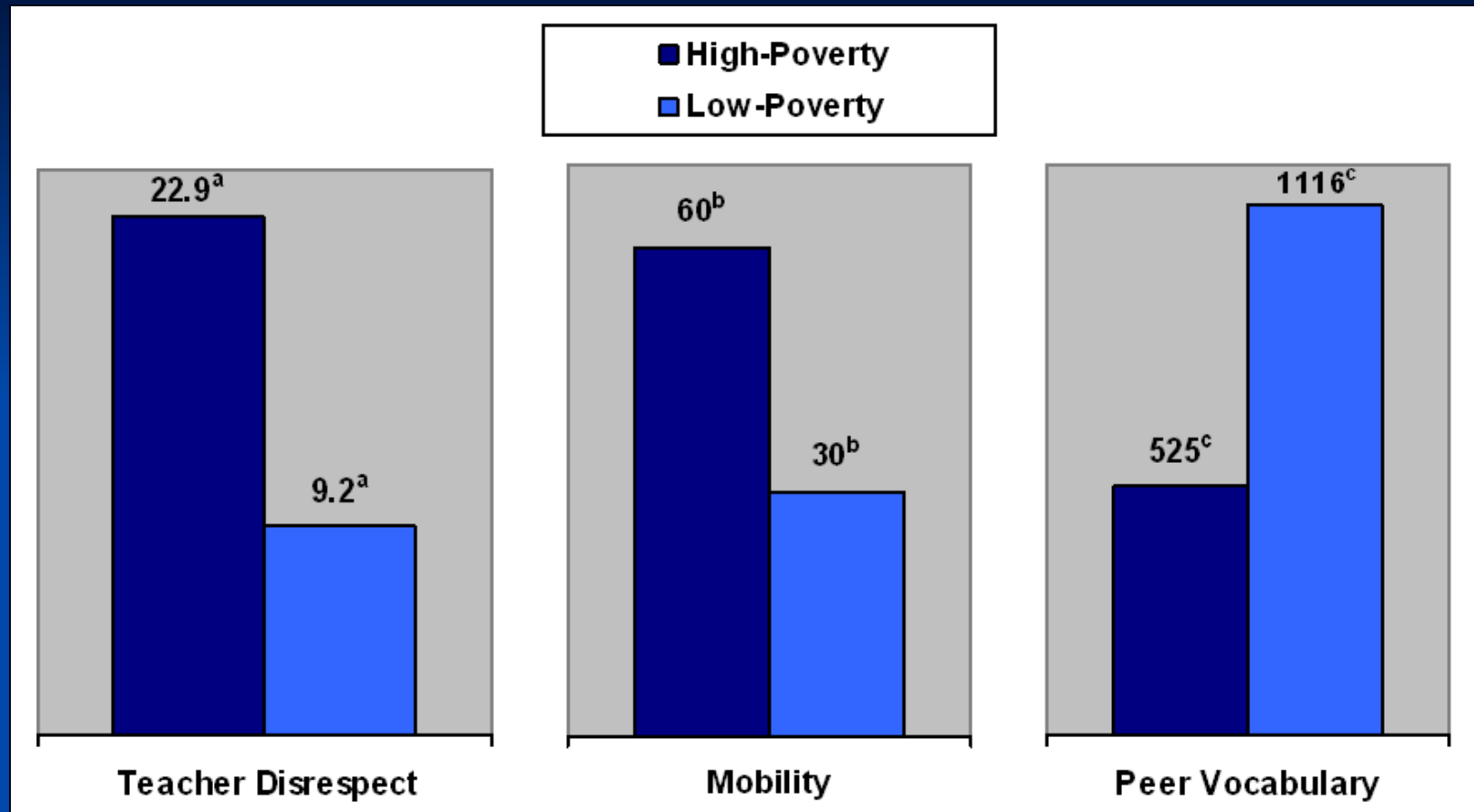
Examples of Integrated Schools as Turnarounds

- * Wexford Elementary, Lansing, MI
Was facing reconstitution; adopted magnet theme; now integrated and high performing
- * Tobin School, Cambridge, MA
Was under-chosen and low income (only 12 applicants for 60 seats), now 145 applicants for 60 seats, twice as many middle class applicants
- * Dunbar High School, Ft. Meyers, FL
Technology magnet has turned around struggling school.
- * Valley High School, Clark County, NV
Magnet school designated as exemplary turnaround school.
- * Normal Park Museum Magnet, Chattanooga, TN

