

Barriers to Students' Transition To College: Lessons from Chicago and Next Steps for NYC

**Presentation to Graduate NYC!
Forum on Building a College Going Culture**

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Outline of Presentation

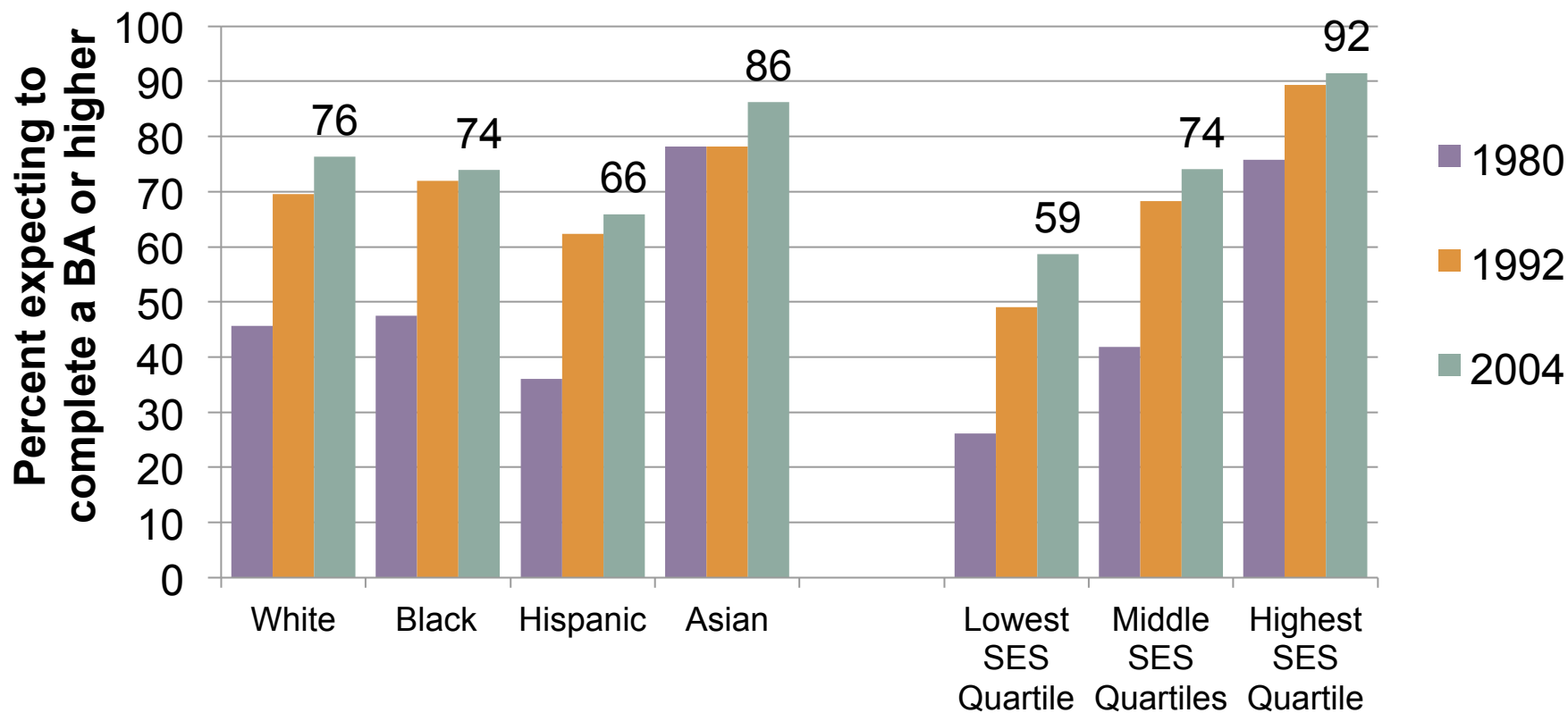
- I. Addressing the Aspiration/Attainment Gap:
A National Issue
- II. Lessons from Research in Chicago
- III. The NYC Context
- IV. What We Can Do To Support Students'
Transition

Addressing the Aspiration/ Attainment Gap: A National Issue

Why are we here?

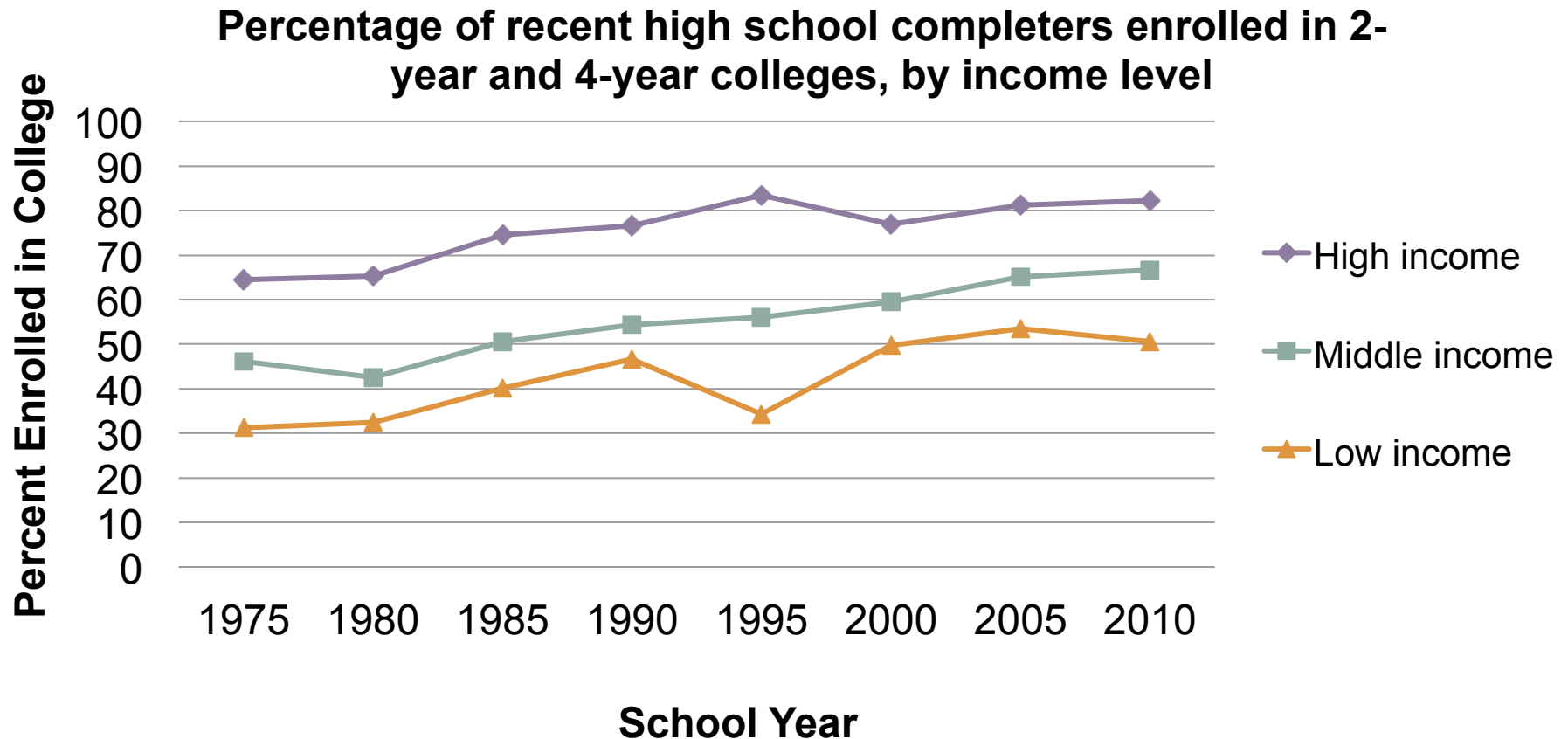
- Aspirations to BA degree have increased dramatically for all students

