

# Illinois Education: Confronting the Brutal Facts

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***Presentation to United We Learn  
Glenn W. "Max" McGee, President  
Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy  
May 14, 2009***

# Student Achievement

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- **NAEP: Eighth Grade Proficiency less than 33% in reading, writing and mathematics**
- **ACT: Less than 25% “college ready.”**
- **PSAE and ISAT: Significant Achievement Gaps between economic groups, genders and racial ethnic groups**
- **Potholes: Boys’ achievement in terms of GPA, ISAT and PSAE substantially trails girls’ achievement in reading and writing.**

# **Huge numbers of this year's graduates do not have the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in work or in higher education!**

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- **63% of low-income students did NOT meet state reading standards in eleventh grade.**
- **83% of students of African American students did NOT meet state mathematics standards in eleventh grade.**
- **70% of Hispanic students did not meet state science standards.**
- **Only 29 of the 138 Illinois high schools with a low income enrollment of more than 50% have even half the students meeting state reading standards!**

# We should be Outraged by the Achievement Gap in our Land of Lincoln!

## Illinois Tops the List in the Size of the Achievement Gap (2005 NAEP -- 1st is largest gap, 50th is lowest)

### ■ Fourth Grade Reading

- *Poor/Non Poor -- 3rd*
- *Black/White -- 2nd*
- *Hispanic/White -- 5th*

### ■ Eighth Grade Reading

- *Poor/Non Poor -- 8th*
- *Black/White -- 9th*
- *Hispanic/White -- 23rd*

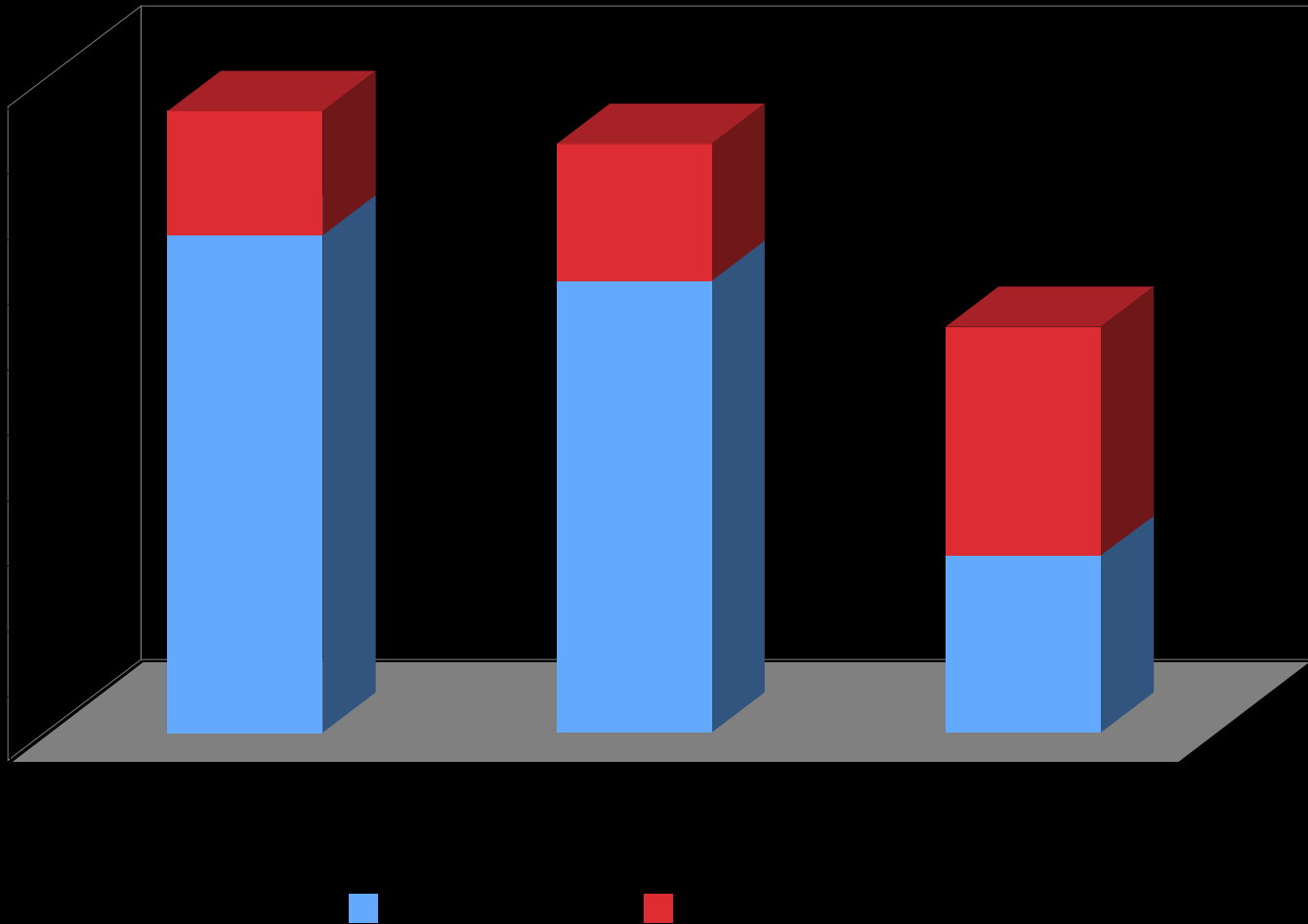
### ■ Fourth Grade Math

- *Poor/Non Poor -- 1st*
- *Black/White -- 3rd*
- *Hispanic/White -- 6th*

### ■ Eighth Grade Math

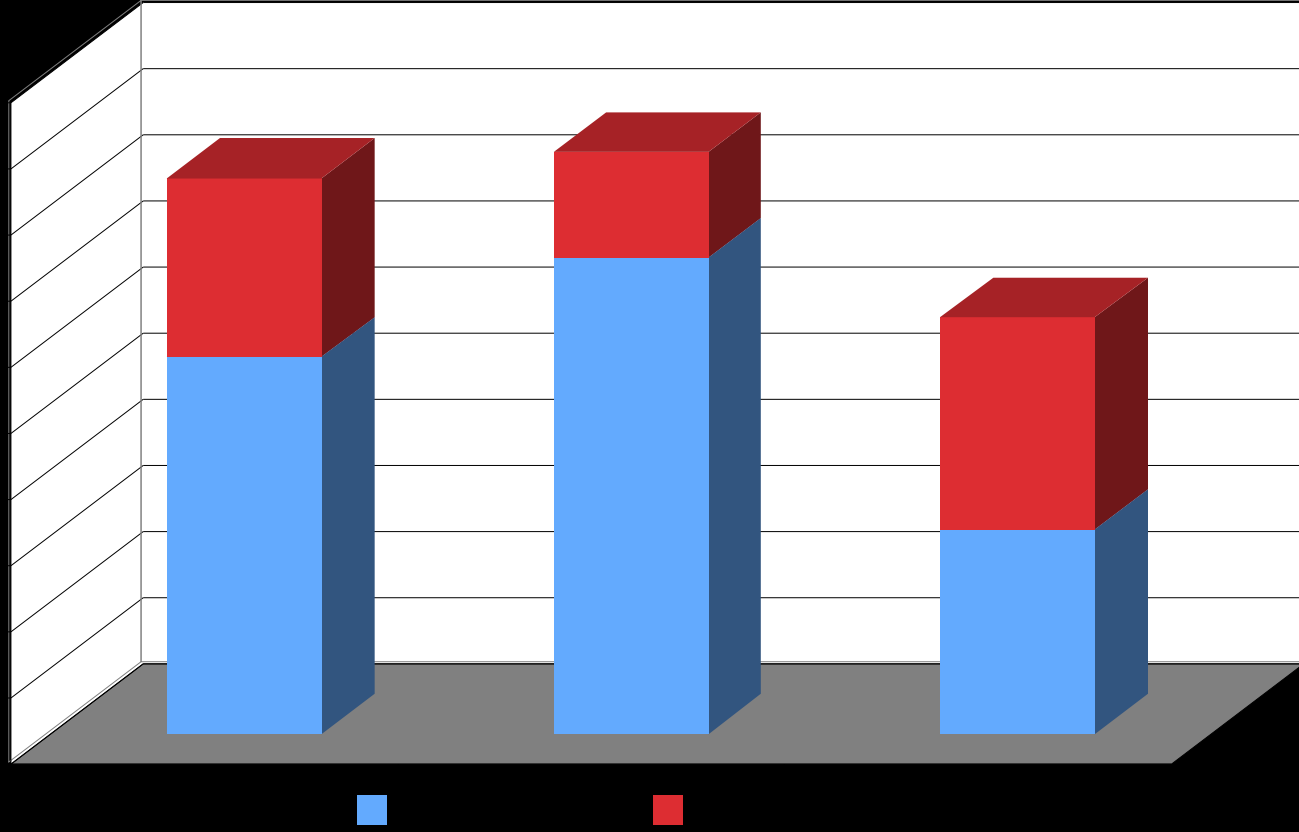
- *Poor/Non Poor -- 2nd*
- *Black/White -- 5th*
- *Hispanic/White -- 22nd*

**% Meeting Standards**

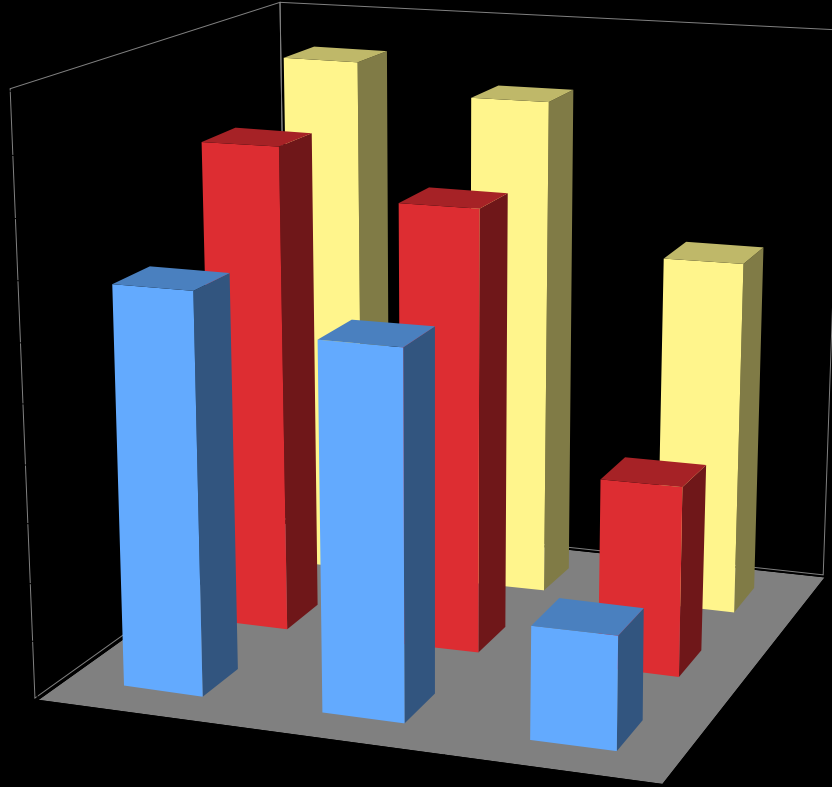


*Approximately 40% of our students  
(almost 900,000) receive free and reduced lunch*

