

**Reading Next:
A Vision for Action and Research in
Middle and High School Literacy**

Alliance for Excellent Education



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Agenda

- Crisis of low literacy levels in secondary schools
- Need for a Policy Solution
- 15 Elements of Effective Adolescent Literacy Programs
- Improve adolescent literacy *AND* develop the research base
- Reading Next in Action
- Adolescent Literacy Policy Update

Literacy Crisis

Reading Skills are Dangerously Low

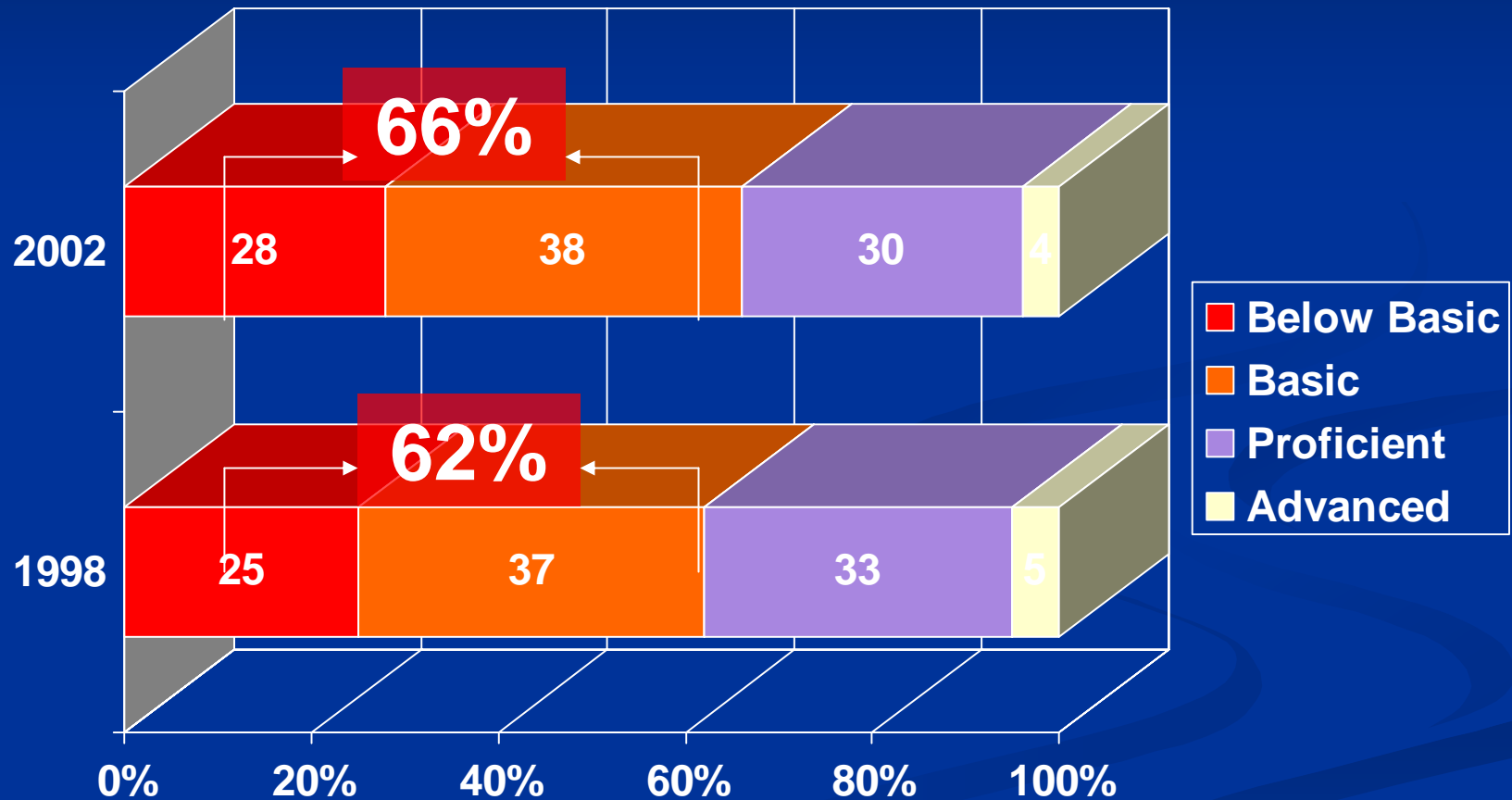
- More than 8 million students in grades 4-12 are struggling readers.
- 2 in 3 high school students read below grade level.
- 1 in 4 high school students reads far below grade level.

Changing Literacy Demands

- Between 1996 and 2006, the average literacy required for all American occupations is projected to rise by 14%.
- The 25 fastest growing professions have far greater than average literacy demands.
- The 25 fastest declining professions have lower than average literacy demands.

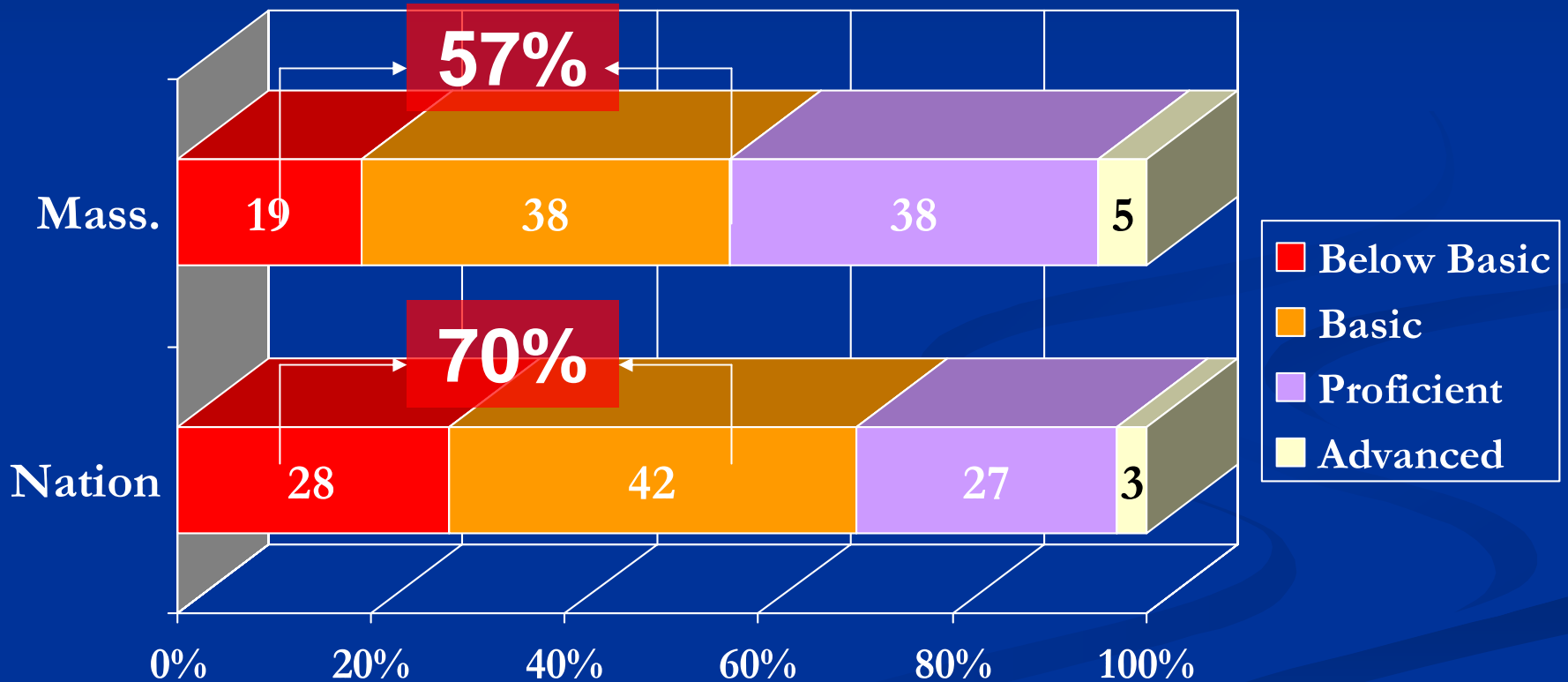
12th Grade Reading

2 in 3 students are not proficient in Reading.