By 2004, Most U.S. High School Seniors Expect to Complete at Least a BA



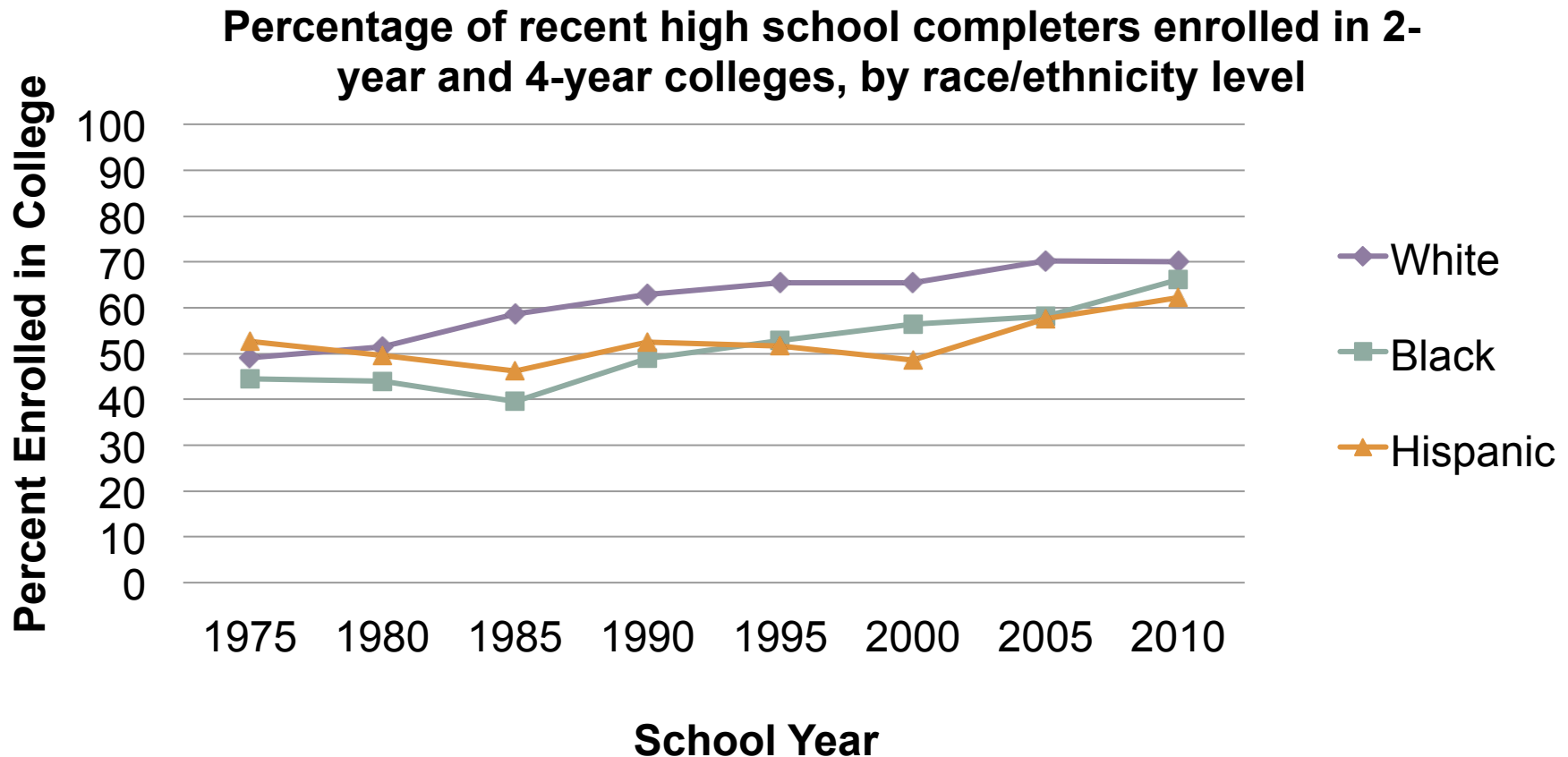
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Longitudinal Study of the High School Class of 1972 (NLS:72), "Base Year"; High School and Beyond Longitudinal Study of 1980 Seniors (HS&B-Sr:80), "Third Follow-up, 1986"; National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88), "Second Follow-up, Student Survey, 1992"; and Education Longitudinal Study of 2002 (ELS:2002), "First Follow-up, 2004."

