

***September 25, 2009***

# Economic Imperative: Turning Around the Nation's Lowest-Performing High Schools

Every Child a Graduate



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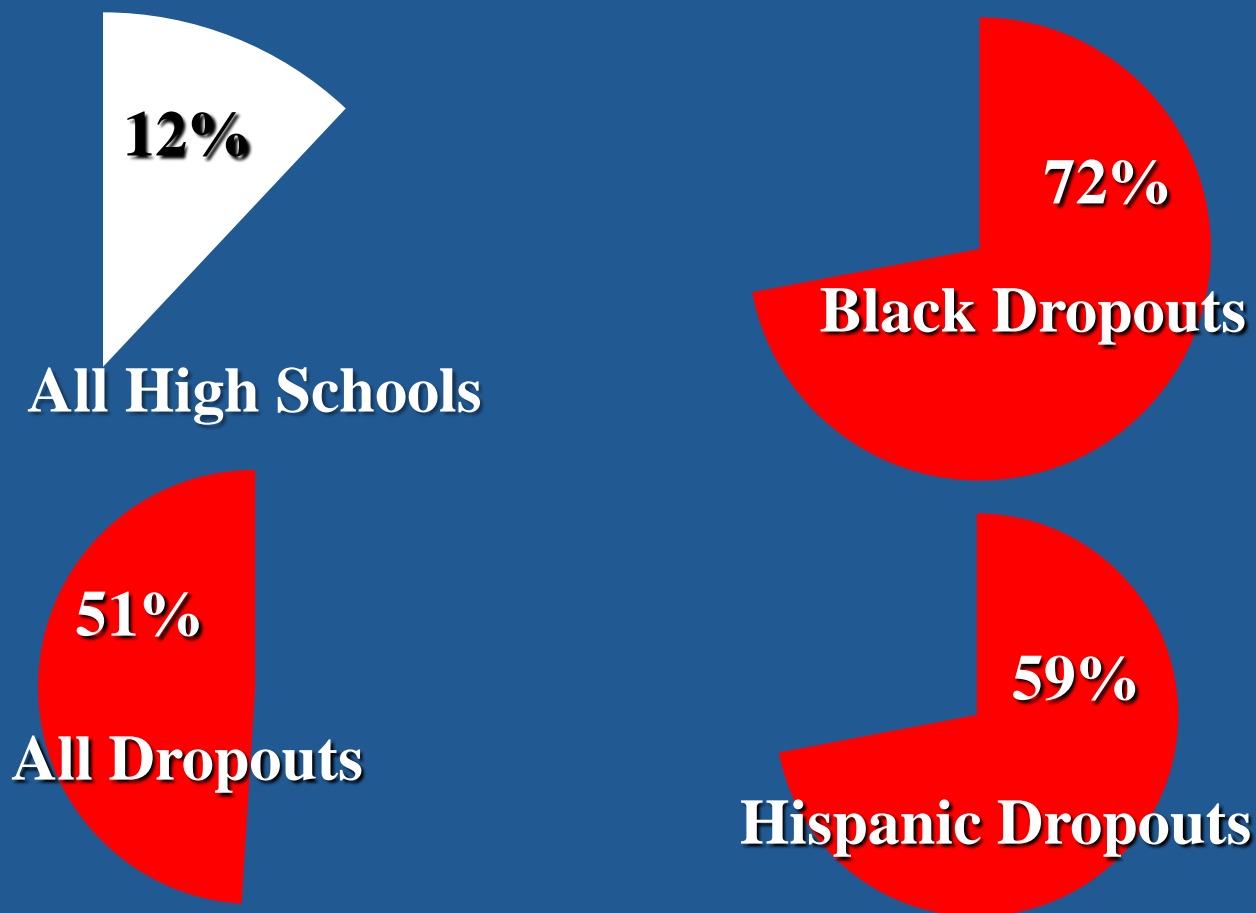
# Lyndsay Pinkus

## *Alliance for Excellent Education*



# **Identifying** the Lowest-Performing High Schools

## Roughly 2,000 Dropout Factories Account for...



Notes: Universe includes regular & vocational schools with grades of 10, 11, & 12 and enrollment of at least 100 students. Dropout percentages by subgroup were derived from schools with a promoting power of 60 or less over a 3-year average.