8th Grade Reading

NAEP Reading Scores 2003



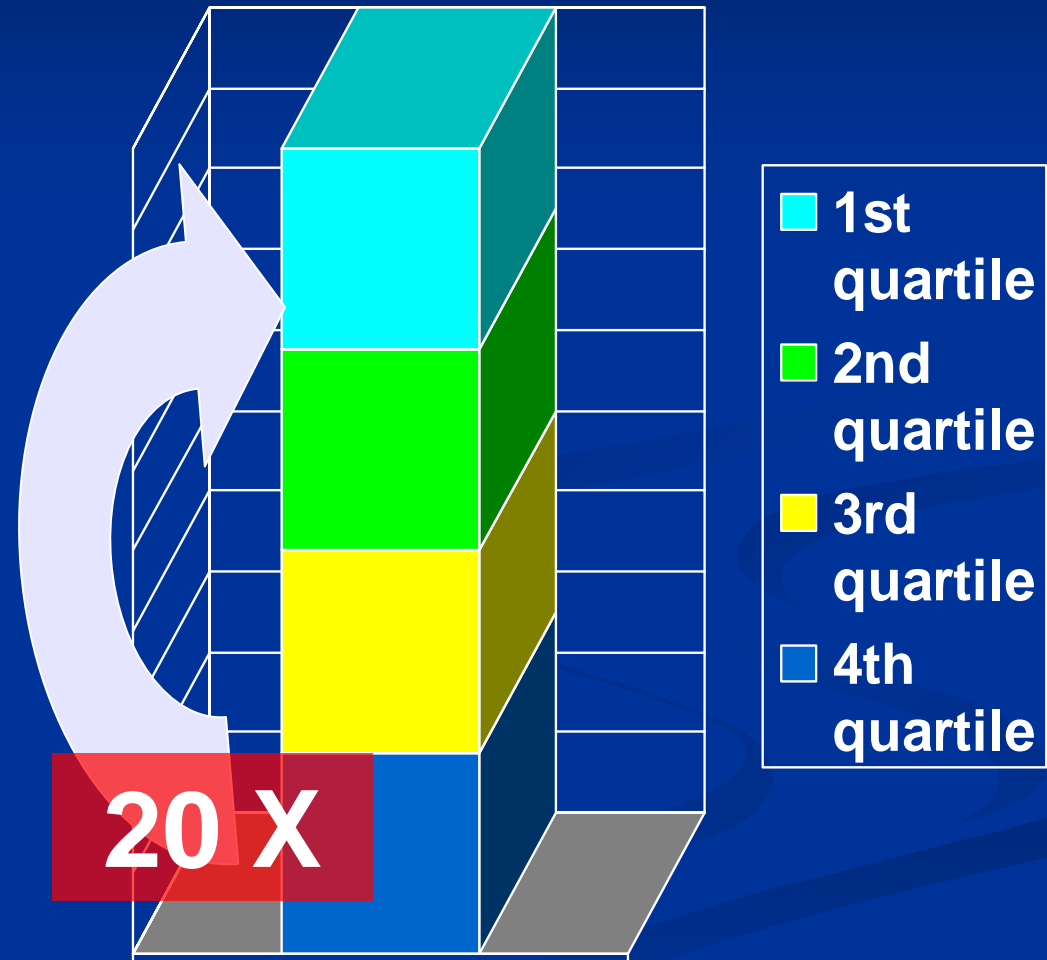
What Do Low NAEP Scores Mean?

- 70% of 8th graders cannot...
 - give details and examples to support themes they identify in a literary passage.
 - describe the purpose of a practical passage and support their views with examples and details.
- Roughly 70% of 12th graders cannot...
 - explain the use of irony and symbolism in a literary passage.
 - apply information or directions appropriately to read a practical passage.

What Are the Results?

Low reading levels lead to high dropout rates.

Students in the bottom quartile of achievement are *20 times more likely to dropout* than students in the top quartile.



Achievement

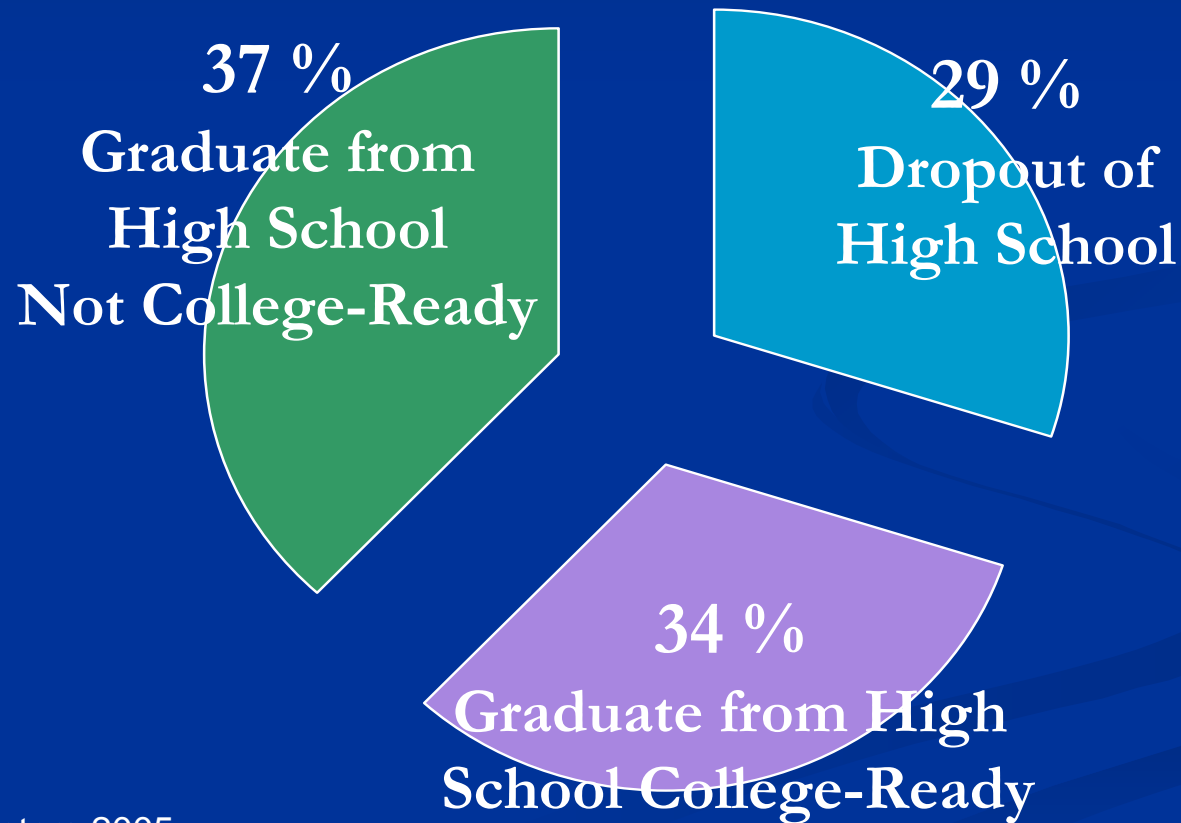
What Are the Results?

Low reading skills lead to low achievement.

