Aligning Resources to Strategy and Need

Diagnostic Analysis for Seattle Public Schools

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SPS partnered with Education Resource Strategies (ERS), a national nonprofit with deep expertise in school system budgeting and strategy, to conduct a diagnostic analysis that examines how resources are allocated and how those investments shape student and staff experiences. The report draws on a wide range of data, including district budgets, staffing, student outcomes, and educator and community perception. It highlights both strengths and areas for improvement, with a focus on equity and sustainability. Slides include data charts and text summarizing the findings on each page.

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Diagnostic Analysis for Seattle Public Schools

2025

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Preface

Seattle Public Schools commissioned a comprehensive resource and strategy analysis to ground our strategic planning in facts, not assumptions. We chose to begin with resourcing because it sits at the center of three linked challenges we must address together: academic outcomes that have been relatively flat in some of our goal areas; long-term declining—and more recently stagnant—enrollment trends; and a significant structural deficit shaped by a challenging set of cost drivers.

The report that follows establishes a common fact base about how our most important resources—time, people, and money—are distributed across the system today. Through a partnership with national leaders in the field, Education Resource Strategies, this report is intended to help us see where our investments align with our goals, where they do not, and where we have opportunities to reallocate, simplify, or redesign for better results. This clarity is essential if we are to meet our commitments to students and accelerate progress.

Midway through this project, our district entered a superintendent transition. That timing only increased the value of this work. A shared, neutral picture of our current state gives the incoming superintendent and leadership team a strong starting point for action—one that can support early decisions and inform the transformative shifts needed to better serve students, staff, families, and our community.

We are grateful to the Alliance for Education for enabling this effort. Their support made it possible to complete an analysis the district could not have funded on its own under current budget constraints. The work itself was commissioned through a rigorous, competitive, and independent process managed by the district.

Most of all, we are grateful to live in a community that believes in public education and expects Seattle Public Schools to be strong for decades to come. This report is a tool for that future. It does not prescribe every answer; rather, it provides a clear starting point for transparent choices, responsible stewardship, and sustained improvement. We invite our community to use this fact base with us—as we plan, prioritize, and act on behalf of every student in Seattle.

Fred Podesta

Superintendent of Seattle Public Schools

Introduction

Context

Introduction

At Education Resource Strategies (ERS), we are honored to have partnered with Seattle Public Schools (SPS) to complete this comprehensive resource and strategy analysis. Our mission is to help districts make the most of their time, people, and money so that every student—especially those furthest from opportunity—can thrive.

This report is designed to provide a clear, shared picture of how SPS currently invests its resources, and to highlight both the strengths and the challenges that the district faces. Importantly, the analysis does not prescribe a set of specific solutions. Instead, it equips the district, its leaders, and the broader Seattle community with a fact base and insights to guide thoughtful decisions and transparent conversations about what comes next.

We recognize that SPS, like many districts across the country, is facing some difficult realities: shifting enrollment patterns, a structural budget deficit, and persistent gaps in academic outcomes. These challenges don't have simple solutions, but by grounding planning in evidence rather than assumptions, SPS is taking the critical first step toward responsible stewardship and sustainable improvement.

This work was conducted through a rigorous, independent process and reflects a collaborative effort with district staff, school leaders, and community partners. Our role was to bring a national perspective, analytic tools, and lessons learned from other districts, while ensuring that the findings incorporate and value the unique context and priorities of Seattle Public Schools.