Nationally, College Enrollment is Up, but Gaps by Income Remain



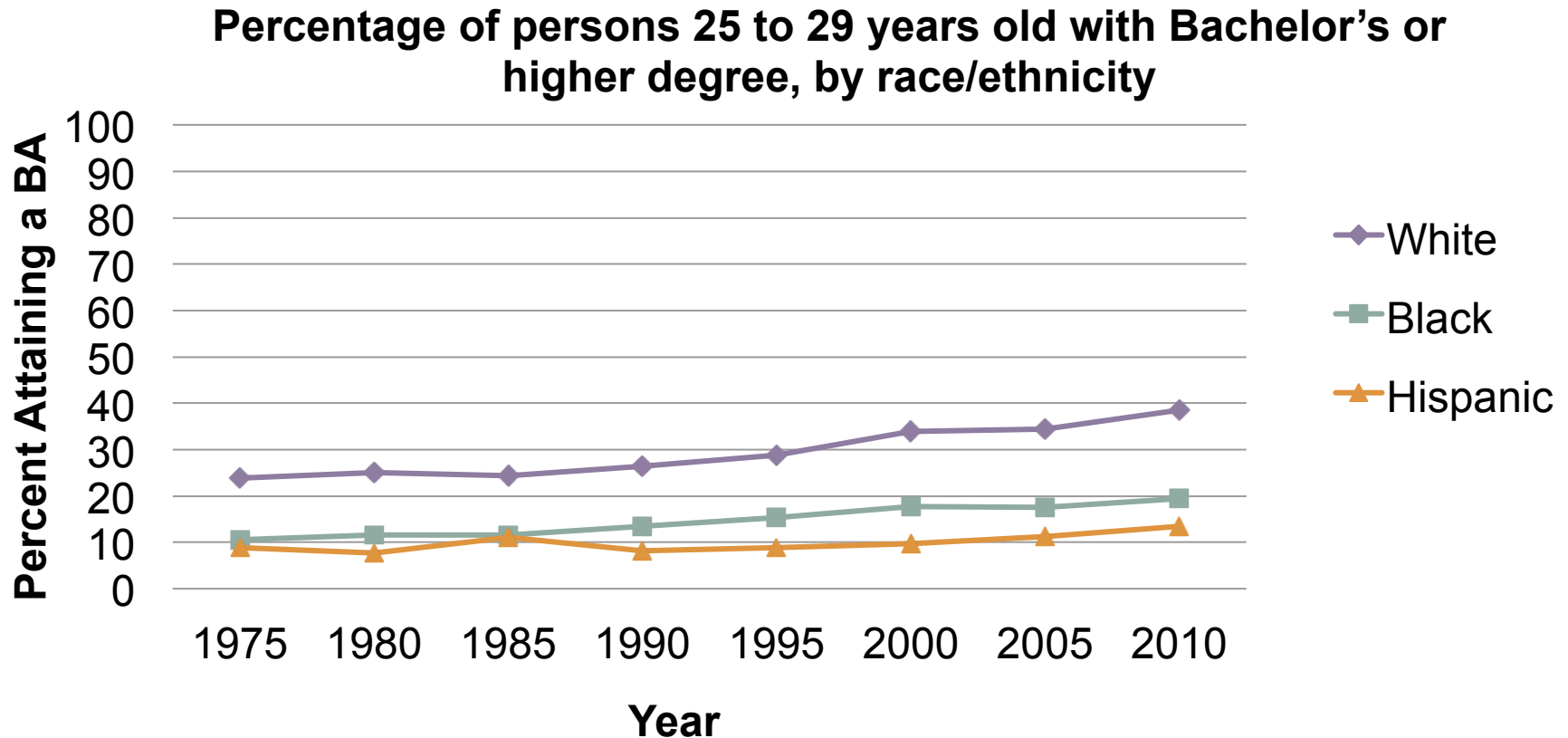
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October, 1970 through 2011. (This table was prepared June 2012.)

Gaps in Overall Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity are Low



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October, 1970 through 2011. (This table was prepared June 2012.)

While Gaps in College Enrollment are Small, Gaps in BA Attainment are Large



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, *U.S. Census of Population: 1960*, Vol. I, Part 1; J.K. Folger and C.B. Nam, *Education of the American Population* (1960 Census Monograph); Current Population Reports, Series P-20, various years; and Current Population Survey (CPS), March 1970 through March 2012. (This table was prepared October 2012.)

Why are we here?

- Aspirations to BA degree have increased for all students
- Returns to education have increased over time (Long, 2010)
 - Especially for men, Blacks, and Hispanics