**% Meeting Standards**

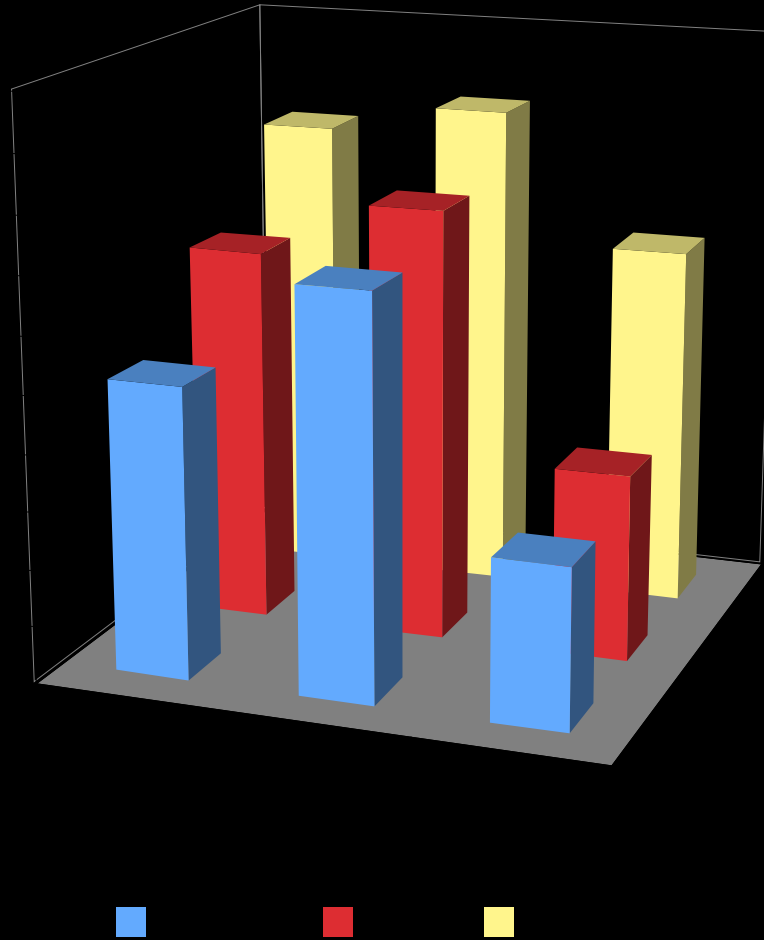


**% Meeting Standards**

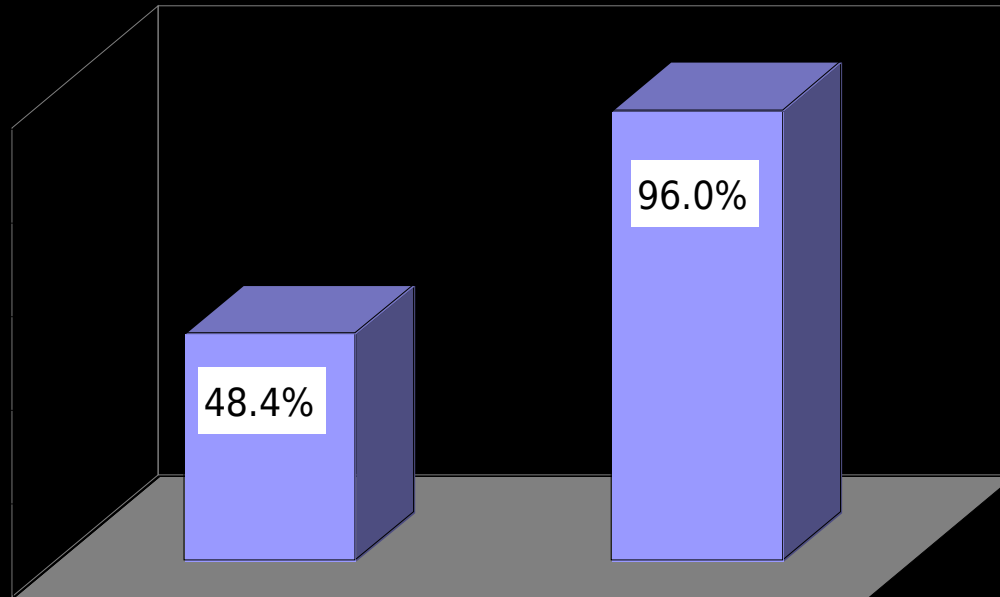


*According to Education Trust, poor, minority kids in middle school spend more time coloring, cutting and pasting than doing reading, writing or math.*