Conditions for Increasing Academic Achievement and Promoting Social Mobility

- Create an environment where all students are in a school community with a core group of academically engaged peers, actively involved parents, and excellent teachers.
- Very difficult to create those environments systemically without reducing concentrations of school poverty

Classmate Characteristics, by School or Student SES



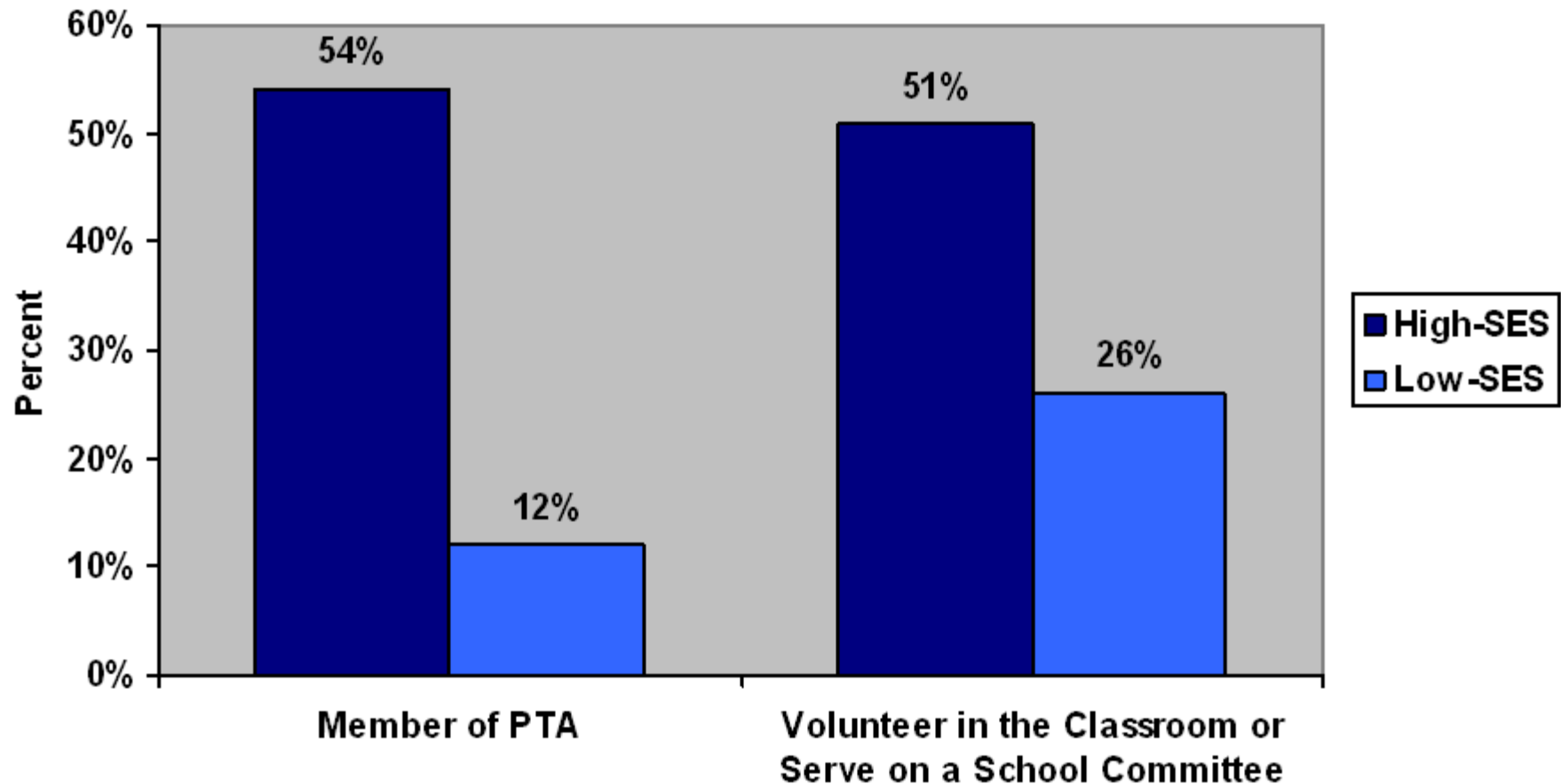
a Percentage of schools reporting student acts of disrespect for teachers in classrooms at least once per week. High-poverty refers to schools with 50 percent or more of their students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch; and low-poverty refers to schools with 20% or less of their students eligible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