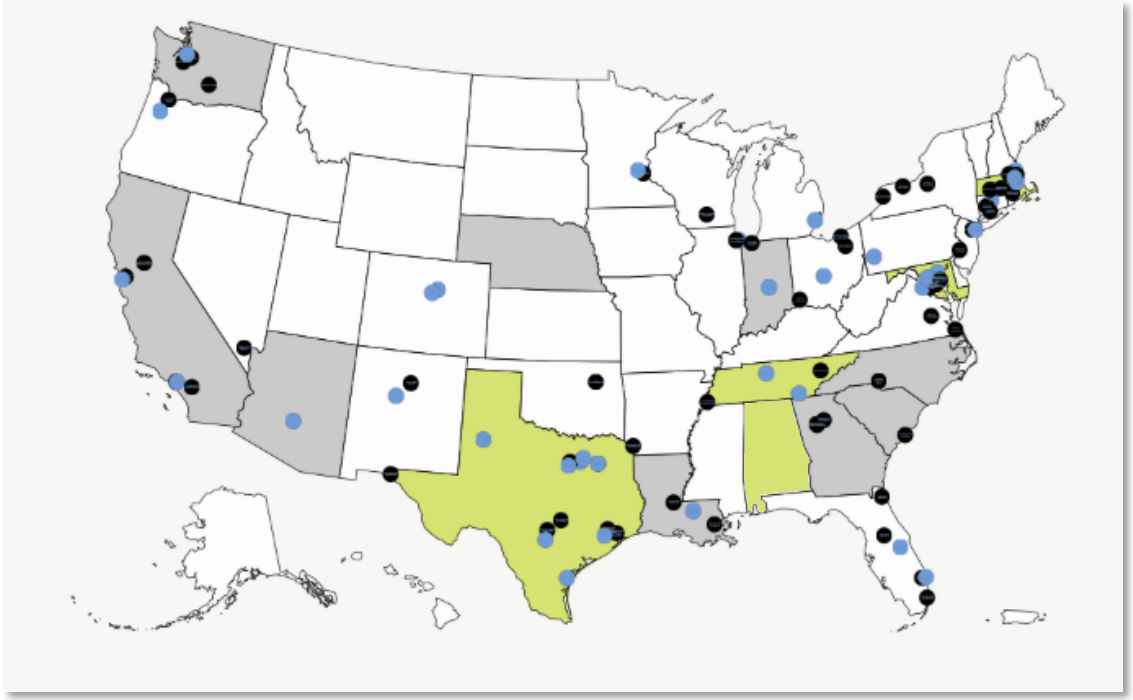
We're encouraged by the district's commitment to using this report as a starting point for dialogue and action. Real progress will require continued collaboration among district leaders, educators, families, and the broader community. We believe that SPS can design strategies within the future strategic plan that address organizational challenges and fiscal pressures, and accelerate progress for all students.

We're grateful to have supported Seattle Public Schools in this important step and remain committed to partnering with Seattle and other metropolitan districts nationwide to create systems that enable every student to learn and thrive.

Education Resource Strategies

About Education Resource Strategies

ERS is a national non-profit that empowers school system leaders to make transformative shifts in **resources, structures, and practices** so that all students — especially those with the greatest learning needs and those furthest from opportunity — attend a school where they can learn and thrive. We **partner with district teams, expand leaders' knowledge and skills, and share lessons and tools with the field**.



Background for this report

The goal of this report is to provide a clear, shared picture of how SPS currently invests its resources, and to highlight both the strengths and the challenges that the district faces

- District is navigating major leadership changes and reassessing its future direction
- Understand how resources (people, time, money) are being utilized
- Report provides an overview of major resource areas and their impact on student experience
- Grounded in research and field best practices on why resource alignment matters
- Shares key findings, challenges, and guiding questions for the district's next strategic plan
- Aims to highlight opportunities for strategic priorities moving forward

Over the last year, the SPS Board of Directors defined district goals and guardrails to support student success

Area	Goal
2nd Grade Literacy	The percentage of students in second grade that meet or exceed key grade-level standards for fc literacy skills will increase from [TBD - Spring 2025 data for baseline] in Spring 2025 to [+ 10 perc in Spring 2030.
6th Grade Math	The percentage of sixth graders prepared to succeed in grade level math coursework in 7th grade by the 6th grade Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA), will increase from [TBD – Spring 2025 SBA baseline] in June 2025 to [+10 percentage points] in June 2030.
Life Ready	The percentage of students that graduate having completed Washington State graduation require consistent with their individual High School & Beyond Plan and having completed one of the follov • Dual credit work in English Language Arts (ELA), World Language, the Arts, Social Studies, Sc Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM), or Career & Technical Education (CTE) • A formal work-based learning experience • Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)/Washington Application for State Financial applications • Applications to one or more college, work-based program, or other postsecondary program v from [TBD baseline to be established using spring 2025 data] in Spring 2025 to [TBD pending baseline data] in Spring 2030.