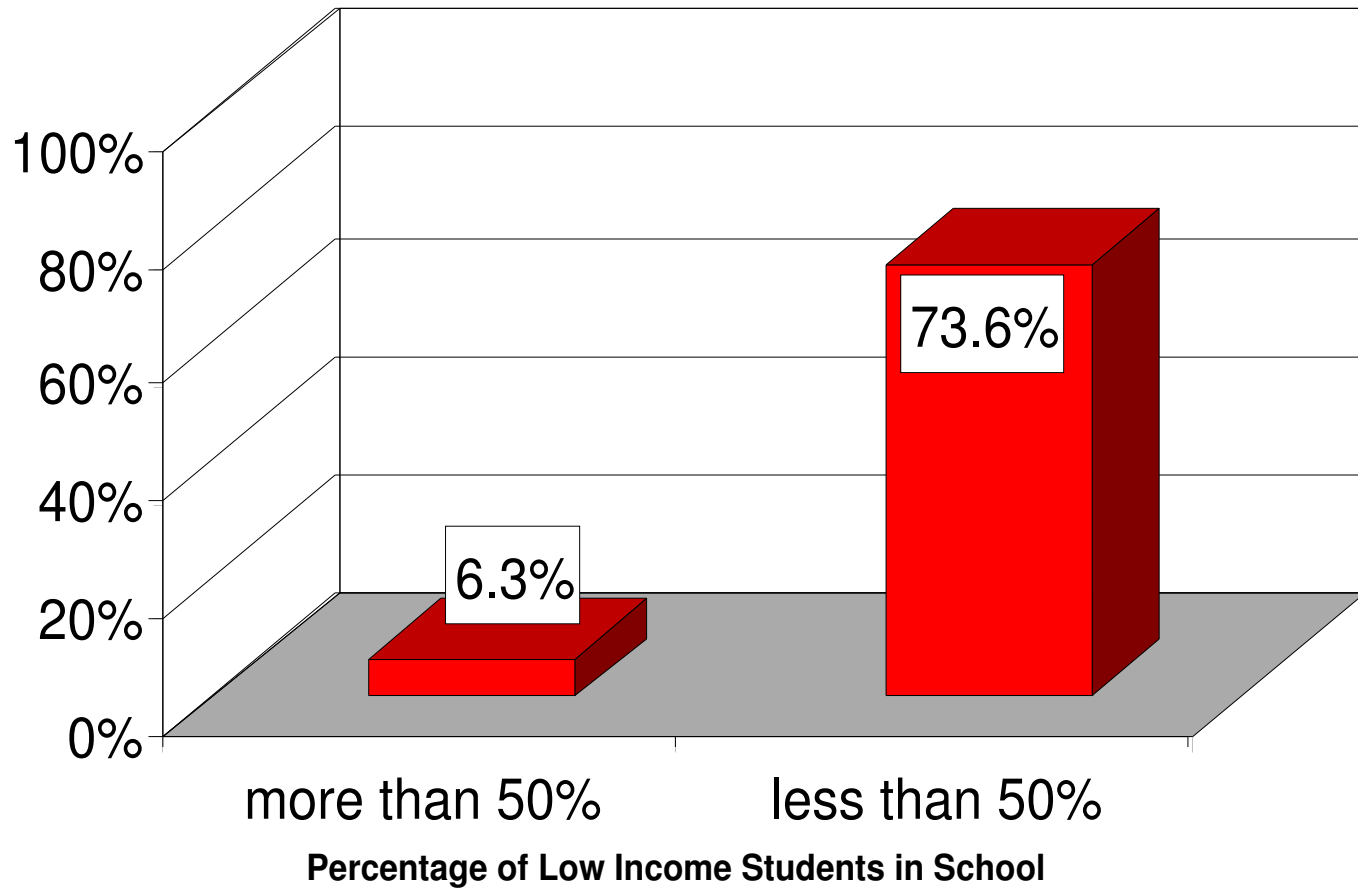
**% Meeting Standards**



# Percentage of Elementary Schools with More than Half of the 3rd Graders Meeting Reading Standards



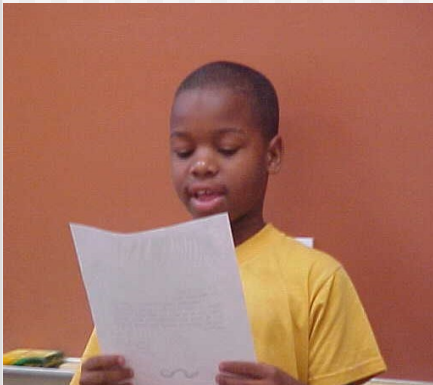
## Percentage of High Schools with More than Half the Students Meeting PSAE Standards



# Who is the Child Left Behind?

## When I Turn 50

*When I'm 50, I will be married and I will have two kids and I will make it a point not to be like other men I know. I will help my wife raise my kids and I will be a good Daddy. I will get myself a good job and buy my kids everything that they need. I am going to work at a store and be the manager. I am going to be very nice to people and help people who need help. I am*



*only going to be married once.*

*I am going to have a nice life.*

*- Victor R., Grade 4*

**“Without quality teachers, every educational initiative in the world will not succeed.”**

**- Governor Rod Blagojevich  
March, 2003**

**Teacher qualification**

In Illinois, teachers are highly qualified if they have:

- A bachelor's degree
- Full state certification
- Demonstrated subject-matter competence in the area taught

Illinois classes not taught by highly qualified teachers (for 2002-03)

In schools with low poverty

0.5%

State average

2.1%

In schools with high poverty

5.4%

Source: Illinois State Board of Education

**Poor kids get least qualified teachers**

Illinois' standards too lax, critics say

By Jodi S. Cohen  
Tribune staff reporter

The first comprehensive statewide assessment of teacher qualifications in Illinois confirms anecdotal evidence that studies have suggested for years: Poor and minority children—the students who often need the most help—are most likely to have the least-qualified teachers.

Data released Friday showed that children in Illinois' high-poverty schools are 10 times more likely than students from low-poverty schools to have classes taught by teachers who are not highly qualified because they don't have a state teaching certificate or are teaching subjects outside their expertise.

East Aurora, Waukegan, Harvey and Country Club Hills school districts were among those with the highest percentage of classes not taught by highly qualified teachers during the 2002-03 school year. In all those districts, more than 10 percent of classes in the core academic subjects were led by teachers who didn't meet stan-

PLEASE SEE TEACHERS, PAGE 22

**“... poor and minority children - the students who often need the most help - are most likely to have the least qualified teachers.”**

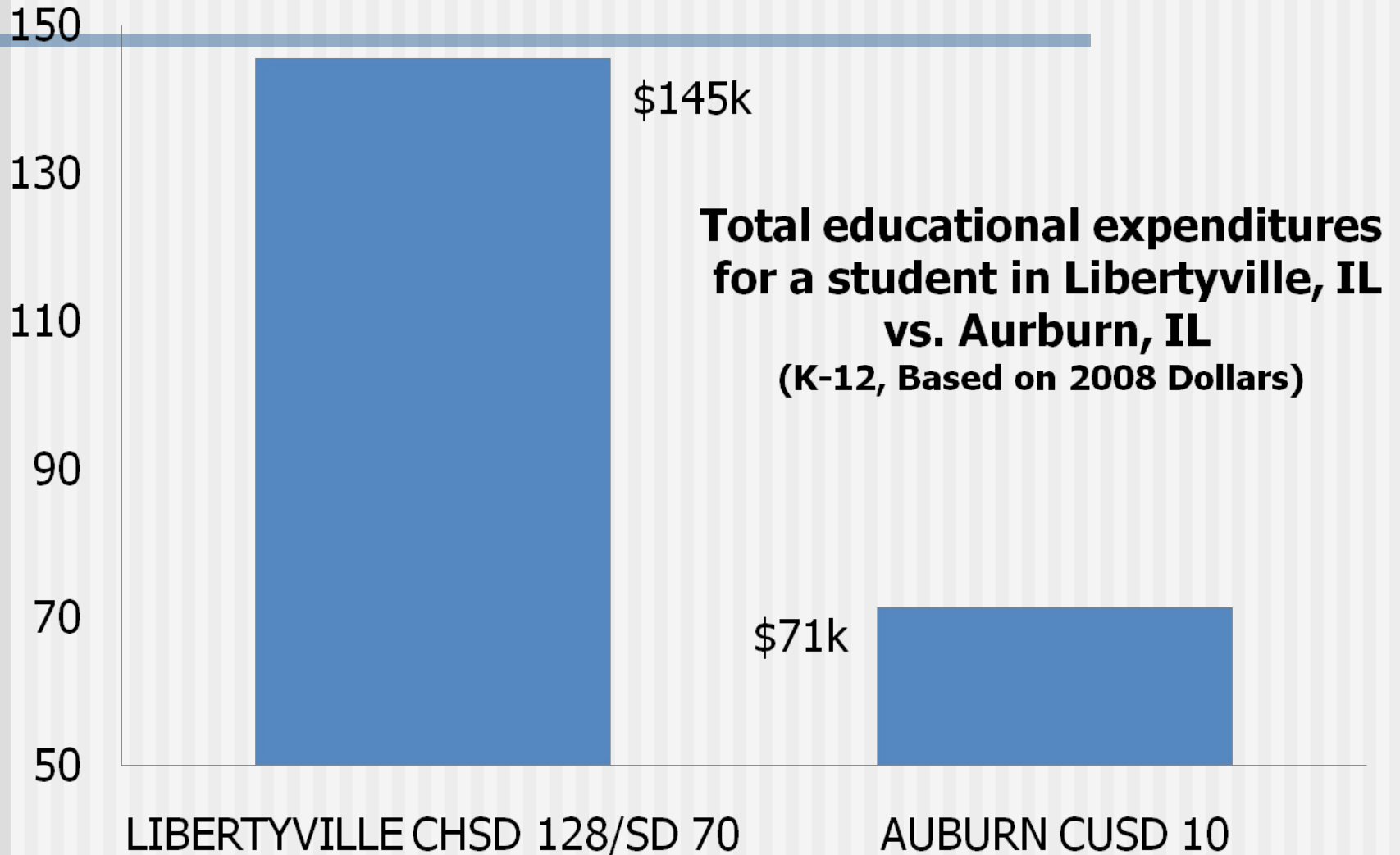
**“...children in Illinois high-poverty schools are 10 times more likely than students from low-poverty schools to have classes taught by teachers who are not “highly qualified”...”**