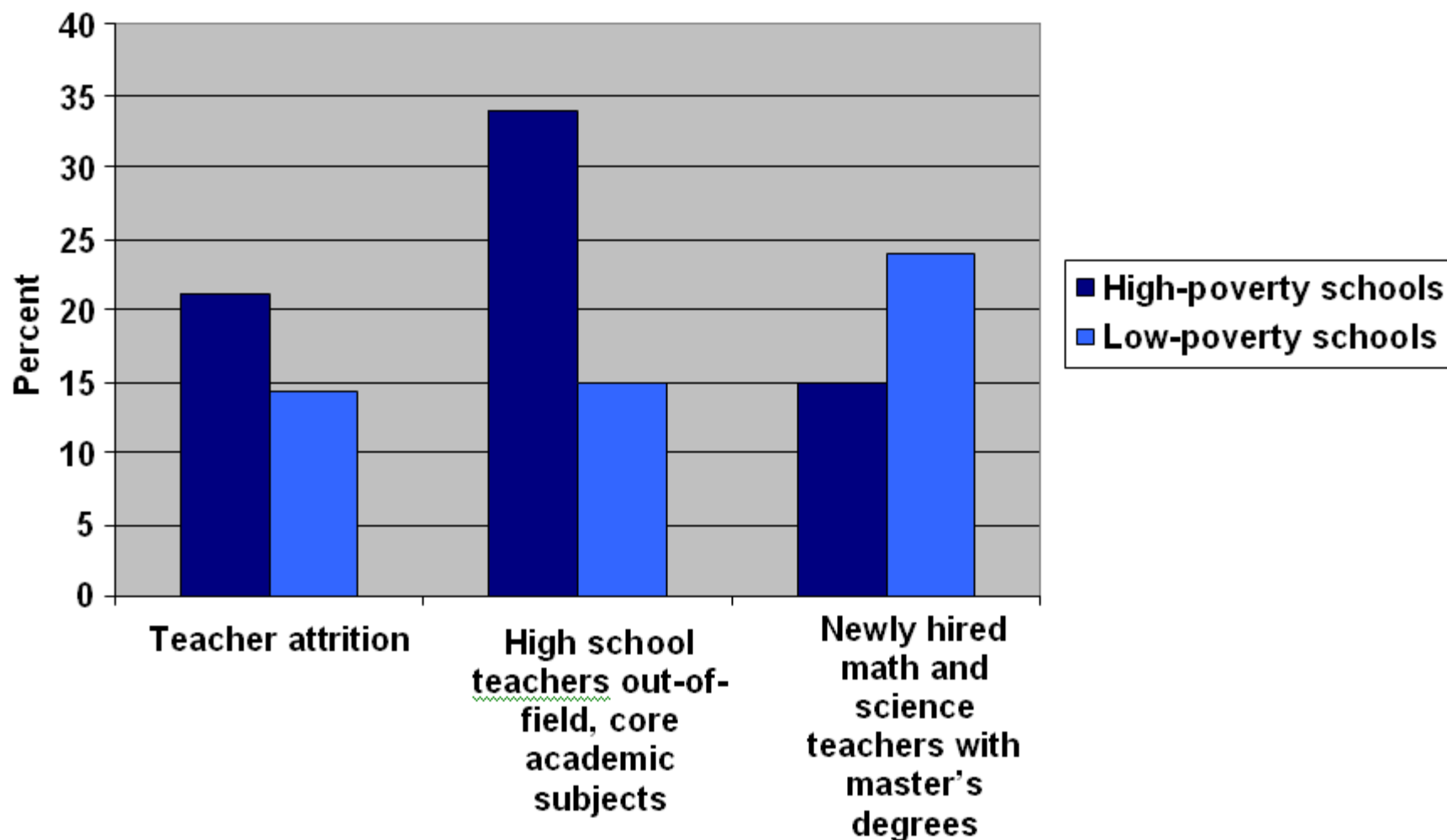
Source: Rachel Dinkes, Emily Forrest Cataldi, and Wendy Lin-Kelly, *Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2008*, National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, D.C., December 2008, Table 7.2, p. 99 (teacher disrespect); U.S. General 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