0025 Guardrails for the District

District Guardrails

The Board adopts these District Guardrails consistent with Board Policy No. 1010, Oversight and Progress Monitoring:

1. The Superintendent will not allow a student's school assignment, family income, race or ethnicity, need, or identity to determine access to high standards, rigorous programming, high-quality teaching, and supports.
2. The Superintendent will not allow the existence of any learning environments that do not promote physical and emotional safety.
3. The Superintendent will not allow adult behaviors in school buildings and classrooms that are misaligned with the anti-racist values of Seattle Public Schools, including the use of curricula, materials, and practices that are inconsistent with those values.
4. The Superintendent will not make major decisions or bring major recommendations to the Board without first implementing an engagement strategy that includes students, parents, teachers, and community members.
5. The Superintendent will not allow people, time, money, and other resources to be allocated in a manner inconsistent with student need.

This work seeks to inform district leadership's efforts to set strategy and align resources in service of the district's goals and guardrails

Seattle Public Schools' **goals and guardrails are designed** to ensure the district stays focused on **improving student outcomes**—especially for historically underserved students—by setting **clear priorities and boundaries** that guide the superintendent's decisions and actions. The ultimate goal is to **align leadership, resources, and accountability around student success and equity.**

The superintendent and team are responsible for **developing and implementing a strategic plan** that translates the goals and guardrails into **concrete actions, systems, and supports** that drive **improved student outcomes and equity.**

The strategic plan will guide district decision making and articulate how resources will be used in alignment with the goals and guardrails

Focus Areas	Board Goals	*Guardrail 1*	*Guardrail 2*	*Guardrail 3*	*Guardrail 4*	*Guardrail 5*
Academic	**All -** Will set the most specific strategies tied to each Board Goal	X		X		
Non-Academic	**All –** Provides the foundational conditions for district success, that increase the likelihood of academic impact		X	X		
Staff		X		X		
Fiscal / Operational		X				X
Community					X	

Articulate <u>how</u> the district will focus resources over 5 years to achieve their goals, mission and vision

Outline how the board will be monitoring progress & impact and holding the district accountable to meeting critical student needs

Guardrails act as checks and balances against what the district **does not want to be true** for students, and what conditions decisions should not create or exacerbate

By examining resource allocation, SPS is building a shared fact base to identify and prioritize actions that address inequities

Resource equity means schools, the district, and the community working together to **ensure every student has access to the right mix of resources and supports needed for high-quality learning**. It ensures that all schools across the district create opportunities for every student—so that race and family income no longer determine a student's future.

The challenge…

As the board centers equity and improving student achievement as the focus of the school system**, the board, the superintendent and the administration must navigate several system challenges** to determine the best places for shifting and aligning resources.

These challenges includes addressing a significant **budget deficit**, which constrains the ability to invest equitably across schools; responding to **changes in enrollment**, which may require structural changes; and **ensuring all students have access** to high-quality programs and supports. At the same time, the district must work to **close persistent opportunity gaps**, **recruit and retain effective educators,** and **strengthen trust** with families and communities.

The **development of a new strategic plan provides a critical opportunity to address these challenges** in a coherent way, creating clear priorities and a roadmap for aligning resources and actions to the goals and guardrails. This report provides the foundational analysis and information needed for the development of the next SPS strategic plan.

Report Outline

Introduction

- Context
- Approach

Analytic Insights

- Overall Resource Levels
- Teachers & Instructional Support
- Course Access & Opportunity
- School Leadership
- Central Office
- School Resourcing
- Elementary Portfolio
- Special Education

Getting to Action

- Overview of Key Insights
- Insight 1: School funding
- Insight 2: District operations
- Insight 3: Advanced coursework
- Insight 4: Experienced educators
- Insight 5: School leaders
- Insight 6: Strategy implementation
- Next Steps

About the Full Diagnostic Analysis Report

The report focuses on…

A snapshot of the current resource use patterns and what contributes to those patterns. The intention is to highlight potential resource misalignments and their impact on the student and staff experience and identify potential resource realignment opportunities to ensure that resource use is aligned to district strategy and the District's Goals and Guardrails.

The report does *not*…

Identify cost reduction opportunities to close the deficit. This presentation is not intended to provide options for reducing the deficit. Its purpose is to align resources to strategy and effective practice while giving the incoming Superintendent and the community a clear picture of how current spending patterns connect to student and staff experiences.