- Every year, 1.3 million students do not graduate with their peers. That means, **every school day we lose 7,000 students.**
- Nationally, 29% of students do not graduate on time.
- 68% of high school students graduate unprepared for college. And 53% of college students enroll in remedial courses.

What Are the Results?

What happens to entering 9th graders four years later...

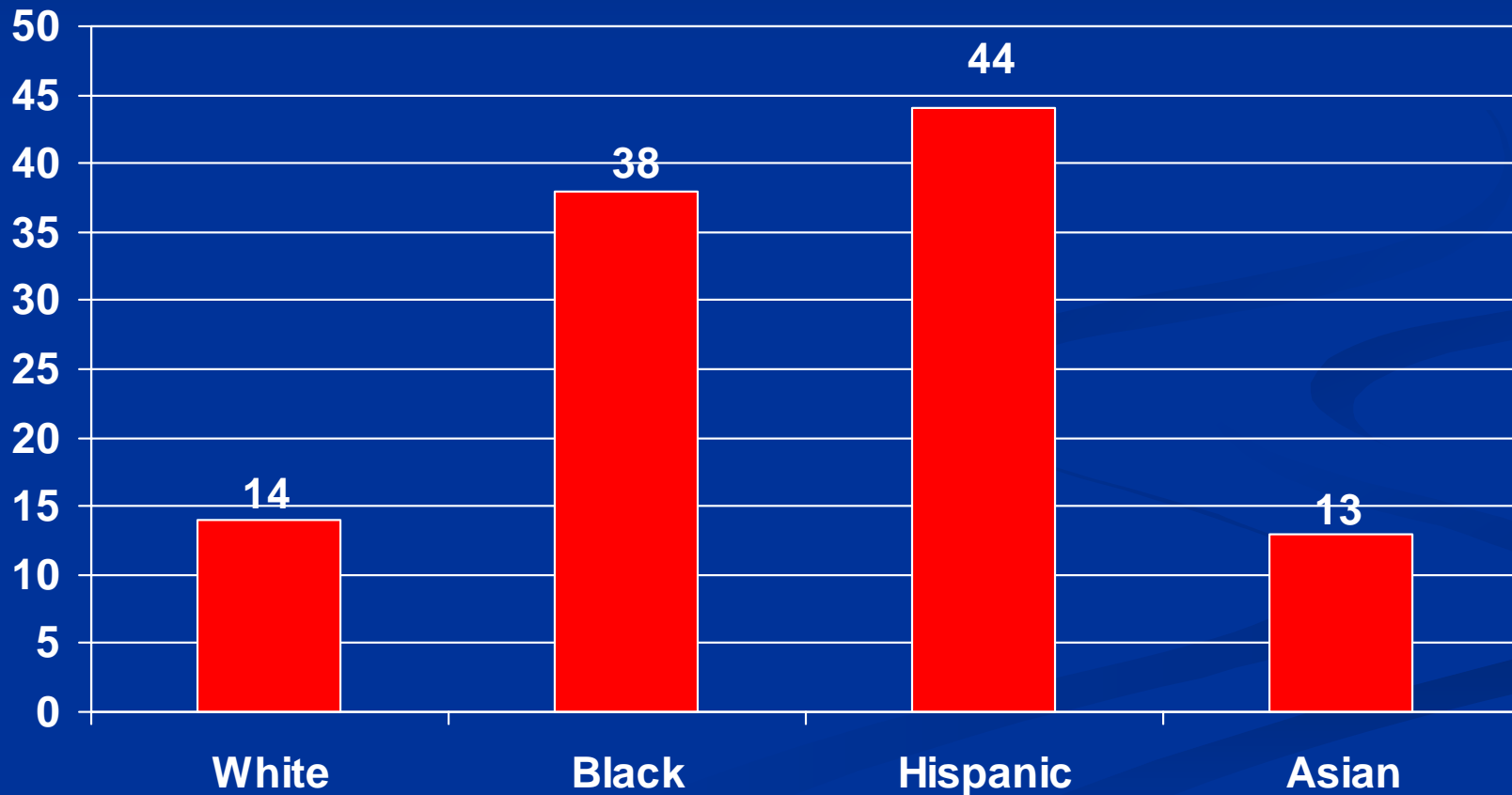


What Does the Reading Data Tell Us?

- On average, students of color and poor students are more likely to read at below basic levels, or far below grade level.
- Where a student lives is not an indicator of their reading performance. Students in rural, suburban, and urban areas alike struggle to read at grade level.

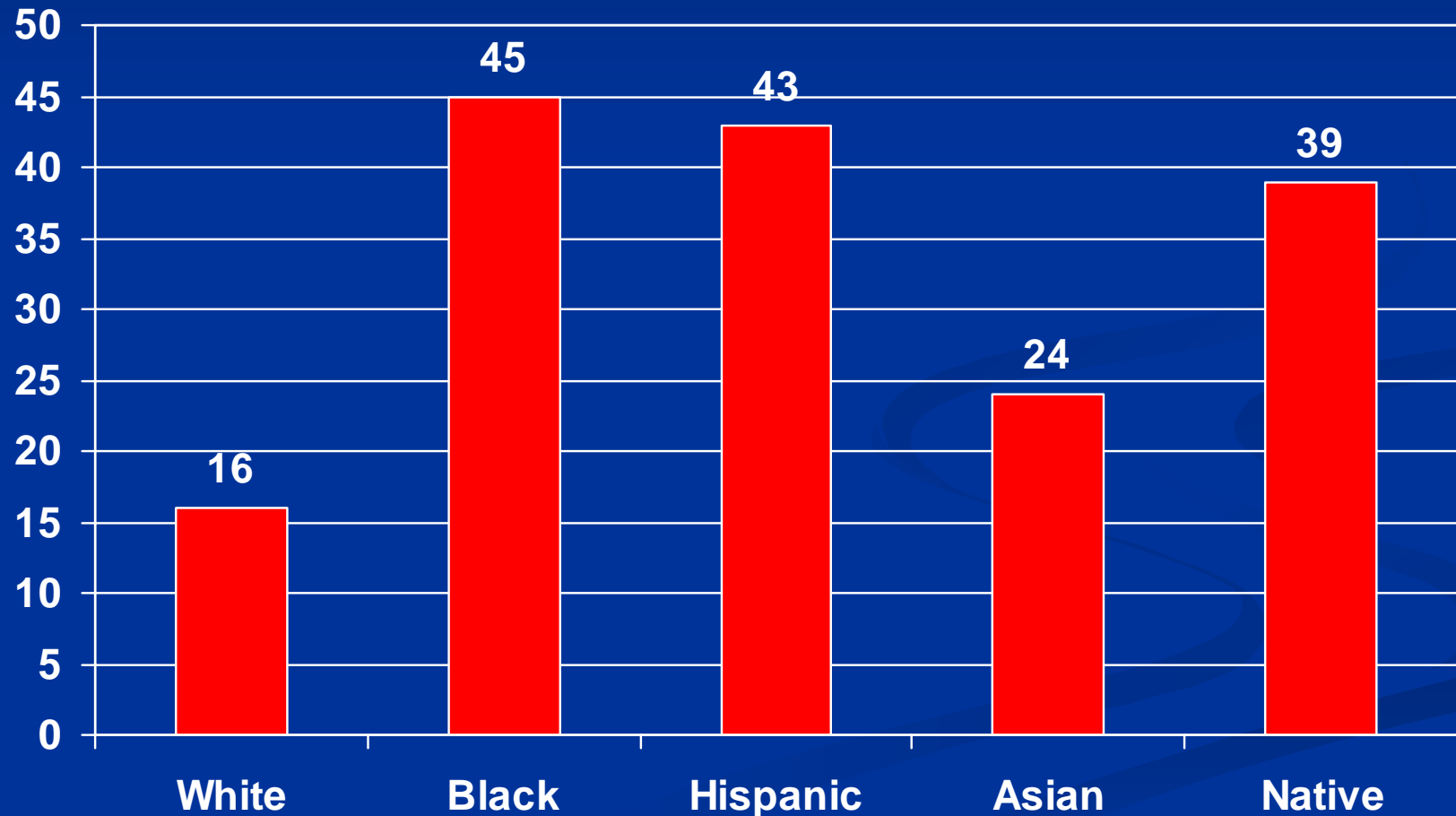
8th Grade Scores in MA

Black and Hispanic students are most likely to read far below grade level.