Source: Adapted from *Prioritizing the Nation's Dropout Factories*, Alliance for Excellent Education, 2009



# ***Identifying*** the Lowest-Performing High Schools

## **Roughly 2,000 Dropout Factories Account for...**

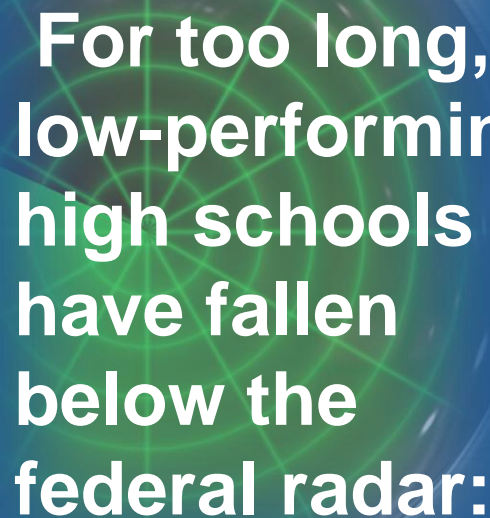
**Much of the  
dropout crisis is  
located in relatively  
few schools.**

Notes: Universe includes regular & vocational schools with grades of 10, 11, & 12 ; low grade of 7; & enrollment of at least 100 students. Dropout percentages by subgroup were derived from schools with a promoting power of 60 or less over a 3-year average.

Source: Adapted from *Prioritizing the Nation's Dropout Factories*, Alliance for Excellent Education, 2009



# **Targeting** the Lowest-Performing High Schools



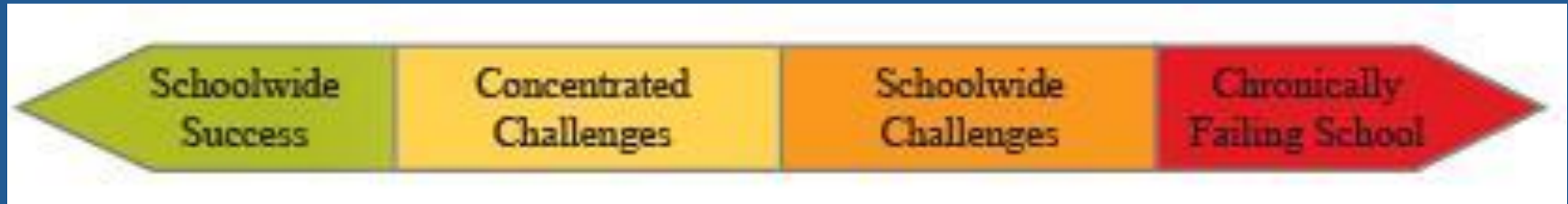
For too long,  
low-performing  
high schools  
have fallen  
below the  
federal radar:

- **RECEIVING** Title I serves as the trigger for support & action under ESEA
  - Only 40% of High Schools, 61% of Dropout Factories *eligible*
  - Far fewer receive
- **Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)** serves as the metric for low-performance
  - 41% percent of Dropout Factories make AYP



# **Addressing** the Lowest-Performing High Schools

- ✓ Not all low-performing schools are the same



- ✓ Addressing the lowest-performing high schools can be difficult, politically unpopular, and expensive
- ✓ More than governance changes
- ✓ No silver bullet



# Addressing the Lowest-Performing High Schools

## ✓ **organizing the school to facilitate transformed teaching & learning,**

often including the development of effective leadership teams & decisionmaking structures, as well as the organization of teachers into teams that share groups of students in order to foster collaboration & relationship building, & the creation of innovative scheduling solutions that meet students' needs

## ✓ **transforming curriculum & instruction,**

through a clear focus on student learning & such activities as implementing a college- & career-ready curriculum for all students, incorporating project- & work-based learning into the curriculum, & regularly collecting & using data to inform instruction

## ✓ **providing students with the necessary academic & social support,**

such as dedicated connections between students & staff to build stronger relationships, personalization in instruction & support, interventions to address targeted student needs, extended learning & credit recovery options, & the building of college awareness