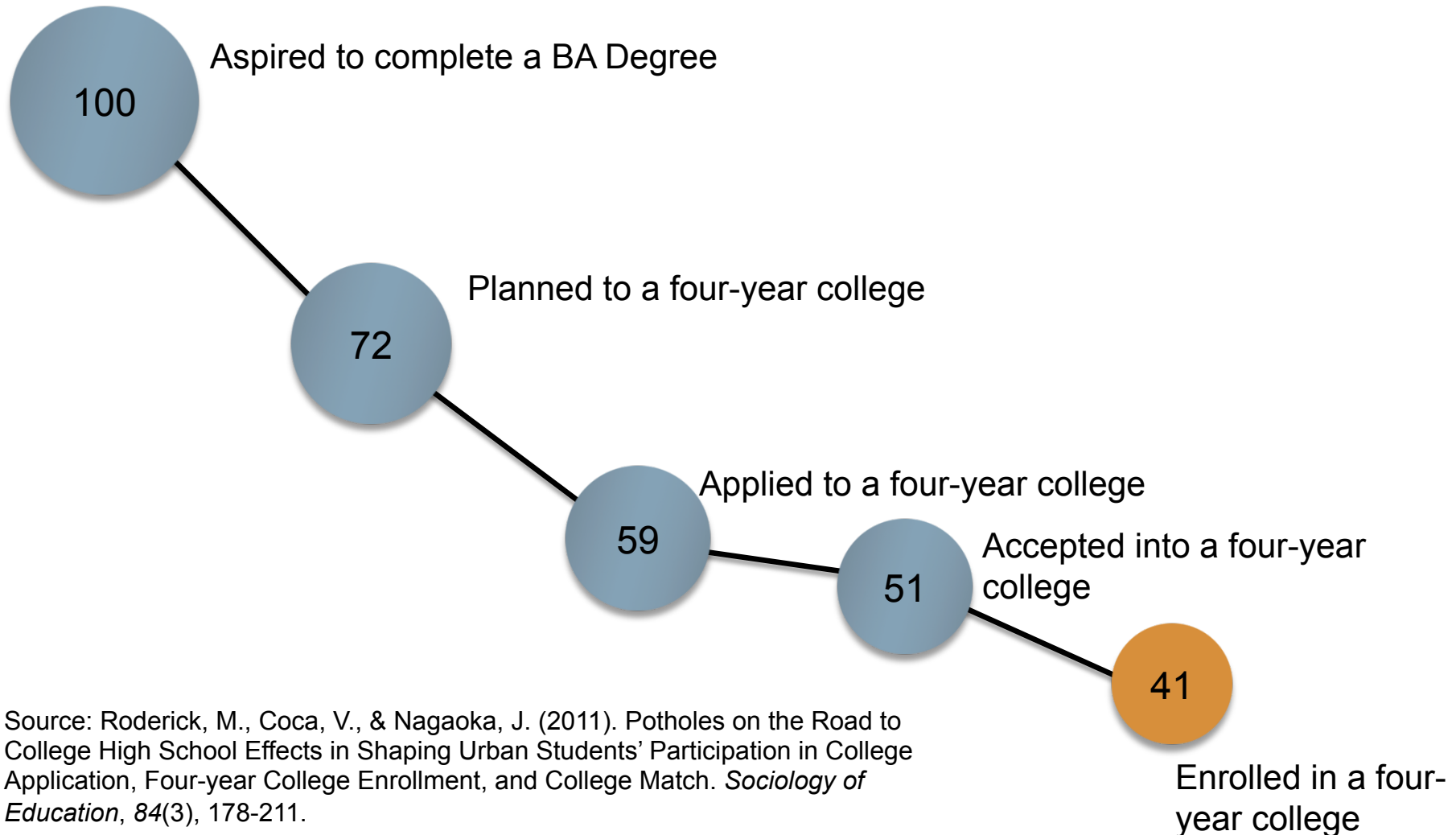
Why do so many students aspire to a BA degree but few attain one?

1. Human Capital – Weak preparation
2. Financial Capital – Rising Costs of Tuition and Decreasing Aid
3. Social Capital – Limited access to information and supports

**How effectively do students
participate in the college
application process?**

**Lessons from research in
Chicago**

Only 41 Percent of CPS Graduates who aspired to complete a 4-year degree to these steps and enrolled in college in the fall after graduation – an additional 9% enrolled in college without taking these steps



Source: Roderick, M., Coca, V., & Nagaoka, J. (2011). Potholes on the Road to College High School Effects in Shaping Urban Students' Participation in College Application, Four-year College Enrollment, and College Match. *Sociology of Education*, 84(3), 178-211.

Themes from Early Two-Year College-Goers

- Positive Messages about College, but Lack of Structured Support
- Sticker Shock and Lack of Information on Financial Aid
- Fear of Making the Wrong College Choice
- Risk Aversion and Defaulting to Two-Year Option

“I was thinking about just going to community college instead, because they’ve been telling me so many things like, ‘Oh, right now you want something, then later on you’re just going to change it, and then you’re just gonna go waste your money, and then you’re going to want to change to something else.’ So they—my teachers, my friends, my family, my parents, you know, everybody—got me thinking, ‘Well, are you sure that’s what you really want?’ I thought I was sure, but now I’m not anymore.”

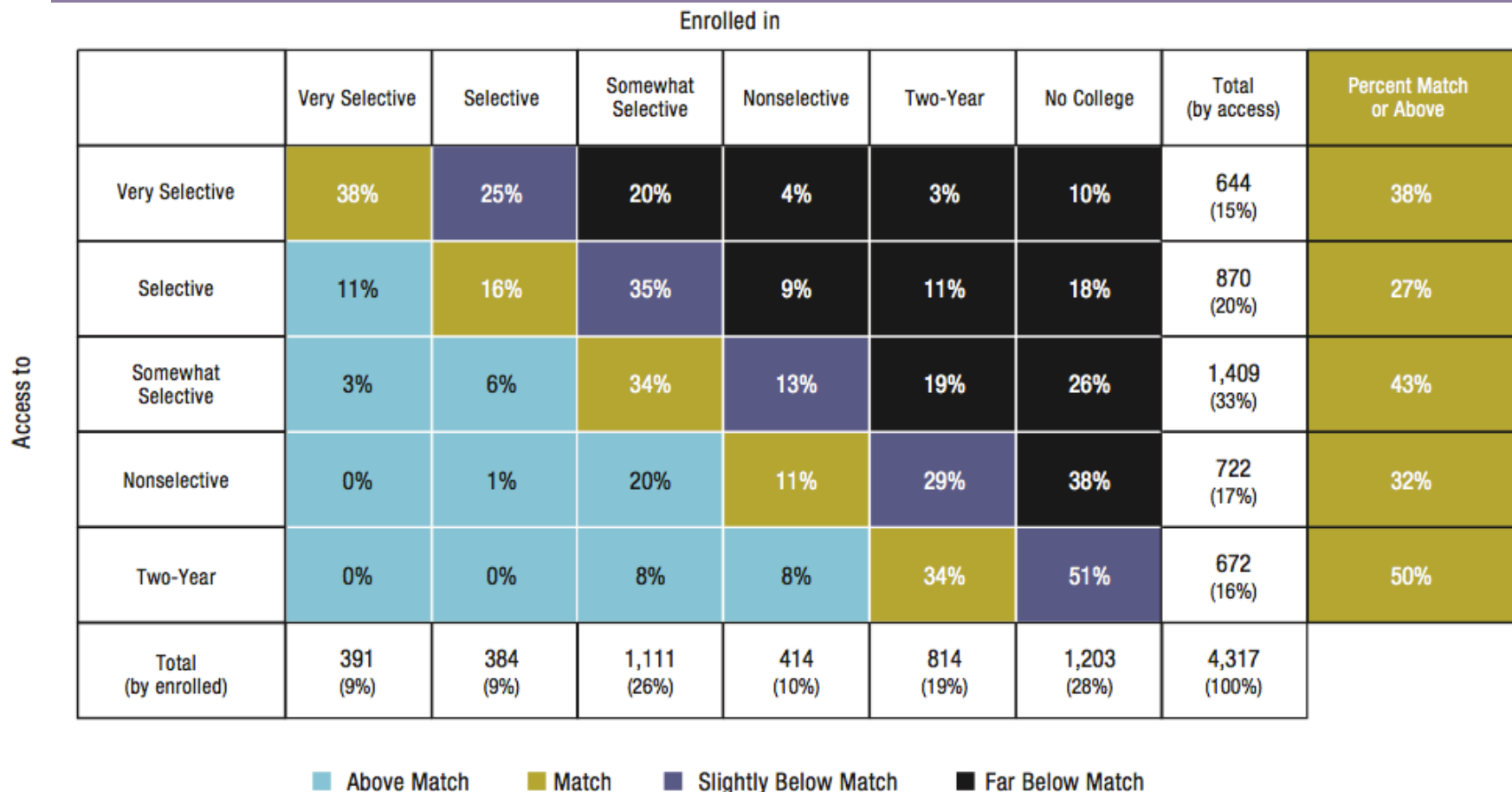
Source: Roderick, M., Nagaoka, J., Coca, V., Moeller, E., Roddie, K., Gilliam, J., & Patton, D. (2008). *From high school to the future: Potholes on the road to college*. Consortium on Chicago School Research at University of Chicago.