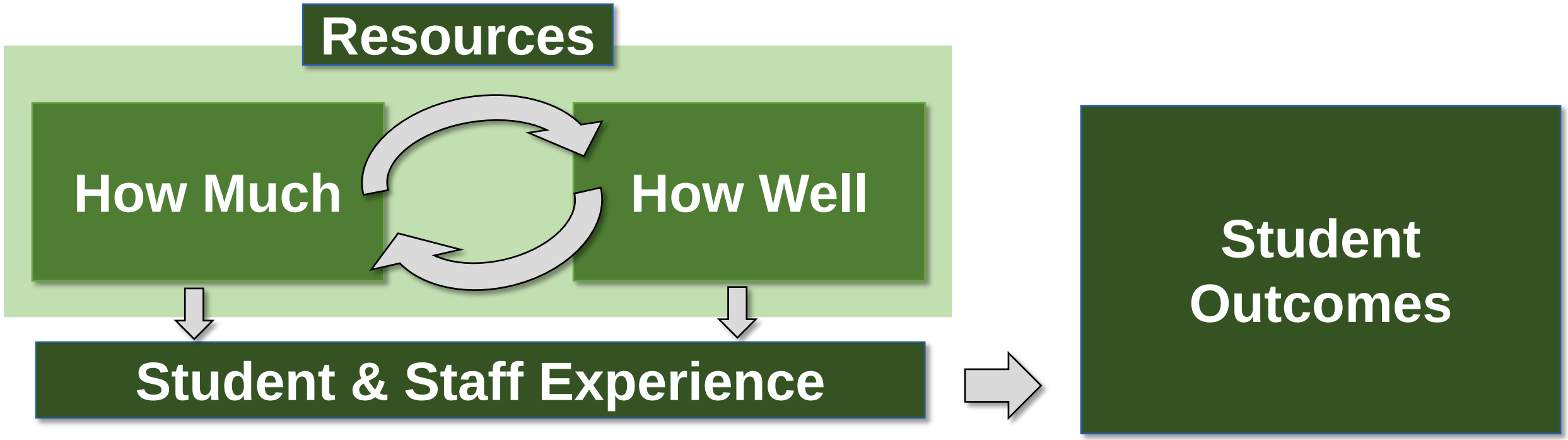
Source: Education Resource Strategies

Introduction

Approach

ERS

Both “how much” and “how well” matter to optimize resources for outcomes



To sustainably achieve its goals, Seattle Public Schools must make resource decisions about “how much” and “how well” to ensure schools provide desired experiences for all students and staff

Source: Education Resource Strategies

The report combines multiple data sources to build a comprehensive picture of resource use in Seattle

Types of Data Included in the Analysis

 Quantitative	Over 10M rows of data covering student and staff demographics, student courses and grades, class sizes, staff compensation, and school and district funding
 Qualitative	Interviews with teachers, principals, central office staff, and board directors, as well as external stakeholders such as the Department of Education and Early Learning (DEEL) and the Alliance for Education; reviews of past reports / presentations.
 Survey	Perception data from 85 principals conducted February 2025 around strategic resource use, including topics such as instructional support and professional learning, teaching quality and support, personalized time and attention, and the school leader job more broadly

Overall Diagnostic Analysis Arc

Over the course of the partnership, ERS held three different learning sessions with SPS leadership to unpack and discuss the diagnostic analysis. The analytic questions discussed in each are listed below.

First Session	Second Session	Third Session
• How is current **school funding** aligned with need in SPS? • How equitably are **teachers and leaders distributed** in SPS?	• Which students access **advanced coursework**? • How is SPS organized to support school leaders as instructional leaders? • How is Central Office organized to **support & develop principals**?	• How are **resources distributed in SPS** and what contributes to its cost structures? • What is the impact of SPS' **elementary school portfolio** decisions? • How much does SPS spend on its **central office**? How is it organized to support schools?

Analytic areas for deeper inquiry in this report were identified based on three criteria

1. **Spending Magnitude:** areas where SPS spends the highest proportion of its resources
2. **Research and Best Practice:** What we know from research matters for student outcomes
3. **Local Context:** What we heard from stakeholders as potentially important areas of focus

How we analyze district spending

Data and Methodology

This report uses Seattle Public School's SY24-25 Budgeted Expenditures.

SPS reports a total operating budget of $1.25B for SY24-25.

As a part of its methodology, ERS applies a set of standard exclusions to district operating budgets in order to ensure "apples to apples" comparisons to national districts. After applying these exclusions, this analysis includes $1.14B in budgeted expenditures for SY24-25.