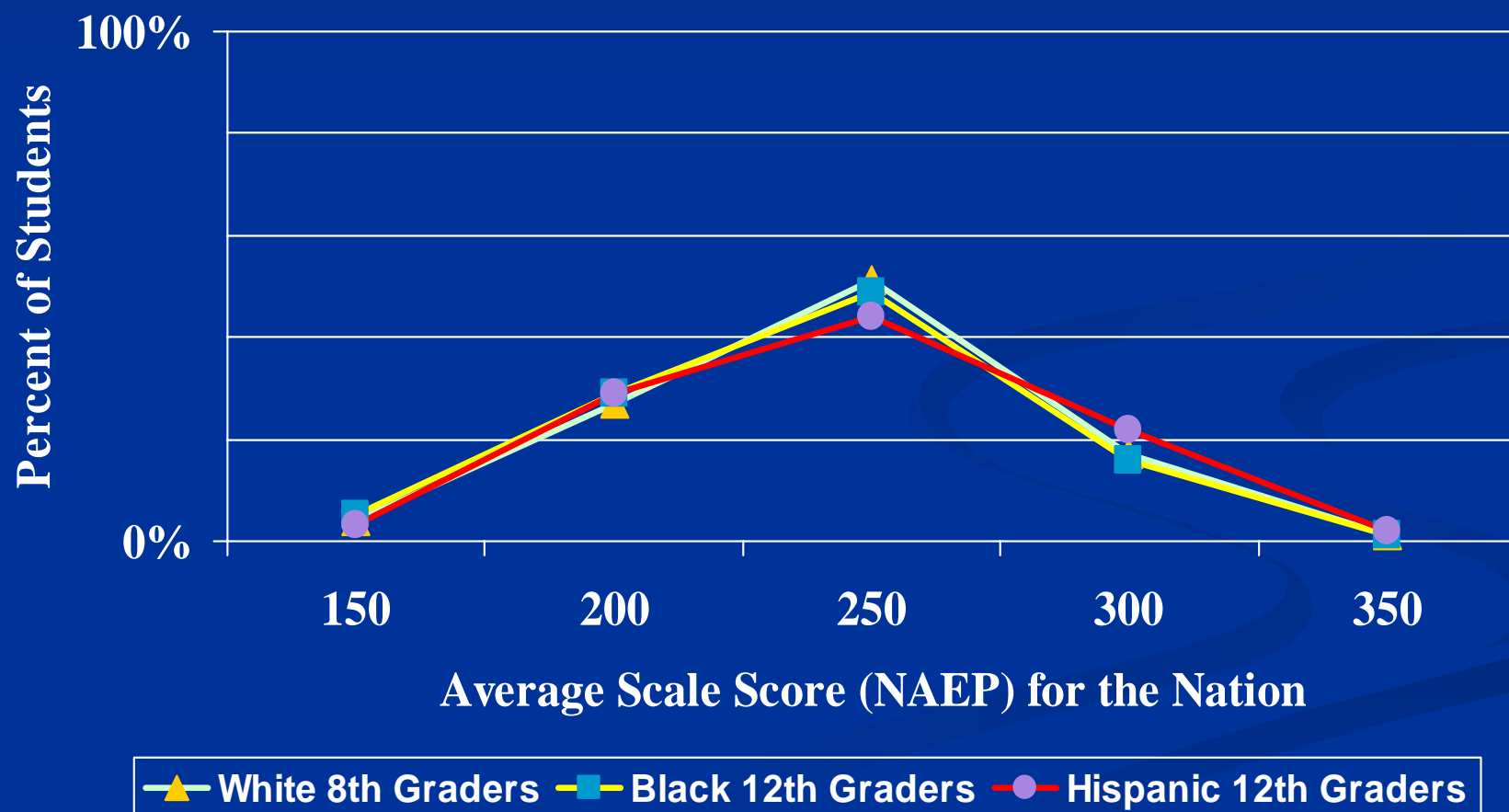
8th Grade Scores in the Nation

Black, Hispanic, and Native students are most likely to read far below grade level.



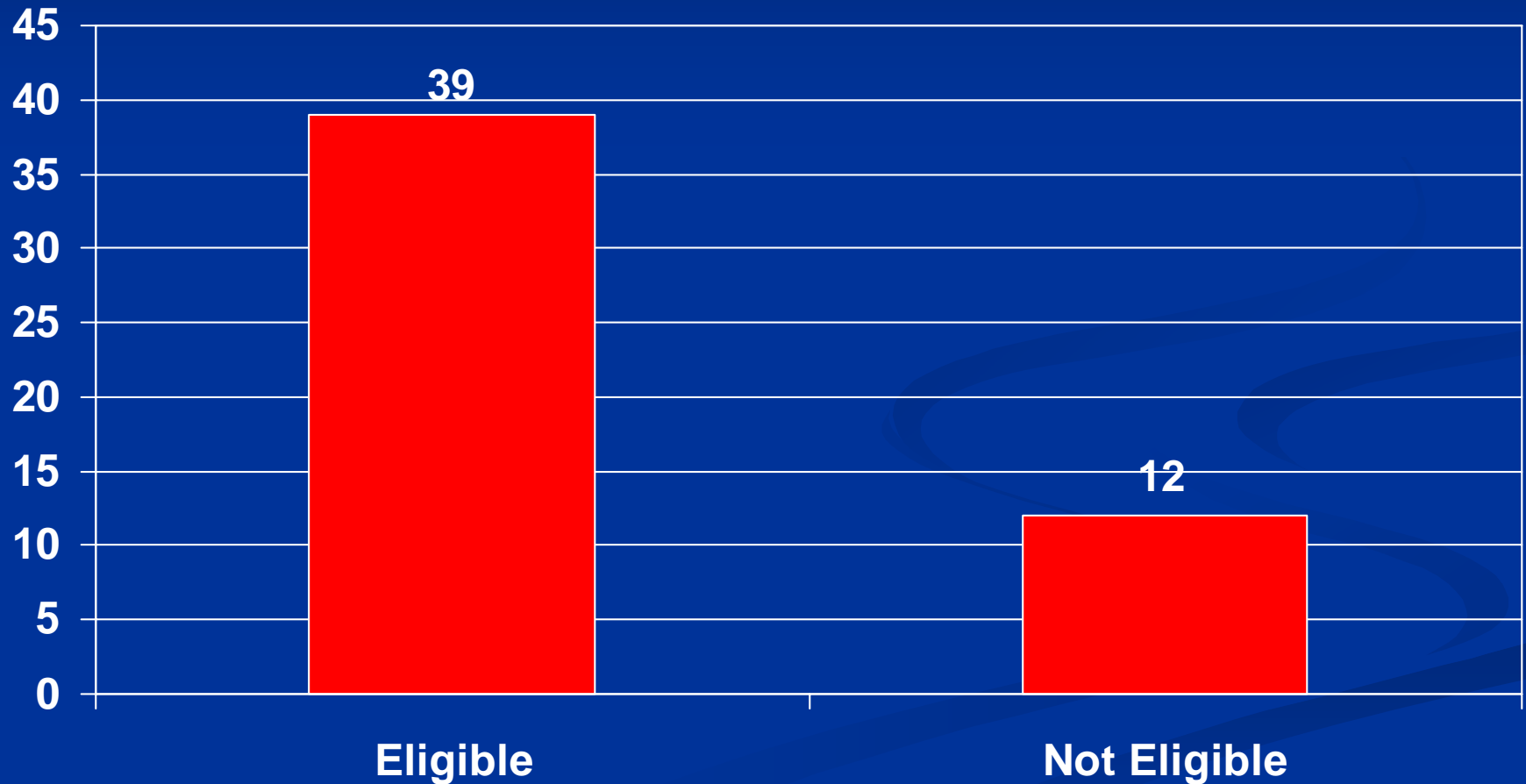
The Achievement Gap:

Black & Hispanic 12th graders read at the same level as White 8th graders



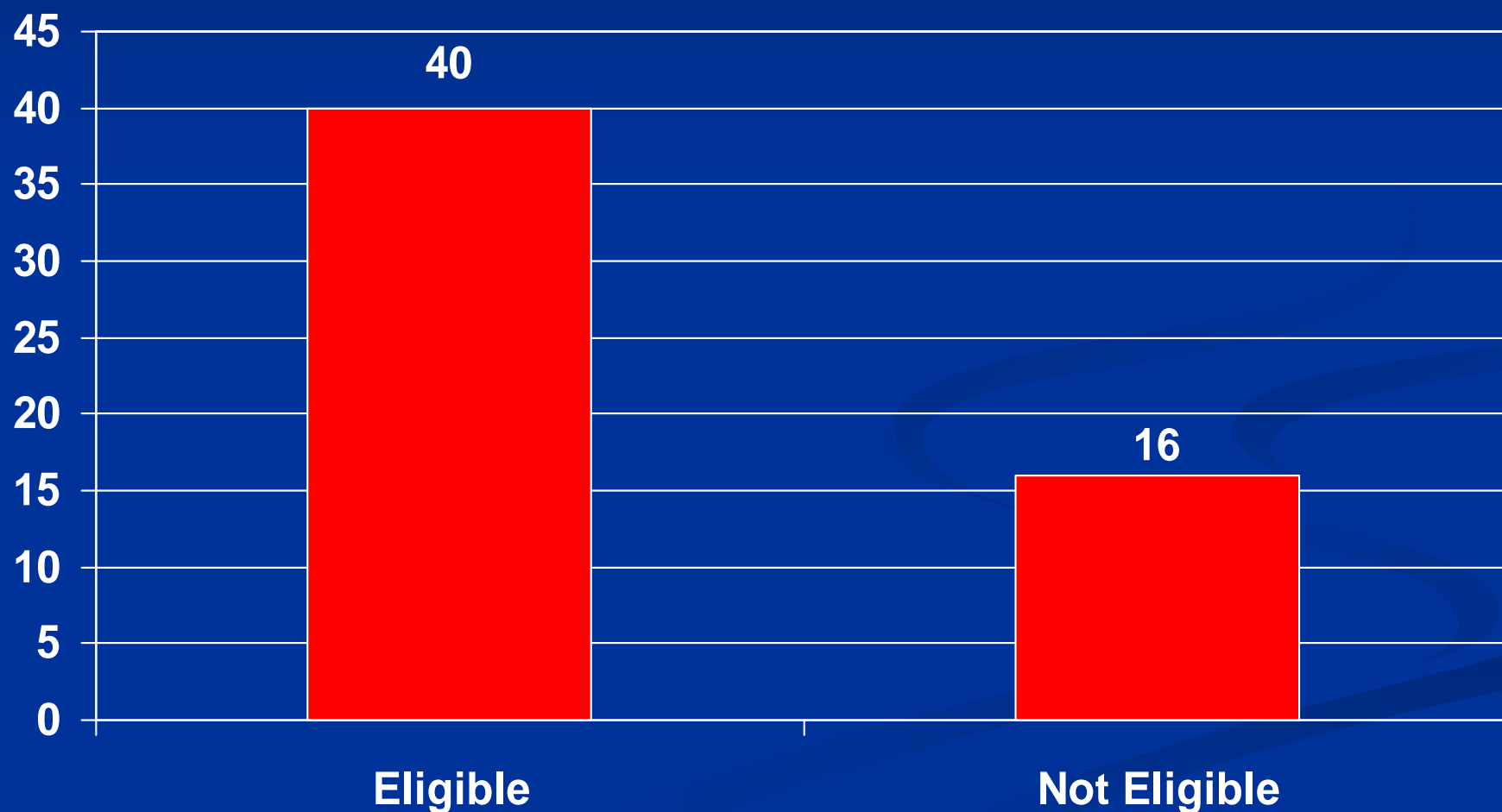
8th Grade Reading Scores in MA

Students eligible for free or reduced price lunch are more likely to read far below grade level.



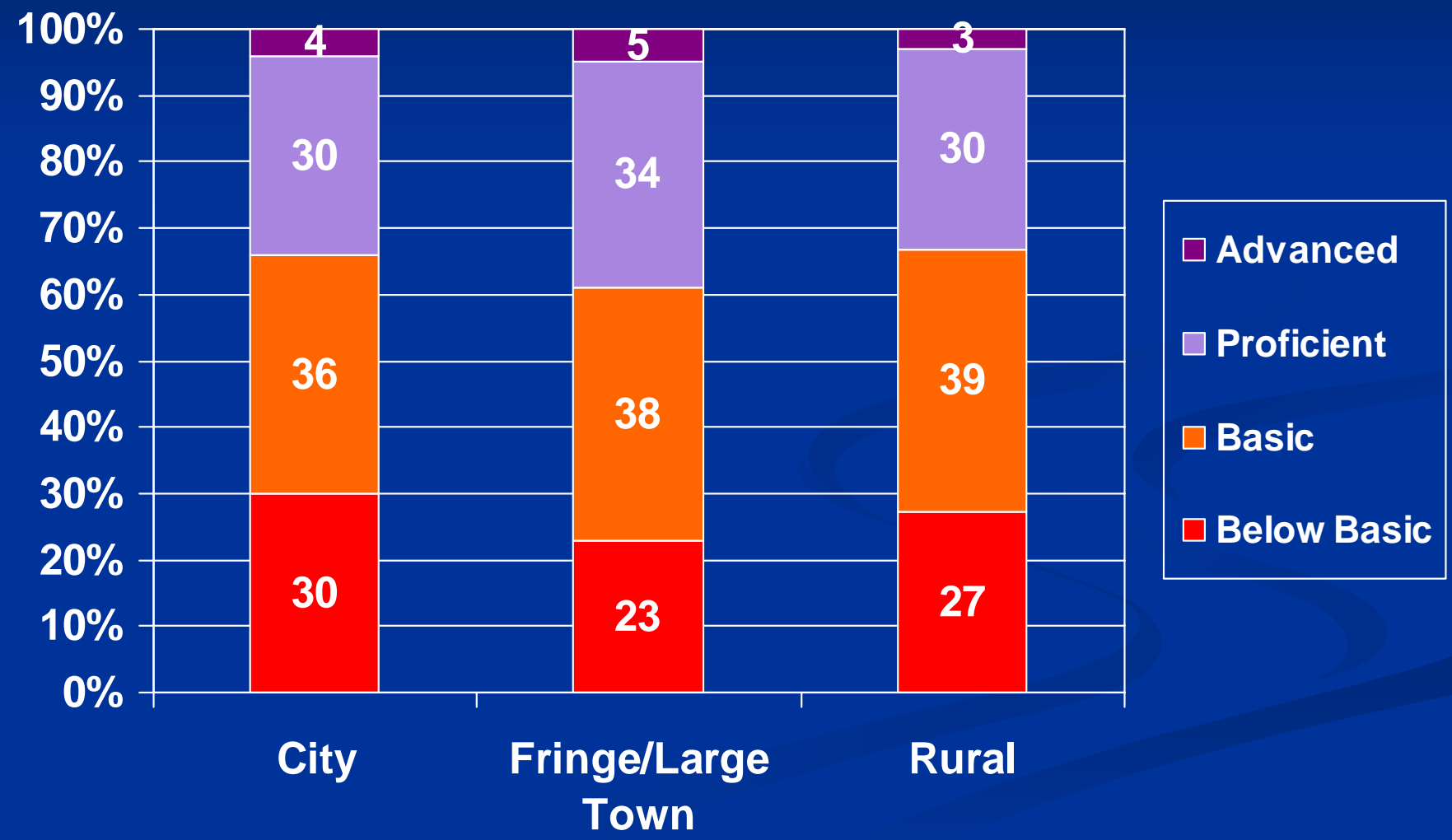
8th Grade Scores for the Nation

Students eligible for free or reduced price lunch are more likely to read far below grade level.