The Issue of ‘College Match’

		Unweighted GPA in Core Courses				
		<2.0	2.0–2.4	2.5–2.9	3.0–3.4	3.5–4.0
Composite ACT Score	Missing ACT	Two-Year Colleges	Nonselective Four-Year Colleges	Somewhat Selective Colleges	Selective Colleges	Selective Colleges
	<18	Two-Year Colleges	Nonselective Four-Year Colleges	Somewhat Selective Colleges	Somewhat Selective Colleges	Selective Colleges
	18–20	Nonselective Four-Year Colleges	Somewhat Selective Colleges	Somewhat Selective Colleges	Selective Colleges	Selective/Very Selective Colleges
	21–23	Somewhat Selective Colleges	Somewhat Selective Colleges	Selective Colleges	Selective/Very Selective Colleges	Selective/Very Selective Colleges
	24+	Somewhat Selective Colleges	Selective/Very Selective Colleges	Selective/Very Selective Colleges	Very Selective Colleges	Very Selective Colleges

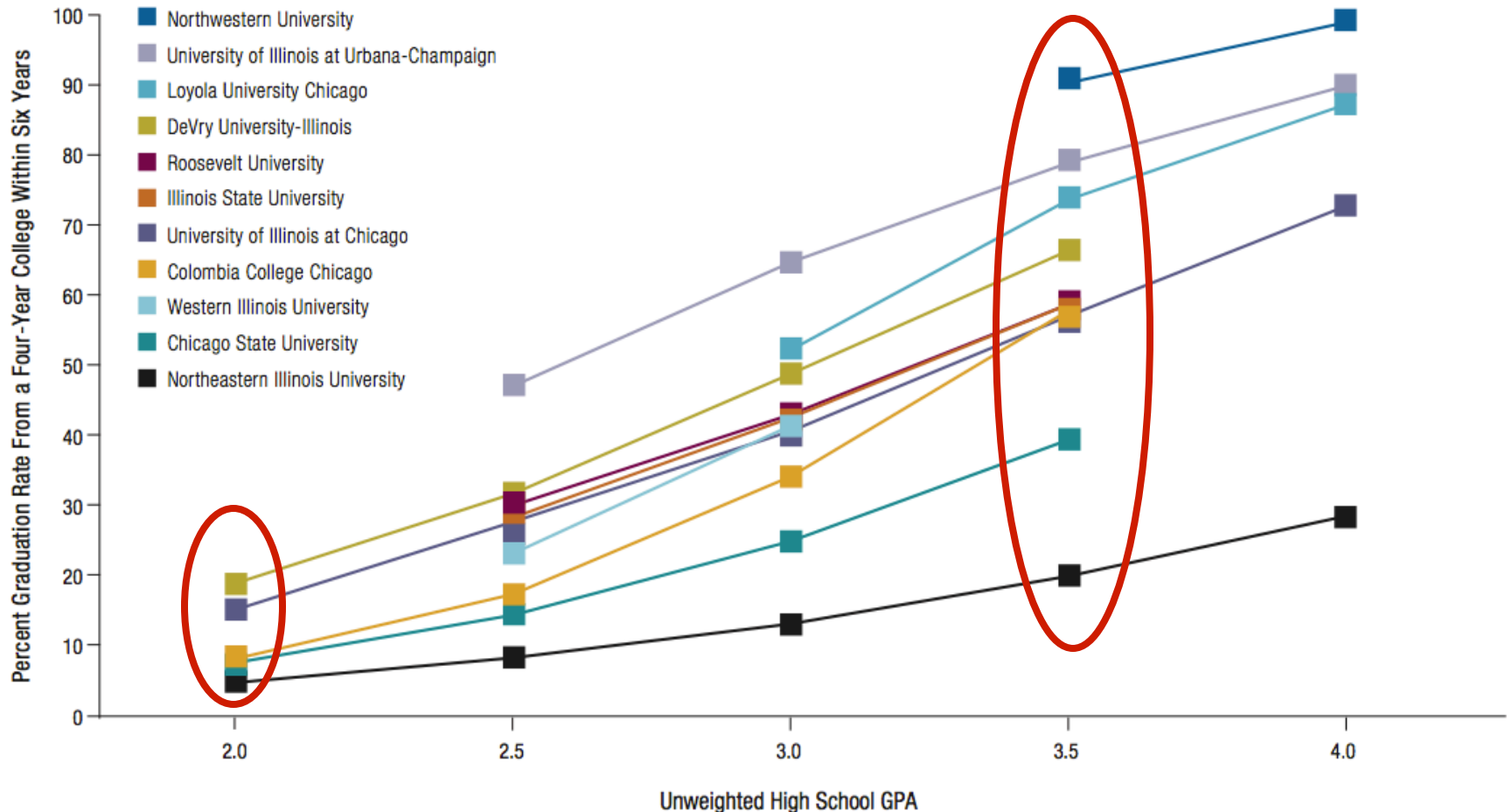
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Most Students Attend Colleges that Do Not Match their Academic Qualifications



Source: Roderick, M., Nagaoka, J., Coca, V., Moeller, E., Roddie, K., Gilliam, J., & Patton, D. (2008). *From high school to the future: Potholes on the road to college*. Consortium on Chicago School Research at University of Chicago.