# School Funding

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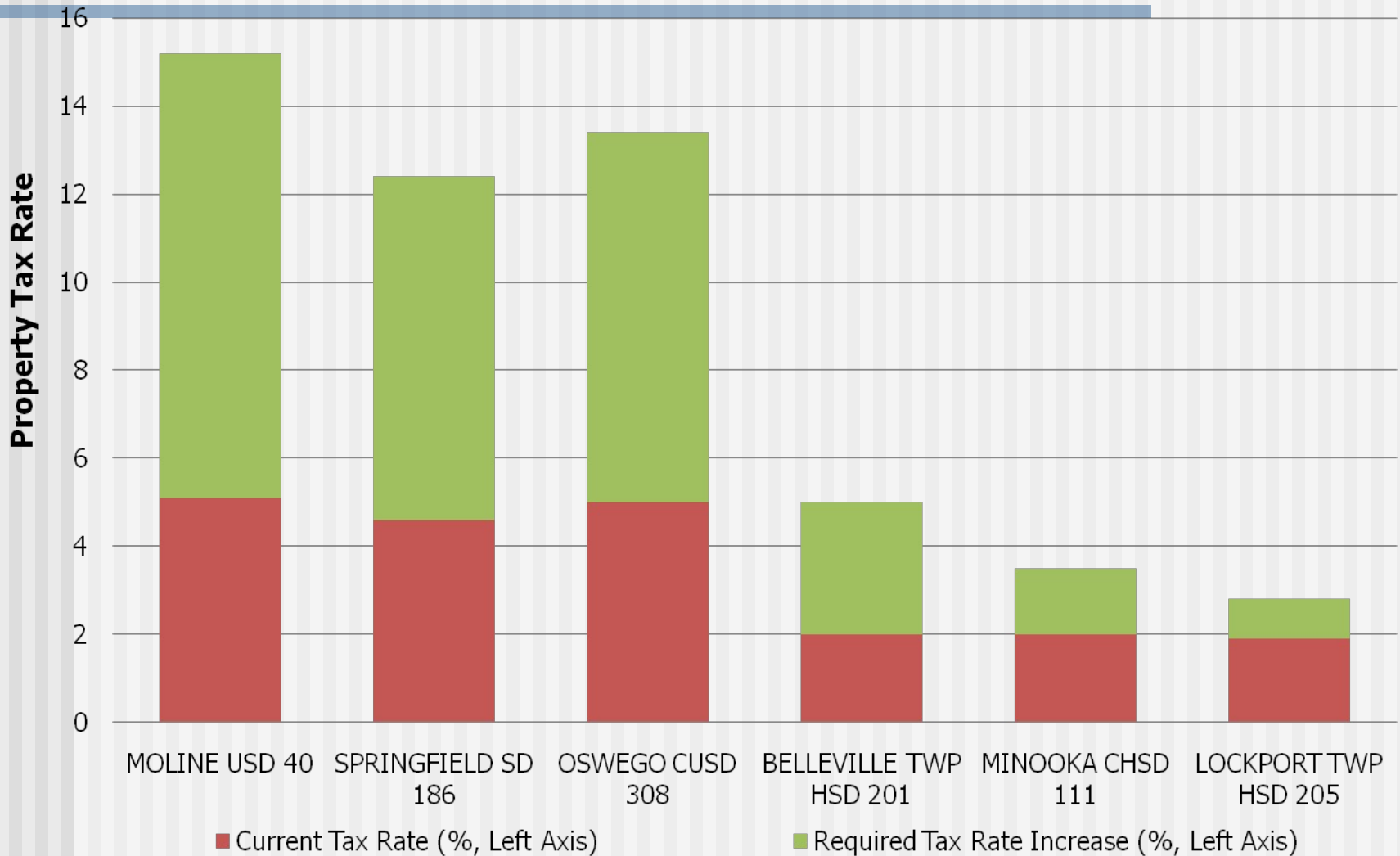
- **\$2324 difference in instructional spending between Flat Grant (4.5% of population) and Formula (77%)**
- **Highland Park spends more money on a student in his or her first 5 years than Auburn does in 13 years**
- **The per pupil spending gap between low poverty districts and high poverty districts is \$2,465 -- the second highest in the country. (The gaps in Wisconsin and Indiana is \$337 and \$379.)**
- **The per pupil spending gap between low minority and high minority schools is \$1,862, the third worst in U.S.**
- **Difference in revenue between 95th %ile and 5th %ile is nearly \$8400**