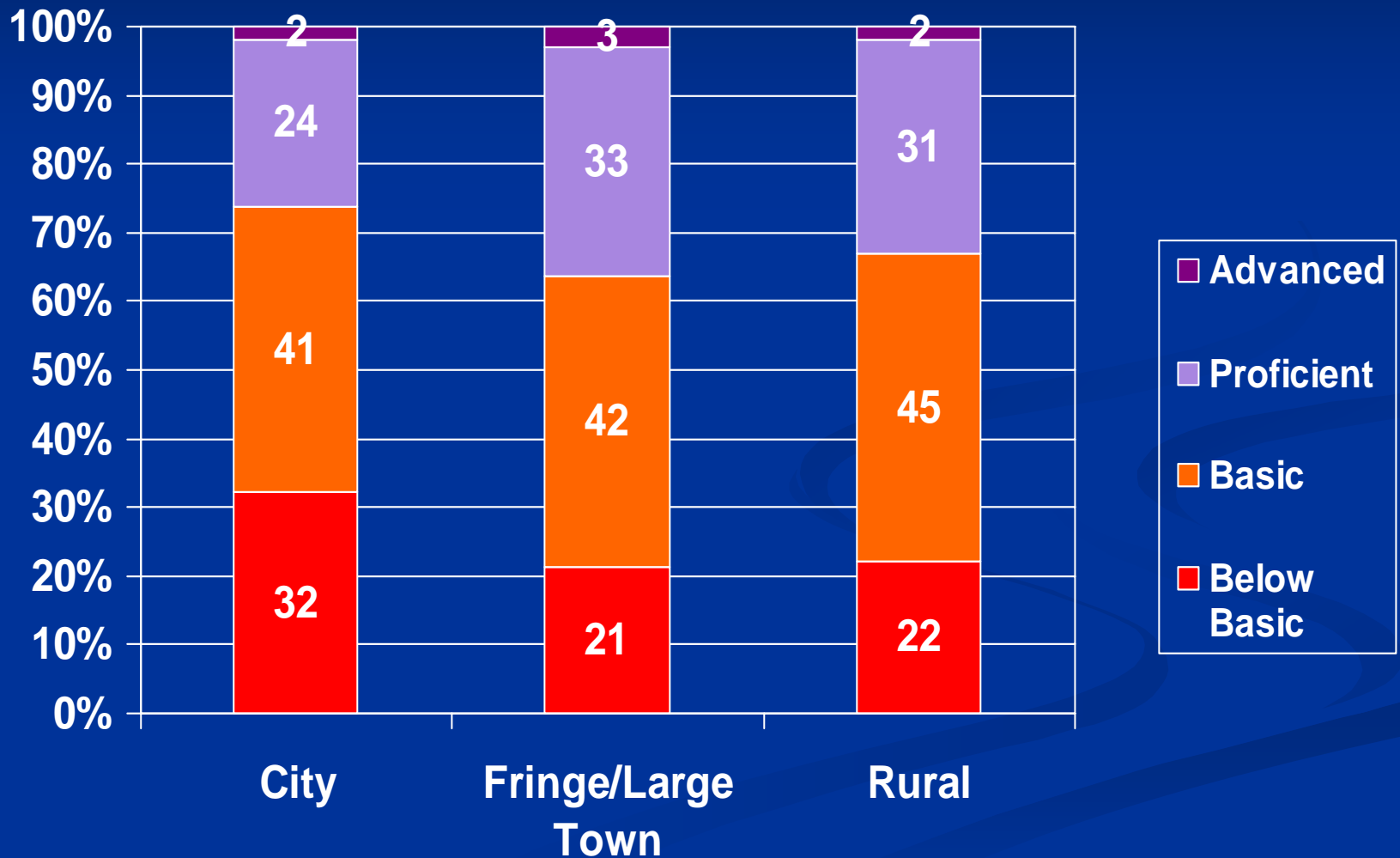
12th Grade Scores for the Nation

Geography is not an indicator of reading performance.



8th Grade Scores for the Nation

Geography is not an indicator of reading performance.