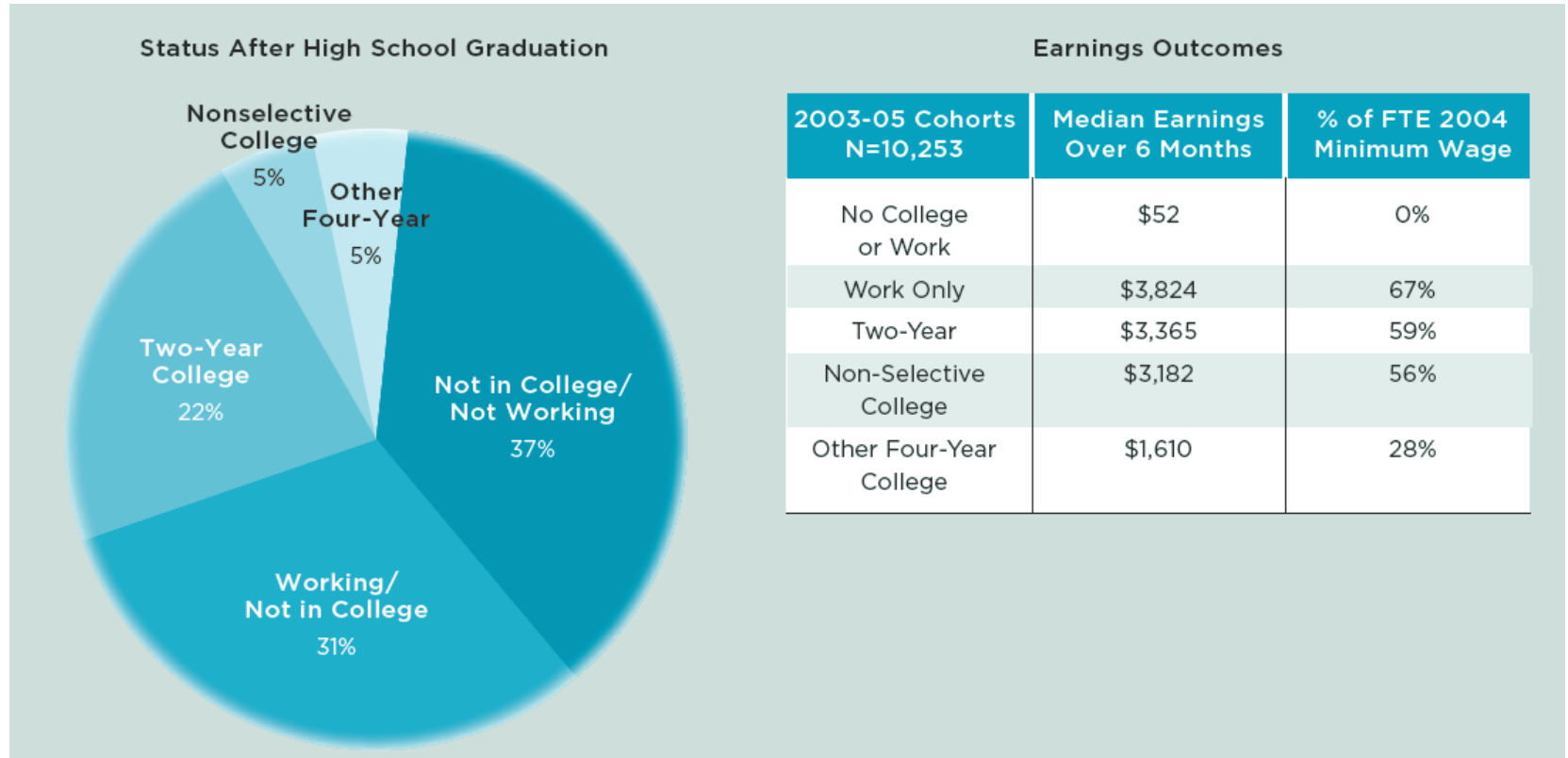
Why should we care about college choice?



Source: Roderick, M., Nagaoka, J., Coca, V., Moeller, E., Roddie, K., Gilliam, J., & Patton, D. (2008). *From high school to the future: Potholes on the road to college*. Consortium on Chicago School Research at University of Chicago.

**What do we know about
post-graduation outcomes for
students with low academic
qualifications?**

Marginal high school graduates were most often not in college or employed in the fall after graduation



Note: % FTE is the percent of what a worker at minimum wage would make if they worked full time. If a person was working full time (40 hours/week or 1,040 hours over six months) at the 2004 minimum wage rate (\$5.50), s/he would have earned \$5,720. So a student who earned \$3,824 over six months at a minimum wage job would have worked 695 hours ($4,376/5.50$) which is $695/1040 = 67\%$ of a full-time job. Earnings data is collected by the Illinois Department of Employment and Security. Earnings are measured for a six-month period starting the October after a student graduates