# Unequal Funding



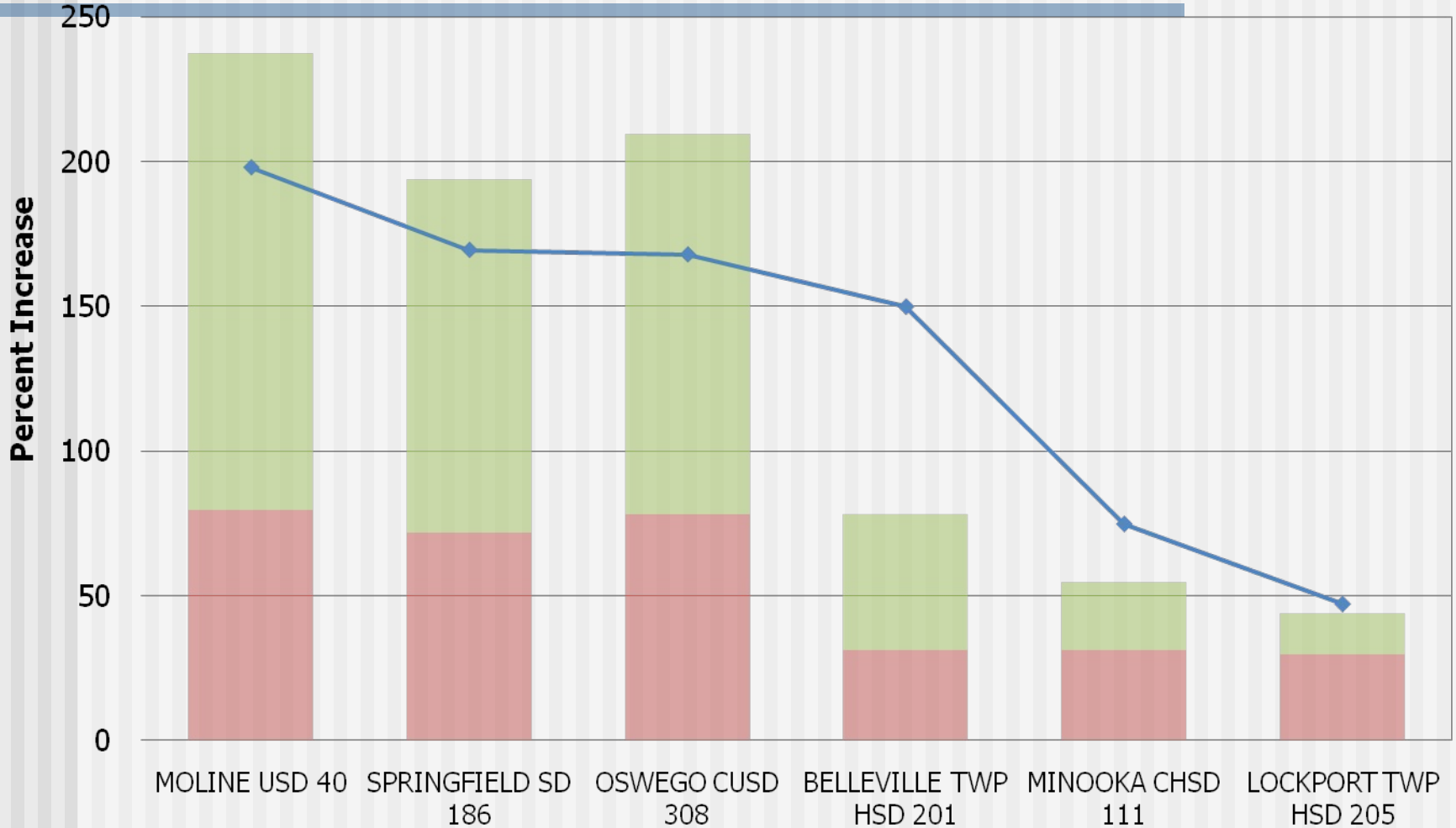
# Price of Equal Opportunity

## Property Tax Rates Required to Match Libertyville CHSD 128 Spending



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Property Tax Rates Required to Match Libertyville CHSD 128 Spending



# Standards Assessment and Accountability

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- **Standards: Too many, too vague**
- **Assessment**
  - Lacking vertical alignment
  - Lack of performance based measures
- **Accountability: AYP and NCLB**
  - No comparables
  - Lack of relational data (\$\$ and performance)
  - Missing important information
  - School Improvement Plans ineffective

# Trending UP

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- **More students taking AP**
- **ACT Composite**
- **NAEP Math**
- **American Diploma Project**

# Trending DOWN

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- **Number of low-income families with children in schools**
- **Spread between ISAT and PSAE scores**
- **Spread between instructional spending per pupil in Flat Grant v. Formula**
- **“Digital divide” in technology use**
- **Affordability of college**

# PK-12 Priorities

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- **Closing the Achievement Gaps**
- **Having students College Ready and Work Ready**
- **Assuring all students have highly prepared and effective teachers and school leaders**
- **Assuring safe and healthy learning environments**

# Higher Education Priorities

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- Reduce number of students needing remediation
- The IBHE Public Agenda
  - Goal 1: Increase educational attainment to match best-performing U.S. states and world countries.
  - Goal 2: Ensure college affordability for students, families, and taxpayers.
  - Goal 3: Increase the number of quality postsecondary credentials to meet the demands of the economy and an increasingly global society.
  - Goal 4: Better integrate Illinois 'educational, research, and innovation assets to meet economic needs of the state and its regions.