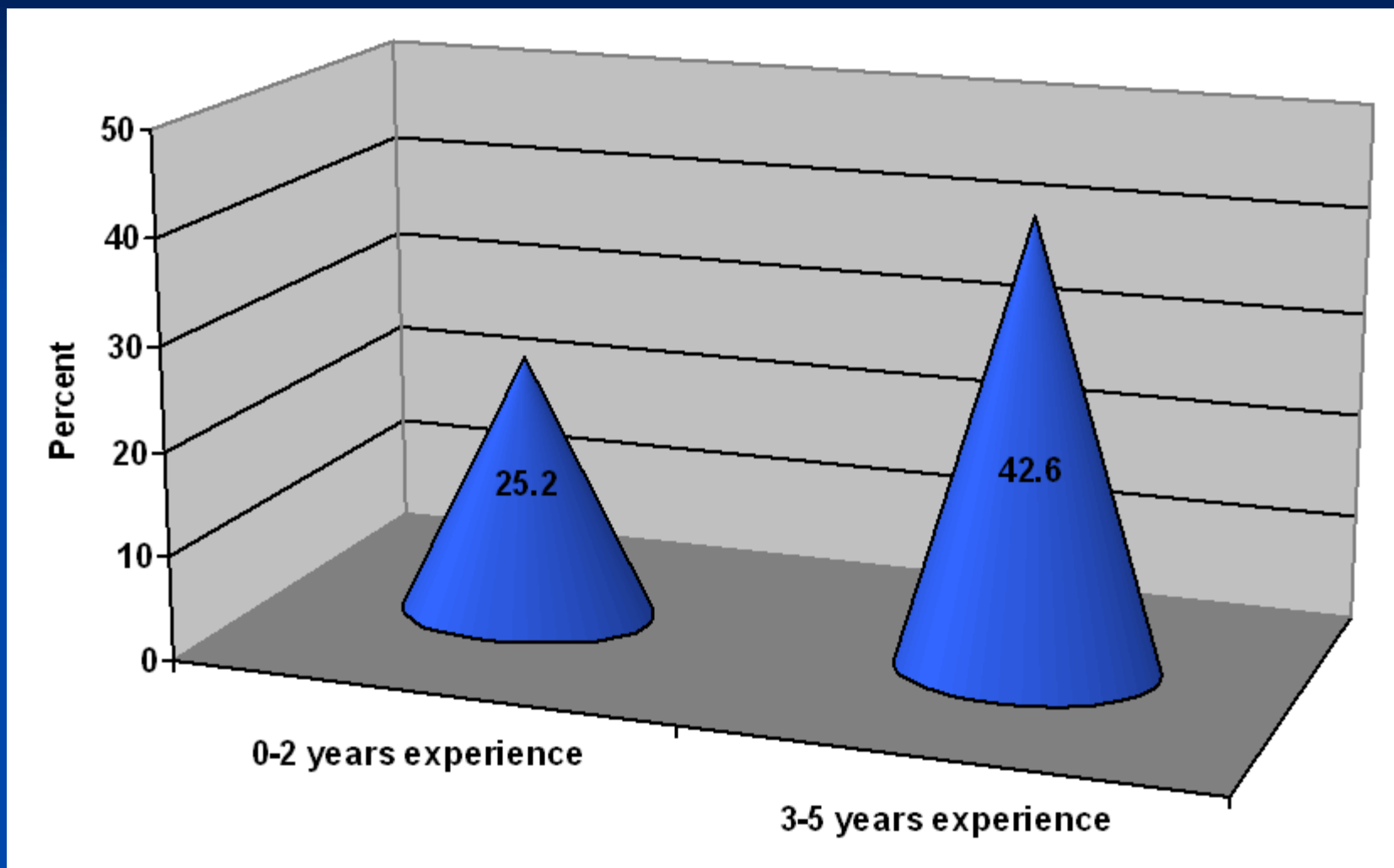
Source: 1988 National Educational Longitudinal Study data on PTA membership cited in Richard D. Kahlenberg, *All Together Now* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2001), p. 62; National Center for Education Statistics, *Parent and Family Involvement in Education, 2006-07 School Year*, August 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)