When available, the most recent year of local Washington state data is also included to provide additional context. In most cases, the most recent data available from the state at the time of this report is from SY23-24.

Peer District Comparisons

The analysis in this report includes comparative data points from other districts across the country that ERS has partnered with. These peers are all relatively large, urban districts that share similar demographics, including poverty, multilingual learners, and special education student populations. Throughout the presentation, the peer districts have been anonymized.

National comparison districts include:

- Albuquerque Public Schools, NM
- Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, TN
- Denver Public Schools, CO
- Columbus City Schools, OH
- Portland Public Schools, OR

Why this matters: **Comparing to similar districts helps identify patterns and areas for deeper inquiry—both in school and district-level spending**

How we center equity in this analysis

Equity in resources means that **all students have access to the right combination of supports and resources to meet their needs and help them succeed.** Our analysis examines patterns of access across different groups of students and schools. In this report, we analyze equity in the following ways:

By Student Characteristics

- **Students of Color Furthest from Educational Justice (SoCFFEJ):** SPS method, which includes students historically facing systemic barriers (e.g., Black, American Indian, Pacific Islander, Hispanic/Latinx, Southeast Asian, Middle Eastern/North African).
- **Black/African American Male Students:** Priority group for SPS early literacy and middle school math initiatives**.**
- **Students with Disabilities & Multilingual Learners.**

By School Characteristics

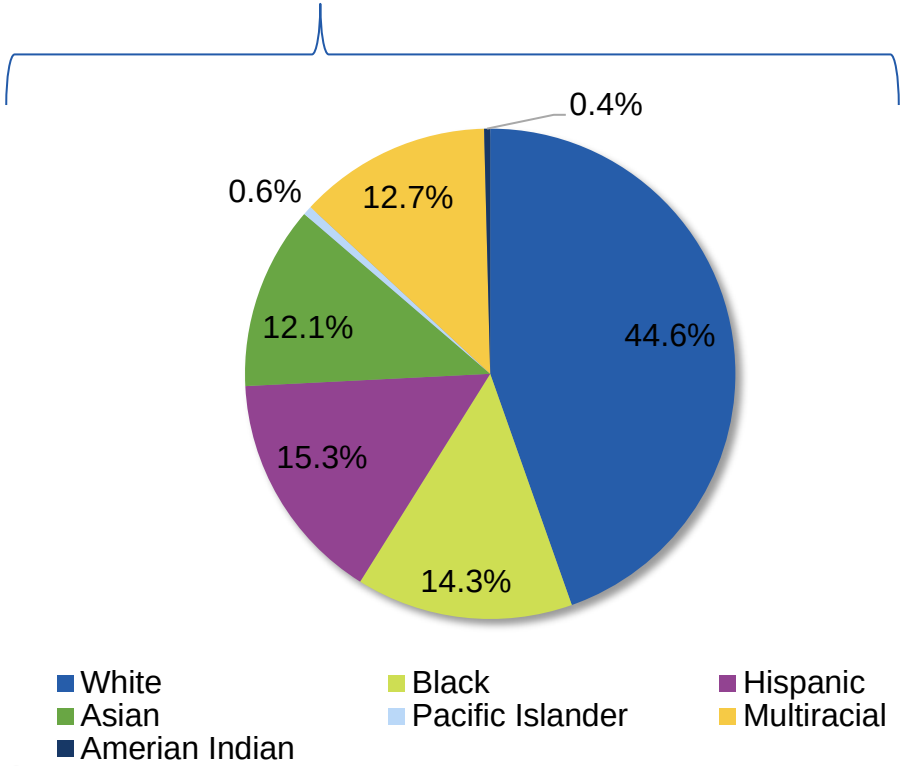
- **Equity Tiers:** SPS method identifying schools serving higher concentrations of underserved students (includes demographics, students born outside the U.S., and those experiencing homelessness).
- **Poverty Quartiles**: ERS method grouping schools by percent eligible for free/reduced-price lunch (within elementary/K–8 and middle/high).