## ✓ **increasing teacher & principal effectiveness**

through the facilitation of teacher collaboration across subject areas via professional communities, the provision of high-quality professional development that is tied to data, & the development of administrator learning & networking groups

## ✓ **maximizing stakeholder resources**

by coordinating & networking with other schools, including feeder schools; partnering with higher education, community-based organizations, & industry; & engaging family & communities in the planning, development, & implementation of school improvement activities

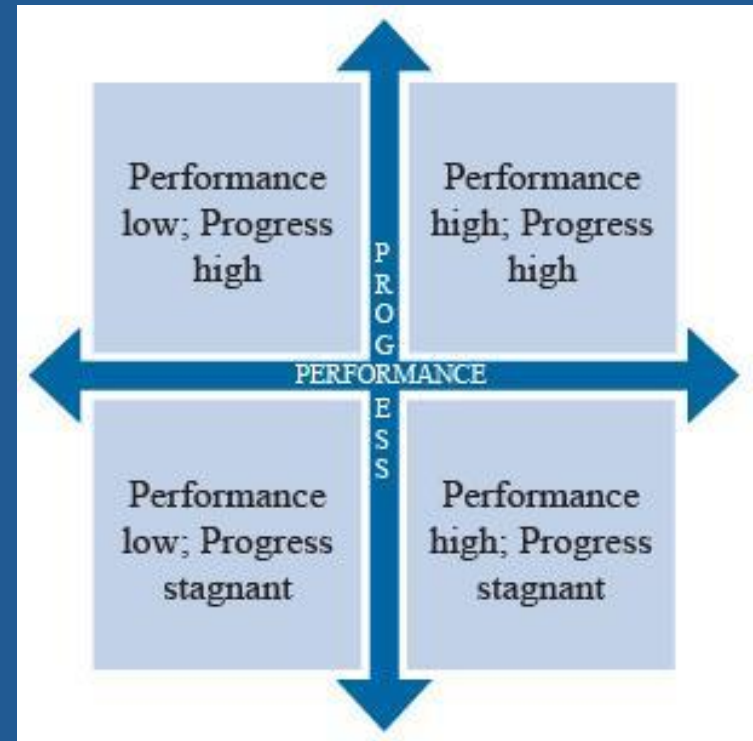
## ✓ **ensuring continuous improvement**

through the creation of a school culture based on data & outcomes through which clear implementation & student outcome goals & benchmarks are established & continuously monitored, & through the continued support from school staff for the whole-school reform plan.



# Measuring Progress in the Lowest-Performing High Schools

- ✓ College- and career-readiness is a much different goal than proficiency
- ✓ Performance and progress are different things
- ✓ High school reform takes time





# ***Measuring Progress in*** the Lowest-Performing High Schools

There are a number of high school performance indicators that are predictive of high school graduation and college and career readiness.

- ✓ Attendance
- ✓ Course success
- ✓ On-track-to-graduation status
- ✓ Course-taking patterns
- ✓ Success on college- and career-ready assessments
- ✓ Postsecondary success information