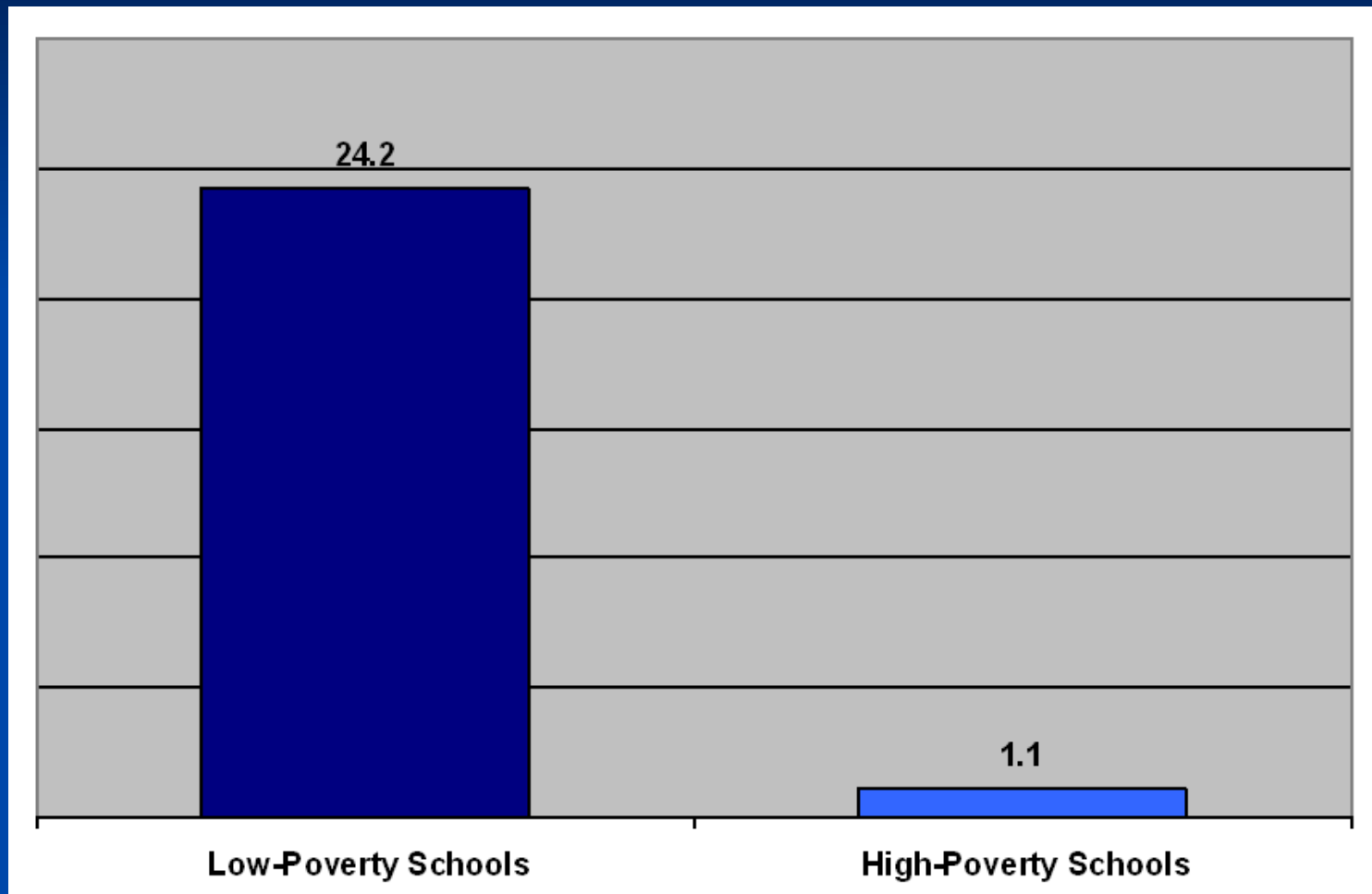


Source: Eric A. Hanushek, John F. Kain, and Steven G. Rivkin, "Why Public Schools Lose Teachers," *Journal of Human Resources* 39:2 (2004): 326-54.

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.”