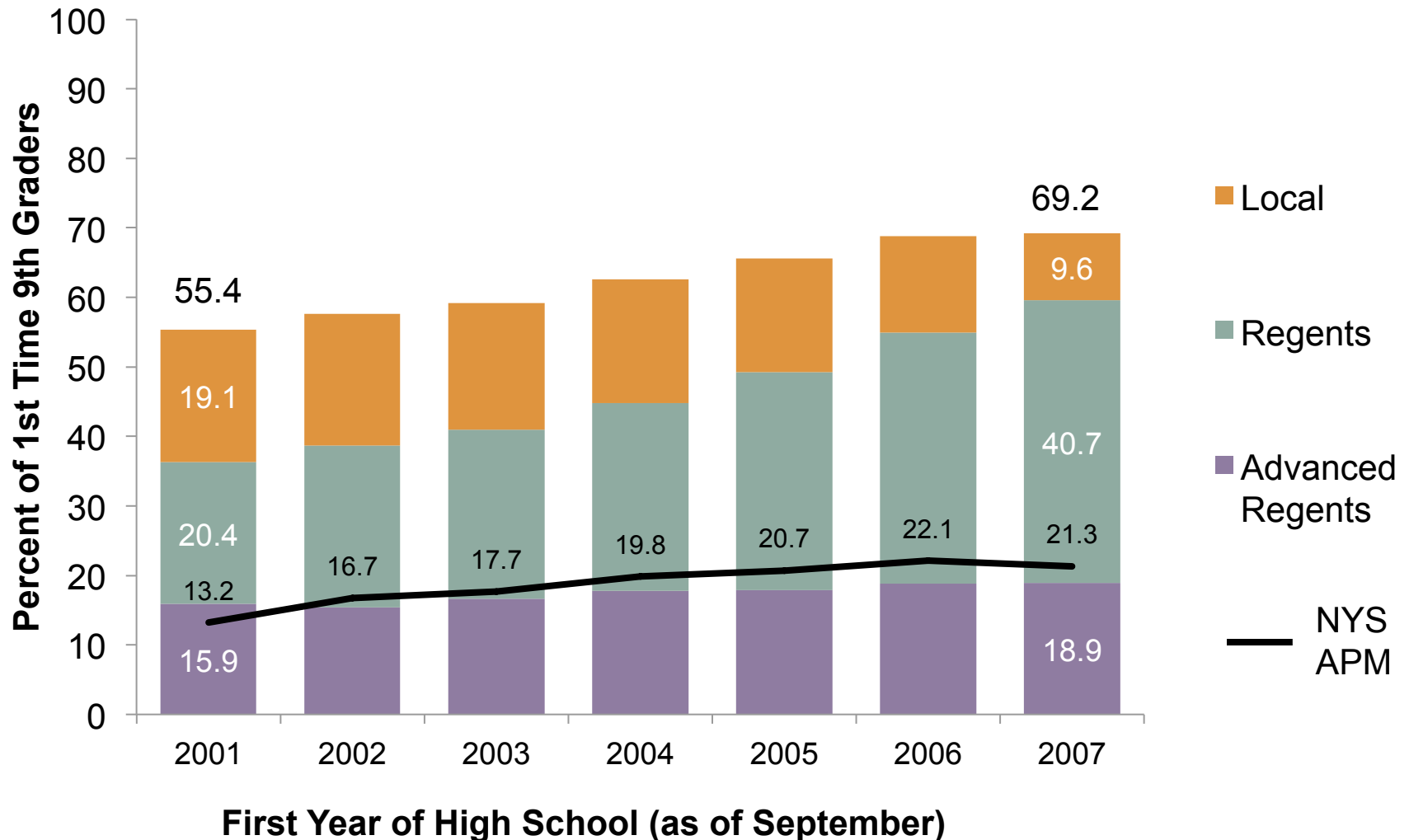
Source: Roderick, Coca, Moeller, Kelley-Kemple. (2013). *From High School to the Future: The Challenge of Senior Year in Chicago Public Schools*. Consortium on Chicago School Research.

Main Take-aways from Chicago Research

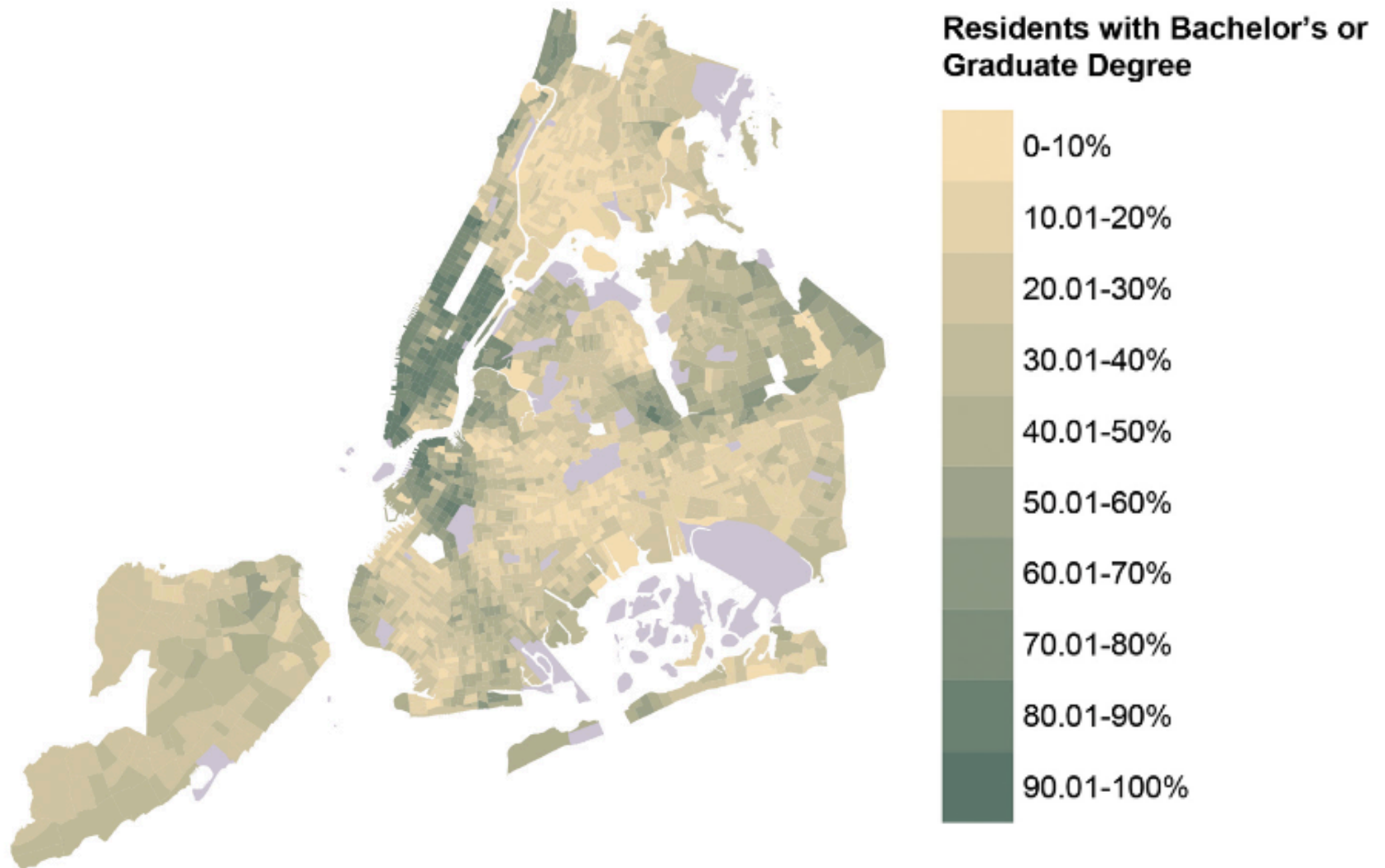
- Grades! Grades! Grades!
- Senior Year is a critical year for all students to prepare for their postsecondary experiences
- College Application/Search Process
 - Special attention must be paid to structuring the college search and application process during **junior and senior years**
 - Teachers and counselors have a significant impact on whether more marginally qualified students go to four-year colleges and whether more highly qualified students enroll in a match college.
 - Lack of knowledge of real costs of attending college
- Limited options for high school graduates with weak preparation