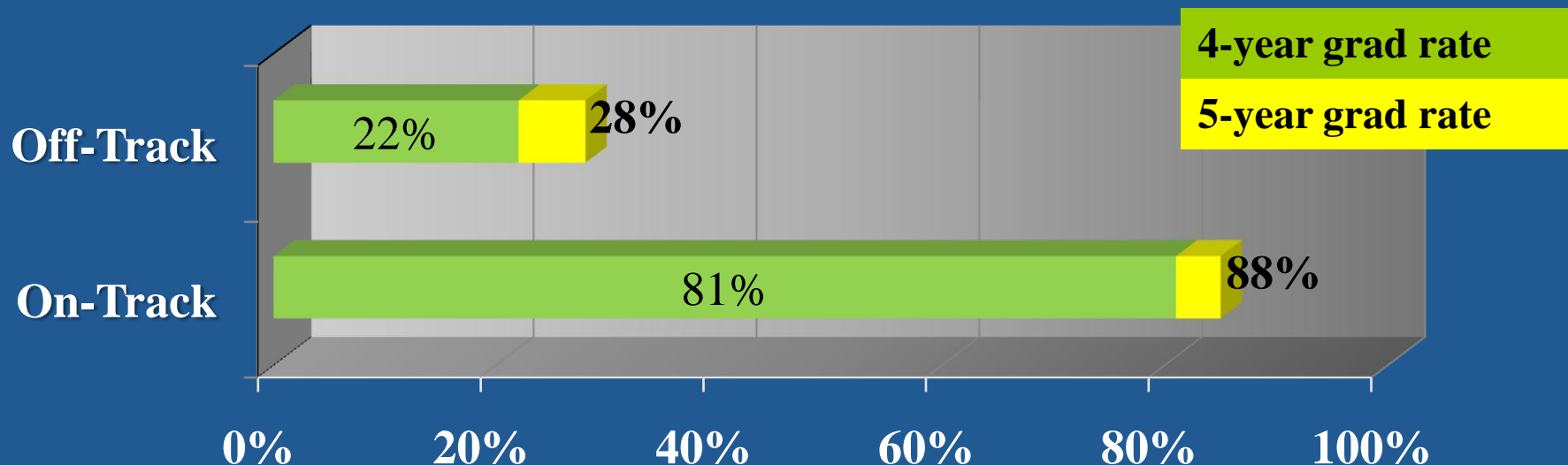


# At the student level...

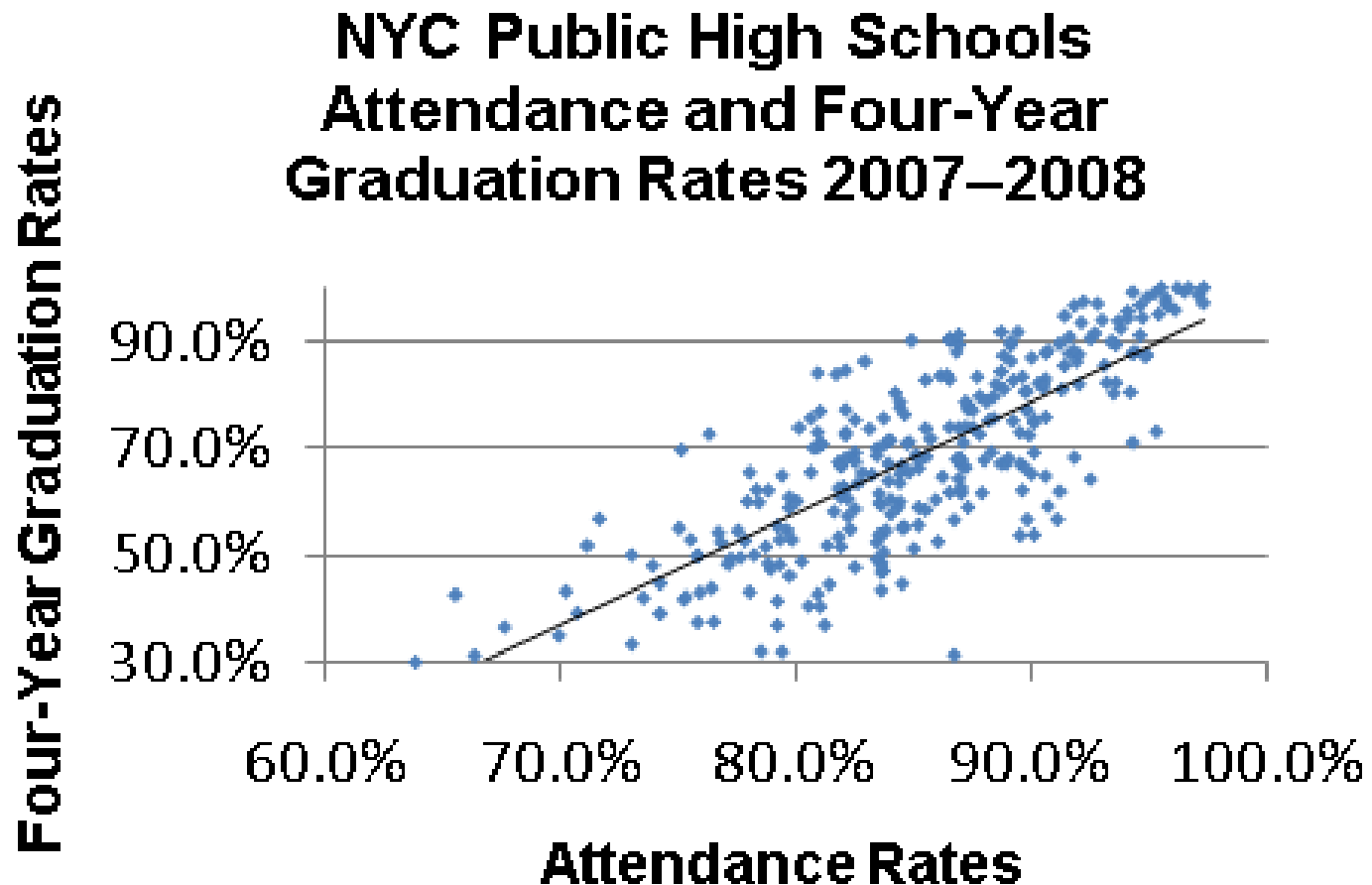
**Chicago Public School students were identified as “off-track” if they:**