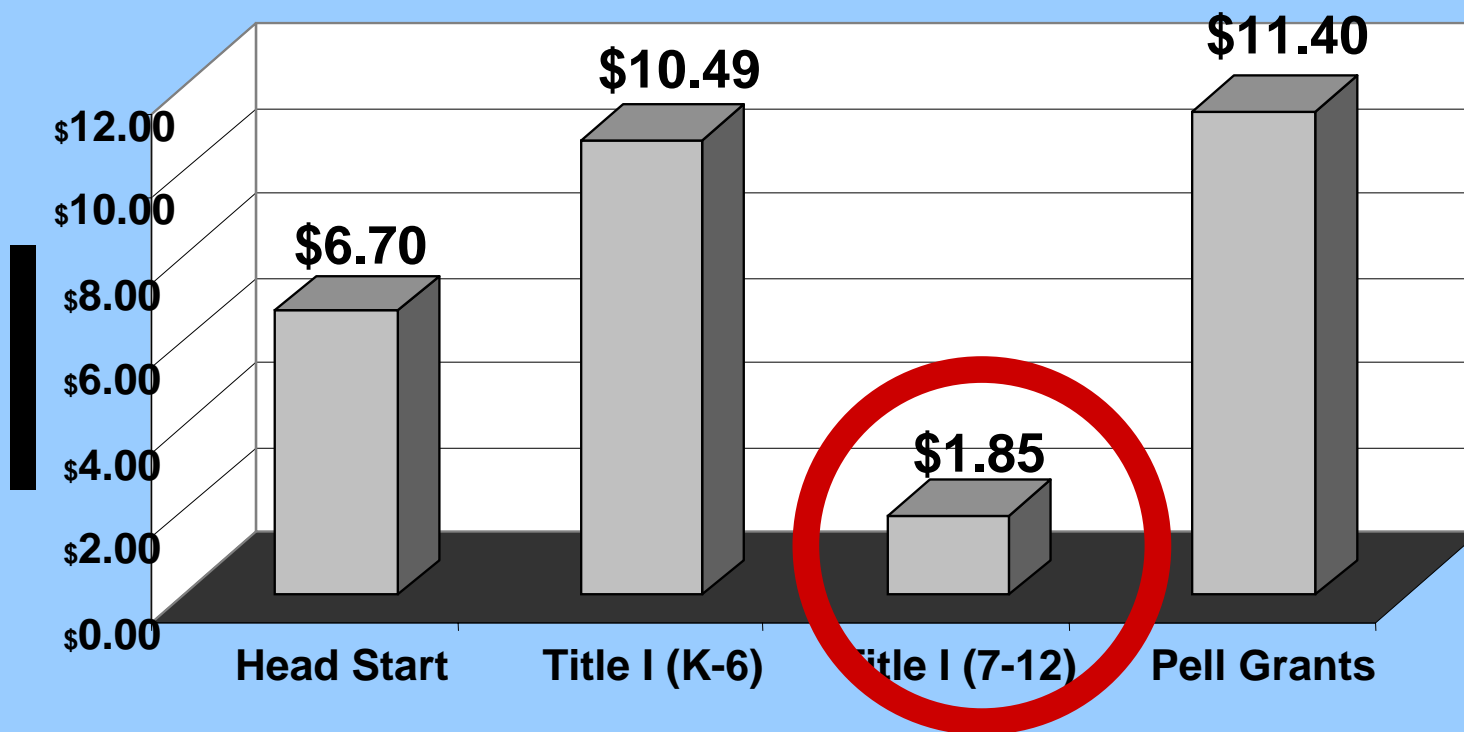
The Need for A Policy Solution

Current Literacy Policies and Practices Do Not Support Adolescents

- Reading First Program under NCLB supports research-based programs in grades K-3
- At fourth grade text changes and teachers are less prepared to incorporate literacy instruction into classes.
- Fourth-grade slump- a drop in the achievement and reading comprehension skills of poor, minority, and students learning English.

Federal Education Signature Programs Do Not Support Adolescents

Middle & High School Students Are Left Behind



Reading Next-

In addition to the **Reading First** program for students in grade K-3, the nation needs a **Reading Next** program to extend the focus on quality literacy instruction for students in grades 4-12.



What is the Solution?

Adolescent Literacy Policy

Improvements to
Adolescent Literacy must be both
Instructional and **Infrastructure.**

15 Elements of Successful Adolescent Literacy Program

Instructional Improvements

1. Direct, explicit comprehension instruction
2. Effective instructional principles embedded in content
3. Motivation and self-directed learning
4. Text-based collaborative learning
5. Strategic tutoring
6. Diverse texts
7. Intensive writing
8. Technology component
9. Ongoing formative assessment of students

Infrastructure Improvements

1. Extended time for literacy
2. Professional development
3. Ongoing summative assessment of students and programs
4. Teacher teams
5. Leadership
6. A comprehensive and coordinated literacy program

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The Vision: Balance Action and Research

- Evaluations: An Opportunity for Research
 - A Mix of Intervention Elements
 - Measure Common Outcomes
 - Comparison Groups Needed

- The Optimal Mix?

Turning Things Around: Reading Next in Action

We Can Improve Reading

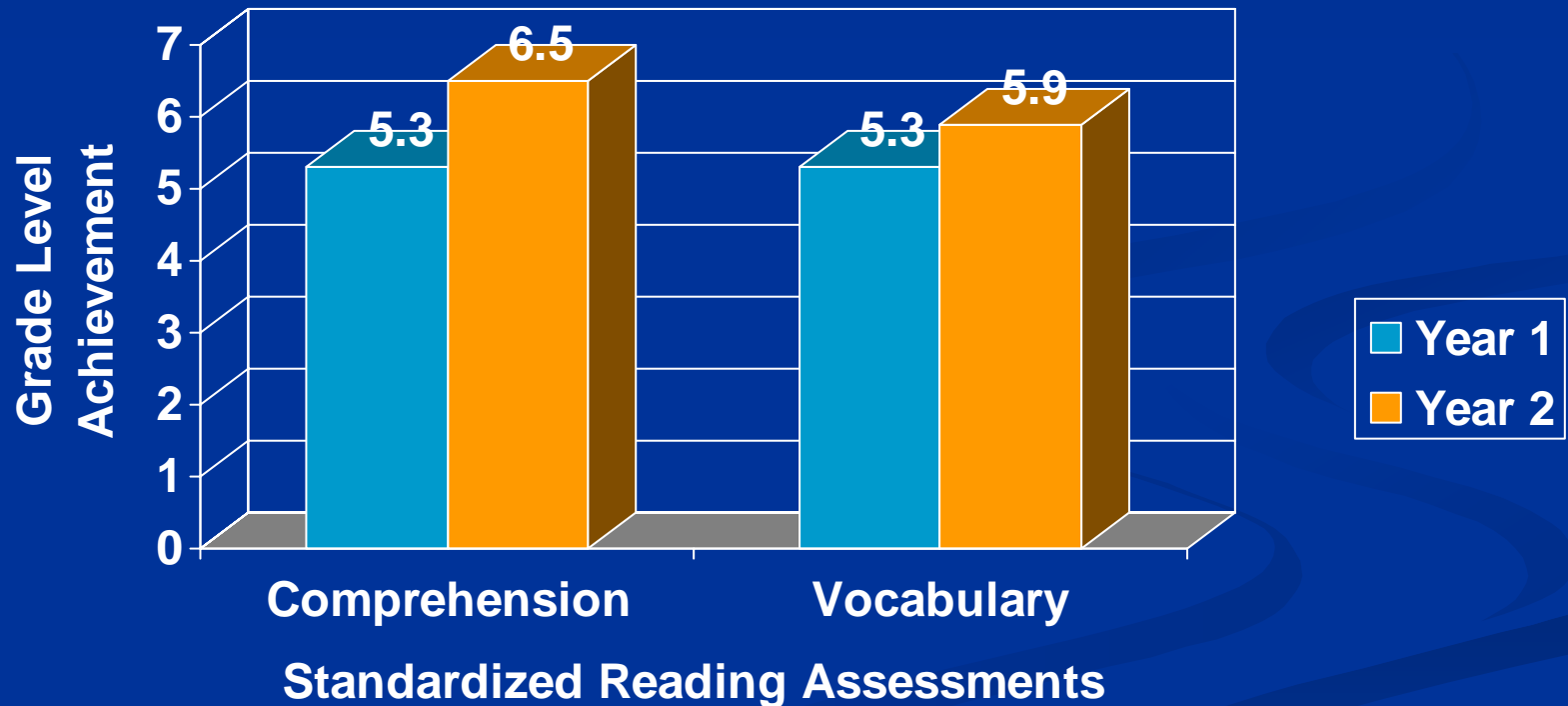
Reading Next: Implement elements of an effective literacy intervention.

- Teach comprehension strategies to struggling readers.
- Give struggling readers more time during the school day to work on reading and writing.
- Use books at a variety of difficulty levels and on a variety of topics.

Where Have We Done It?

With this kind of intervention, schools have improved literacy.

Benjamin Franklin High School (PA)



Where Have We Done It?

With this kind of intervention, schools have improved literacy.

- At Benjamin Franklin High School (PA)...
 - the typical student gained 1 year's worth of reading ability in a 4-month period.
 - 4 in 10 students gained more than 1 year's reading ability in a 4-month period.
 - student's comprehension and vocabulary achievement rose.