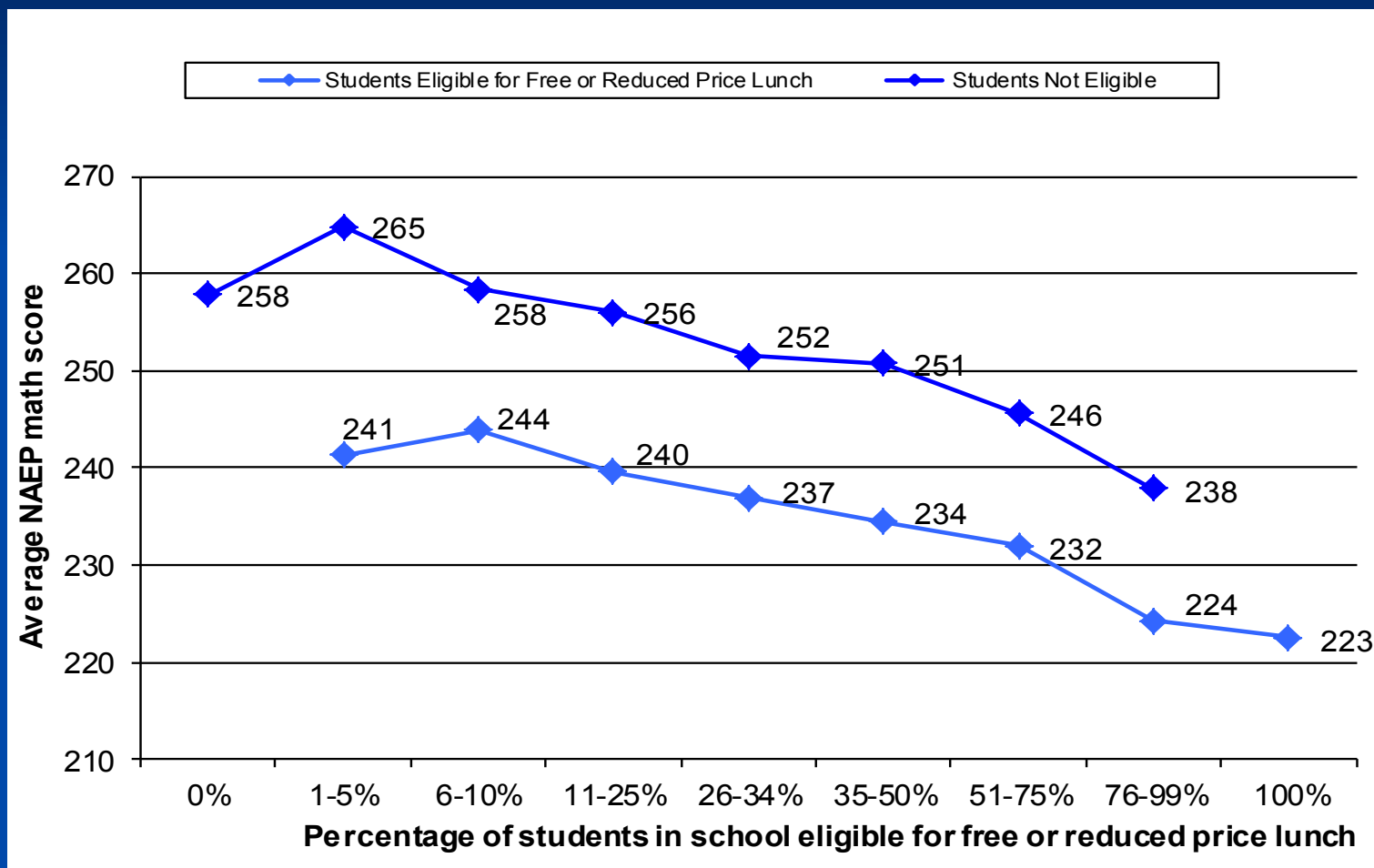
Percentage of Schools That are Persistently High-Performing, by SES



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.