# What's Preventing Solutions

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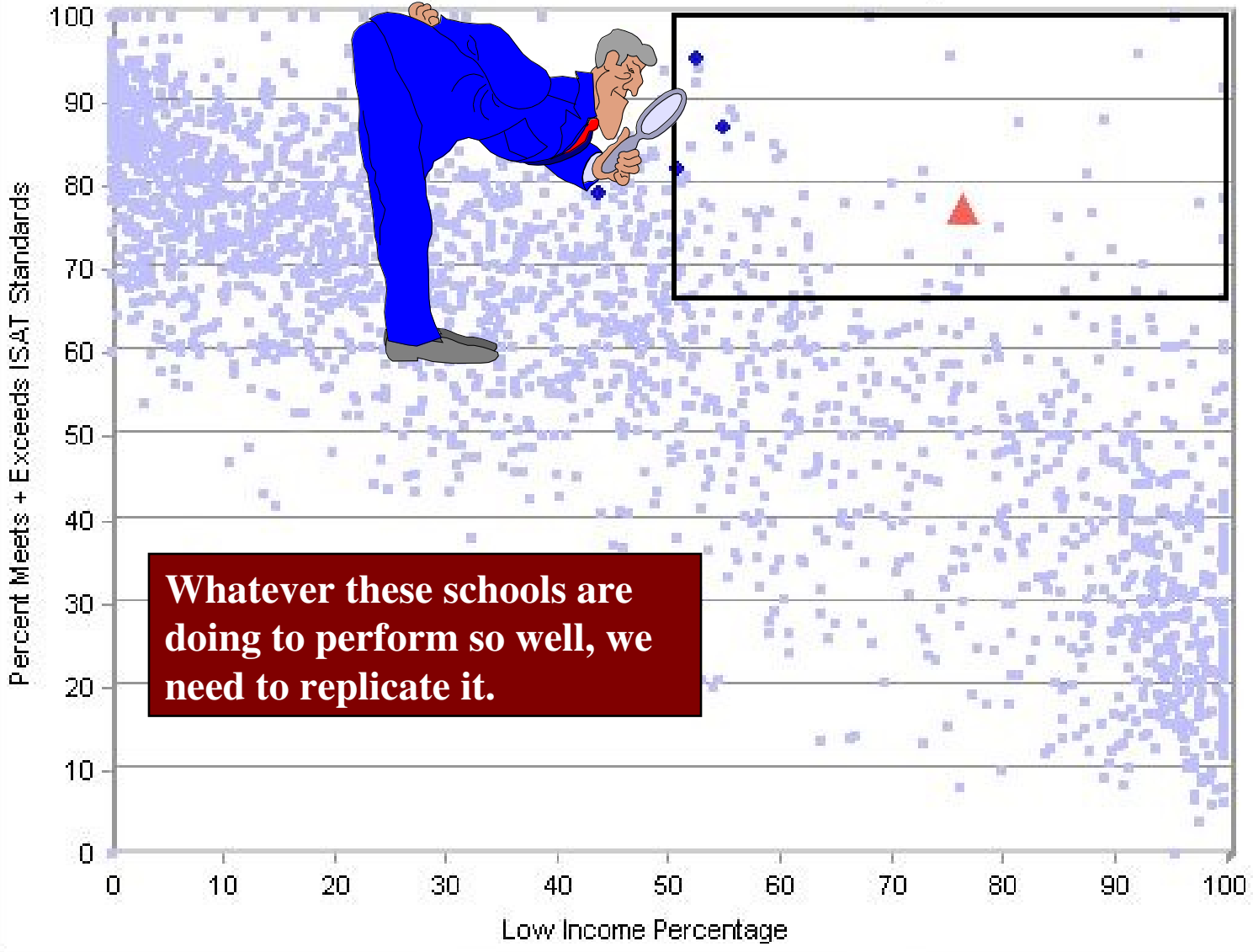
- **Turf and the challenges of consensus**
- **Satisfaction of the Status Quo**
- **Financial resources for schools**
- **Data resources for schools and the public**
- **No sense of urgency or outrage**
- **Political will and courage**