The Case for Building College-Going Cultures in NYC High Schools

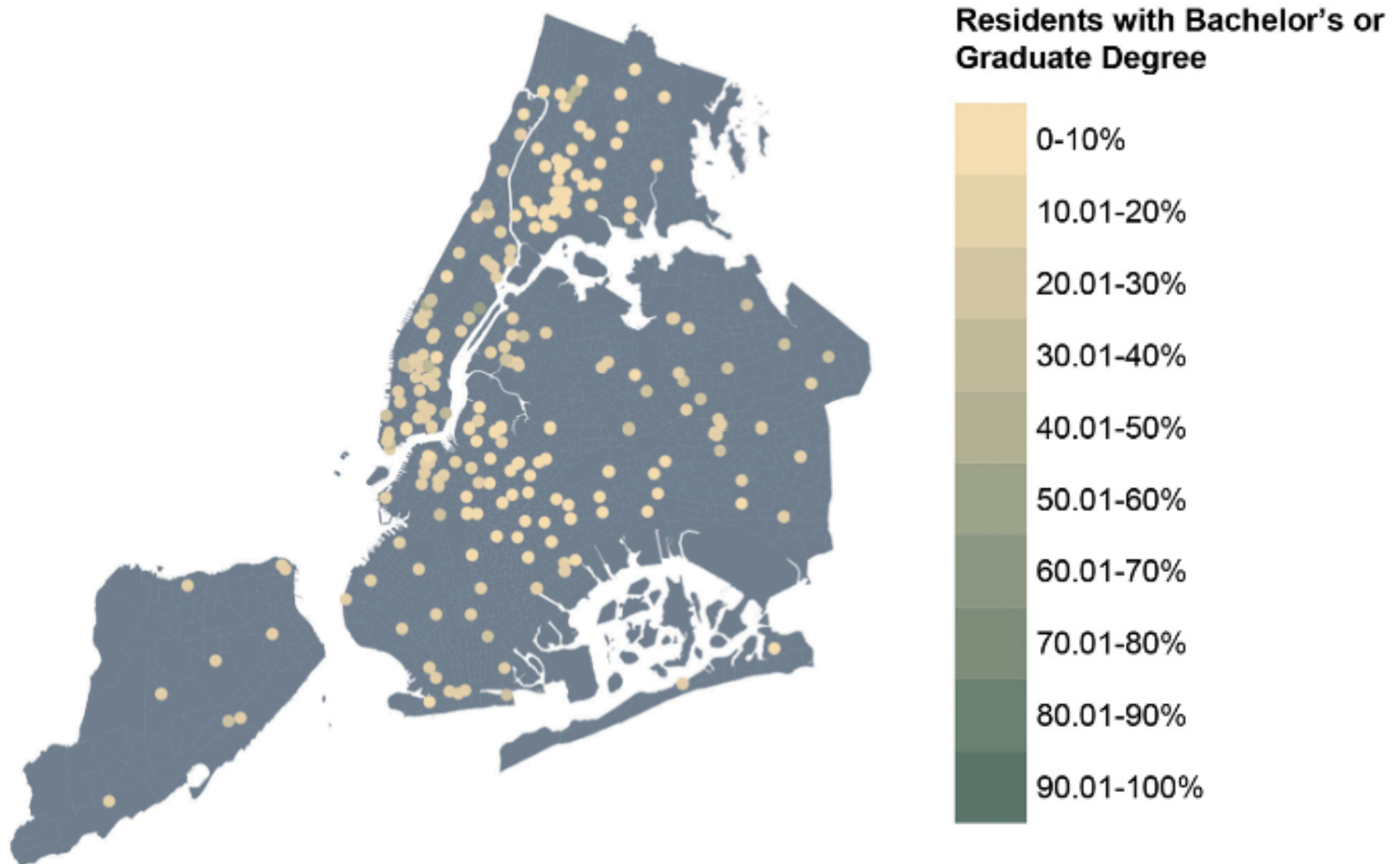
High School Graduation Has Increased in the Last Decade



Most NYC Neighborhoods Have Few College Educated Adults



Most NYC Schools Serve Students from Neighborhoods with Few College Educated Adults



Summary

- High schools play a critical role in creating the academic environments necessary to prepare for college coursework
- High schools are an important resource for first-generation college goers
- High schools cannot work alone
 - The role of postsecondary institutions
 - Other external partners

What can external partners do?

- Support College Enrollment & College Match (see MDRC's Promoting College Match for Low-Income Students)
 - Information sharing & awareness building
 - Individualized advising
 - Parental engagement
 - Application & decision making support
- Support for “Summer Melt” (see Strategic Data Project's *Summer Melt Handbook*)
- Support for the Career Pathway (see Pathways to Prosperity Network / Jobs for the Future)
 - Need for intermediary organizations to support collaborations between employers and industry organizations with high schools and community colleges

Thank you!

For more information on research from the Research Alliance for New York City:

http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/research_alliance/

Twitter: @RANYCS

Facebook.com/RANYCS

For more information on the Chicago Research:

<http://ccsr.uchicago.edu/>