- Earned less than five full credits in the ninth grade
- Failed more than one core course in the ninth grade

## Graduation Rates



## At the school level...



Note: The attendance rate is calculated by taking the total number of days attended by all students and dividing it by the total number of days on the school's register for all students. The four-year graduation rate is defined as the percent of the cohort that graduated with a Regents or local diploma within four years.

Source: Analysis of 2007–08 Progress Report Results for High Schools. Adopted from *Beyond AYP: High School Performance Indicators.*, Alliance for Excellent Education, 2009.



# ***Building Capacity to Address*** **the Lowest-Performing High Schools**

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- ✓ **Dedicated funding stream for high school improvement**
- ✓ **Aligning of professional development for teachers & principals to school improvement challenges & goals**
- ✓ **Invest in capacity for technical assistance and school improvement at SEAs, in district/school staff, external partners**



# From No Child Left Behind to Every Child A Graduate

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**A consensus is forming around some high level principles for a reauthorized ESEA that would reflect these realities.**



# Goals

## No Child Left Behind

- ✓ 100 percent of students **proficient** in reading & mathematics by 2014.
- ✓ Proficient defined & measured through **50+ sets** of state standards & assessments.



## Future Federal Policy

- ✓ 100 percent of students graduating from high school **college & career ready.**
- ✓ College & career readiness is defined & measured through **common** standards & aligned assessments.
- ✓ Graduation rates are defined & calculated **commonly.**



# Accountability

## No Child Left Behind

✓ AYP—with flawed measures of proficiency & graduation—is **only tool** for measuring schools' performance, guiding intervention decisions, & measuring progress.



## Future Federal Policy

✓ AYP's successor is made up of **improved indicators of college & career readiness & graduation**

✓ It is designed to evaluate & communicate BOTH **performance & progress**

✓ It is positioned to serve as a "**check-engine light**" to identify low-performing schools that are neither performing or progressing satisfactorily.



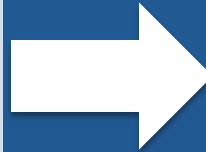
# School Improvement

## No Child Left Behind

### ✓ One-size-fits-all-schools

approach based solely on the length of time not meeting AYP, regardless of each school's individual problems or needs

✓ Federal system is layered on top of state & district systems.



## Future Federal Policy

✓ Federal policy leverages state- & district-led school improvement systems that:

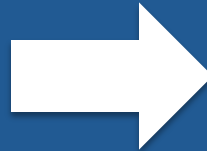
- data driven
- differentiate among schools' individual needs
- focus on improvements to teaching & learning not just governance changes
- build capacity
- prioritizes the lowest-performing schools



# Funding

## No Child Left Behind

- ✓ Only high schools that **receive** Title I funds are required to implement improvement actions.
- ✓ **No dedicated funding** for high school improvement.



## Future Federal Policy

- ✓ Low-performing high schools enter the school improvement process **whether or not** they receive Title I funding.
- ✓ **Targeted new funding** is provided for high school improvement.



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