Poverty Concentrations and Achievement

National Assessment of Educational Progress 2011, Fourth Grade Math Results

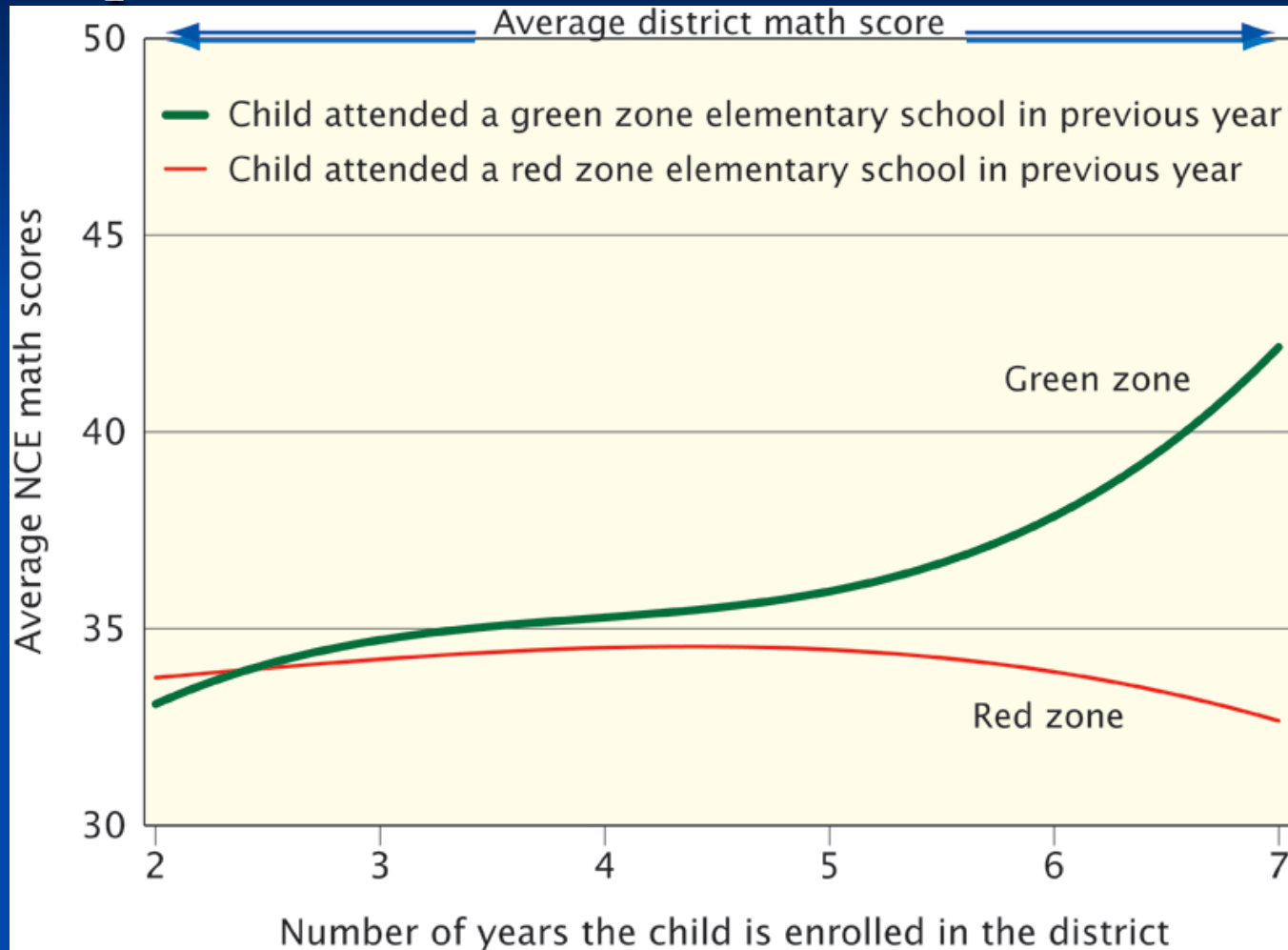


Source: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessments of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2011 Math Assessment, Grade 4.

Heather Schwartz Montgomery County, MD Study

- 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 Study

- 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

Socioeconomic Integration Effect on Middle-Class Students

- Numbers Matter. Numerical majority sets the tone.
- Middle-Class children on average are less sensitive to changes in school environment than low-income students.
- Social and moral benefits of diversity

Concluding Thoughts

- Poor kids can learn, if given the right environment.
- 95% of education reform about making separate but equal work rather than reducing the number of high poverty schools.
- For school turnarounds, magnet approach has a more solid research base than other options currently favored.

Contact Information

- Richard D. Kahlenberg
- Senior Fellow
- The Century Foundation
- 1333 H Street, N.W. 10th Floor
- Washington, D.C. 20005
- kahlenberg@tcf.org
- www.tcf.org