We Can Improve Reading

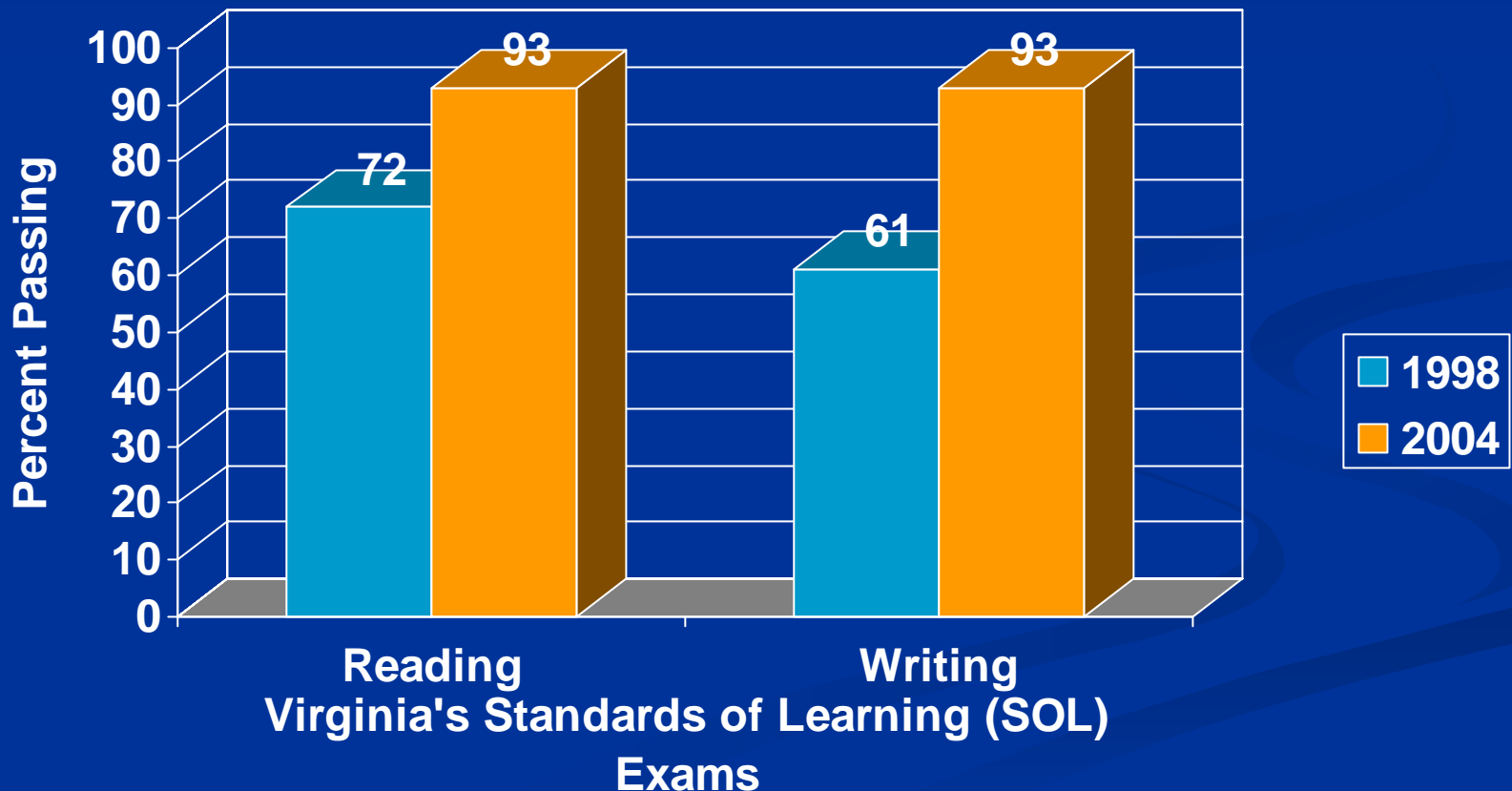
Reading Next: Implement elements of an effective literacy intervention.

- Group teachers into interdisciplinary teams that meet regularly to discuss students and align instruction.
- Help teachers of other subjects like Math or Science teach struggling readers how to read better, in ways appropriate for those subjects.
- Regularly assess student performance and report that information for accountability purposes.

Where Have We Done It?

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Norview High School (VA)



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Norview High School (VA): Closing the Gap

Reading SOL Exams

Race	1998	2004
Black	74.4%	92.9%
White	75.9%	92.9%
Gap	1.5	0

Writing SOL Exams

Race	1998	2004
Black	79%	90.7%
White	90.7%	94.3%
Gap	11.7	5.4

Adolescent Literacy: Gaining Momentum

Seeds of a National Movement

States are beginning to address adolescent literacy statewide

State	Program	Components
Alabama	Alabama Reading Initiative	Locally-funded, full-time reading specialists in K-12 schools; voluntary school participation; recent cuts in funding severely limiting program to K-3
Florida	Just Read! Florida	State-funded reading coaches and summer reading camps in middle schools
New Jersey	Secondary School Initiative	Extends a K-3 program to middle schools which includes data collection and analysis, reading and writing, and professional development components
Ohio	Adolescent Literacy Blueprint	Three main strategies are communication and informing stakeholders, professional development, and development of resources
Rhode Island	State High School Regulations	Every high school must assess its students and provide literacy instruction in all subject areas and targeted intervention for students reading below grade level.
Idaho	The Open Book Initiative	A K-8 initiative to improve teacher knowledge and skill, get students reading at grade level, and promote a culture of reading

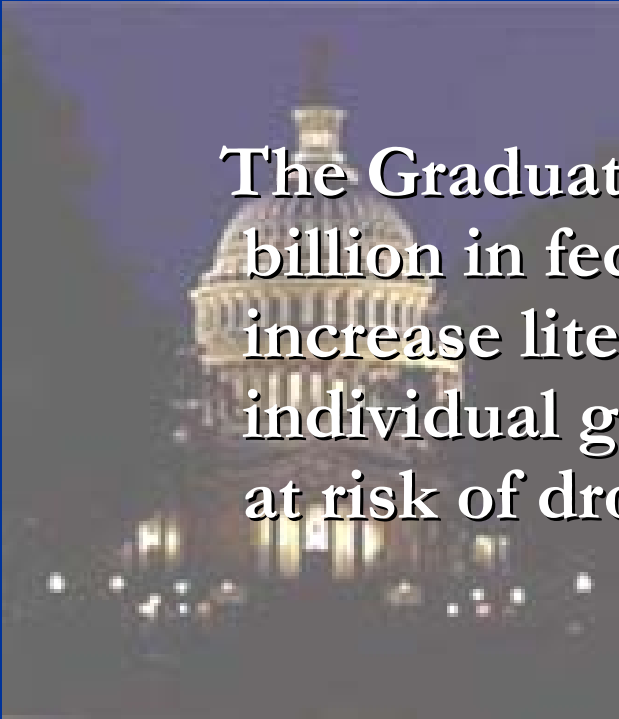
Seeds of a National Movement: Striving Readers Initiative

- The Striving Readers Initiative for FY 05 will provide \$25 million to districts to help to implement research-based reading interventions to help middle and high school students reading “significantly below grade level”.
- President Bush requested \$200 million in the FY06 budget for the Striving Readers Initiative.

Seeds of a National Movement: Proposed Federal Legislation



Graduation For All Act (Hinojosa, D-TX)- reintroduced in 109th Congress



The Graduation for All Act would authorize \$1 billion in federal funding for schools to increase literacy rates and implement individual graduation plans for students most at risk of dropping out of high school.

Seeds of a National Movement: Proposed Federal Legislation



Pathways for All Students to Succeed Act (Murray, D-WA)- to be reintroduced in 109th Congress

The PASS Act would reform the nation's secondary schools through a new focus on adolescent literacy, academic counselors, and a new grant program that will improve student achievement in low-performing secondary schools.

Seeds of a National Movement: Gov. Warner's Redesigning the High School Initiative

- Led by Gov. Mark Warner, the initiative focuses on improving the senior year of high school in particular and high school reform in general, including promoting literacy and math interventions for struggling students. Following a winter summit of the nation's governors, the National Governor's Association is producing a guide for governors for implementing adolescent literacy programs.

How Can We Work Together?

- Center adolescent literacy in larger frame of secondary school reform.
- Work with state and local officials to inform secondary reform measures.
- Work with federal legislators to reauthorize upcoming education bills.
- → Connect federal and state policy with local policy and practice to build public will.

For more information about Adolescent Literacy Policy
and other high school transformation initiatives,
please visit our website:

www.all4ed.org

Or contact:

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202-828-0828

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