# We can solve these problems!

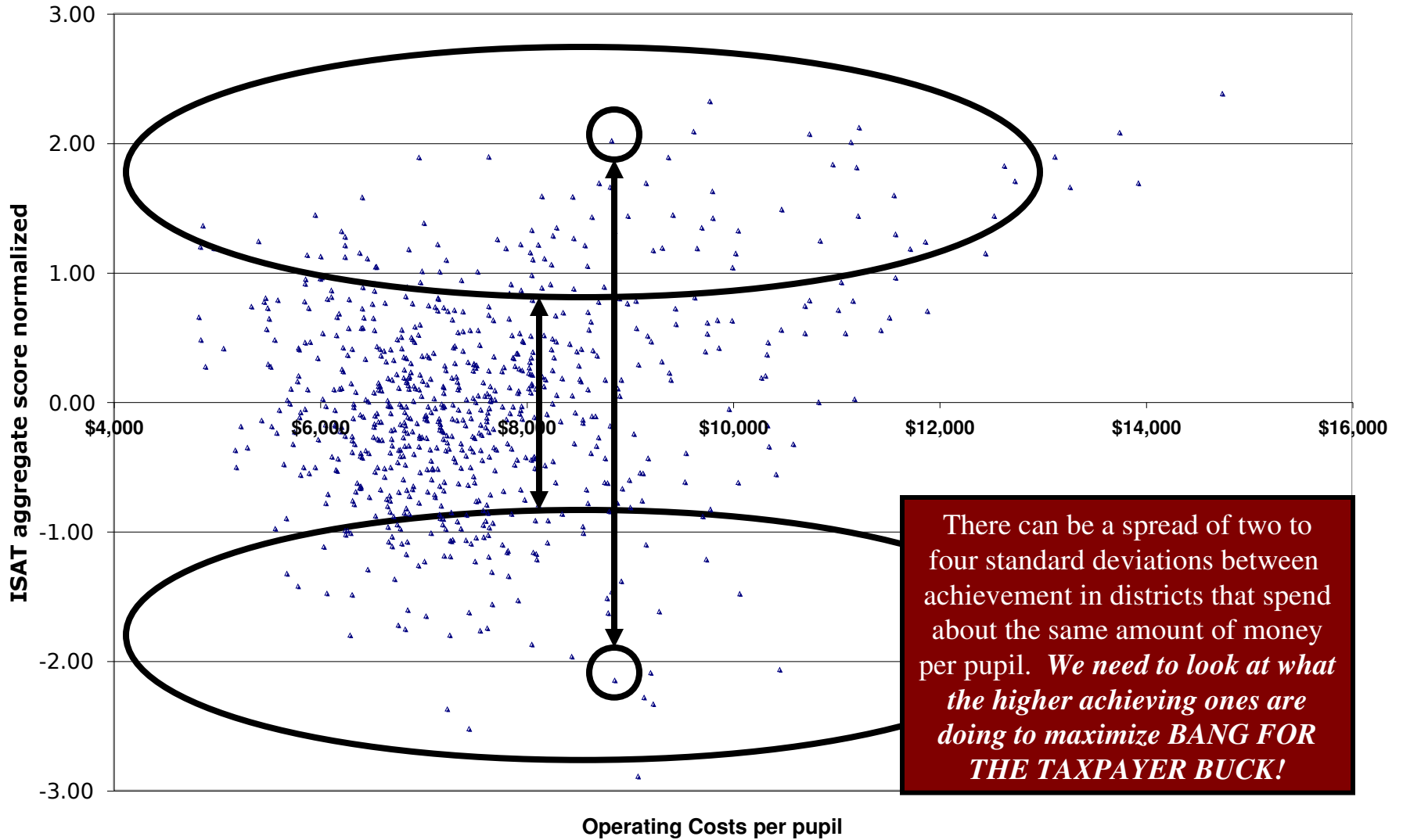
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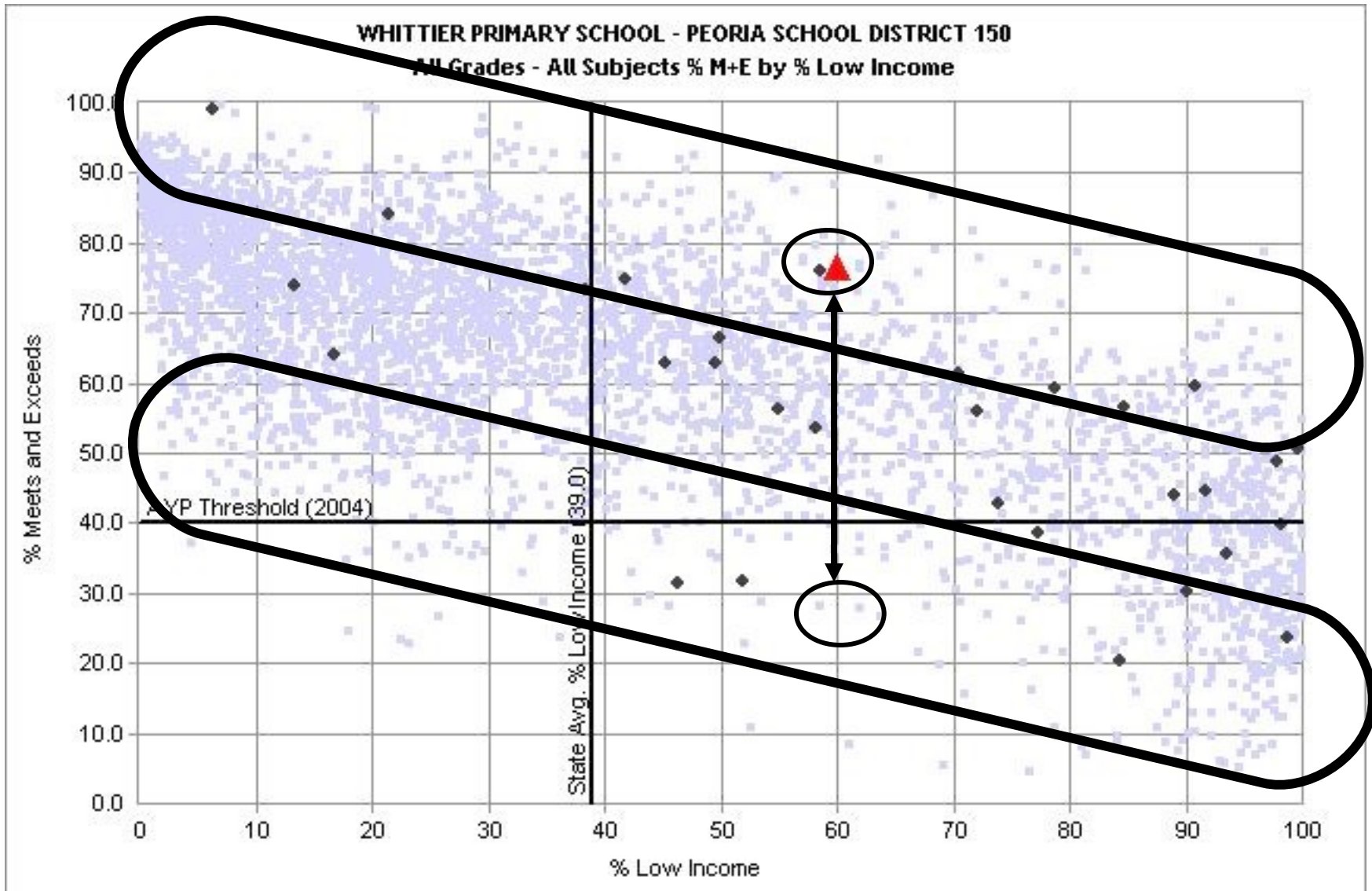
- Increase funding for education and tie funding reform to a system of fiscal and academic performance accountability.
- Replicate the most effective programs and practices in high poverty, high performing schools in Illinois.
- Identify and implement policies and practices that have proven successful in other states (P-20, accountability, differential pay, etc.).

FRANKLIN ELEM SCHOOL  
Meeting Illinois Standards: ISAT - Grade 3 - Reading



## ISAT v. Operating Costs





Even among schools with the same percentage of low-income students, there can be a spread of 50% in “meets and exceeds” scores. *We ought to be looking at what the high performing schools do differently and replicate it.*

# **Cost Effective Solutions: Student Achievement**

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- **Leadership Training and Development**
- **High Quality INSTRUCTION**
- **More Time to Learn (including virtual learning)**
- **Early Literacy**
- **School Improvement Plans with measurable goals and professional development**
- **Parent Engagement (“College Bound”)**
- **High quality, rigorous standards and more authentic assessment**
- **New “school” models**

# Cost Effective Solutions: Funding

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- **Tie new funding to accountability reforms**
- **Small tax increase on a broad base**
- **Environmental “sin” taxes**

# Who's Working on Solutions

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- Dialogue Group (Burnham Plan 2.0)
- Advance Illinois
- Education Caucus
- Education Roundtable
- Civic Committee
- Mayors' Caucus
- and more ... including US