A note on student demographic data

- For the purposes of our analysis, we relied on federal classifications of student race & ethnicity.
- In some instances, we brought in SPS-calculated metrics and classifications that provide a more nuanced student classification – such as *African American Males* (AAM) and *Students of Color Furthest from Educational Justice* (SoCFFEJ). See Appendix slide A for notes on methodology for classifying students in these two groups.
- It is best practice in data analysis not to share data for student populations when the N-size (the total number of students in a particular cut of data) is low. In some instances, this means that data looks specific to students federally classified as American Indian and Pacific Islander are not displayed visually, to protect student anonymity. For more details on Washington State policies regarding the "Minimum N Rule" and practices recommended related to data suppression, see OSPI business rules and Suppression Rules for Public Reporting. Despite not being displayed, these populations were *not* excluded from our analysis.
- You may see data looks throughout that look at schools by their concentration of students eligible for "Free and Reduced Priced Lunch" (FRL). You can find more information on the details of this measure from OSPI in appendix X here and from the USDA here. District and School values for this data are available on the OSPI Report Card here.

About Seattle Public Schools

Enrollment			
Total Enrollment SY 24-25	Students Receiving Free and Reduced-Price Lunch	Multilingual Learners	Students with IEPs
51,729	**33%**	**17%**	**18%**



Source: OSPI Report Card Enrollment SY24-25

Student Performance (SY 23-24)			
3rd Grade Literacy			
	All Students	Students of Color FFEJ	African American Males
% Proficient	**63.2%**	**41.7%**	**32.7%**

7th Grade Math			
	All Students	Students of Color FFEJ	African American Males
% Proficient	**52.8%**	**44.5%**	**30.9%**

College & Career Readiness			
	All Students	Students of Color FFEJ	African American Males
% of Graduates that Took Adv. Courses	**81.3%**	**73.9%**	**74.1%**

How to read and use this report

Go Back to Table of Contents

You will see **green sidebars** on the right of most slides that highlight:

Context

What did we look at and why?
Context notes are included at the beginning of individual slides or sections to introduce key concepts.

Explore

What does the data show us?
Each slide includes details about what the data is showing.

Consider

What questions or next steps does the data raise?
Considerations are included at the end of individual slides or sections to encourage reflection on the data. Some slides do not include considerations because there is additional data (e.g. on the following slides) that should be taken into account before turning towards considerations.

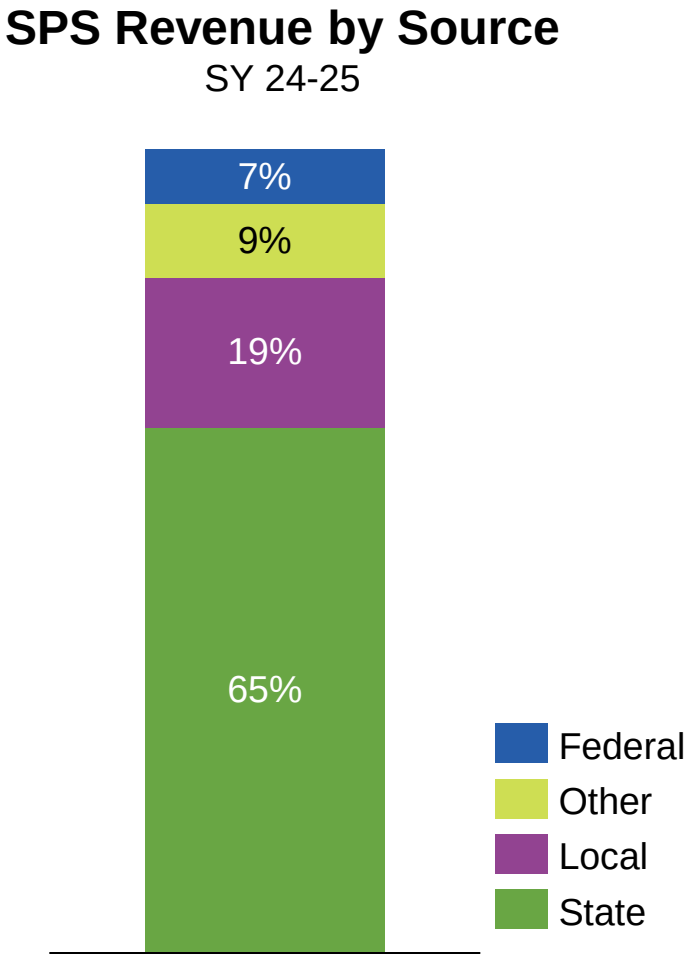
Hear Directly

What have district and school staff shared?
Whenever relevant, quotes are included to more directly represent what we heard from district and school staff during our surveys and focus groups.

Analytic Insights

Overall Resource Levels

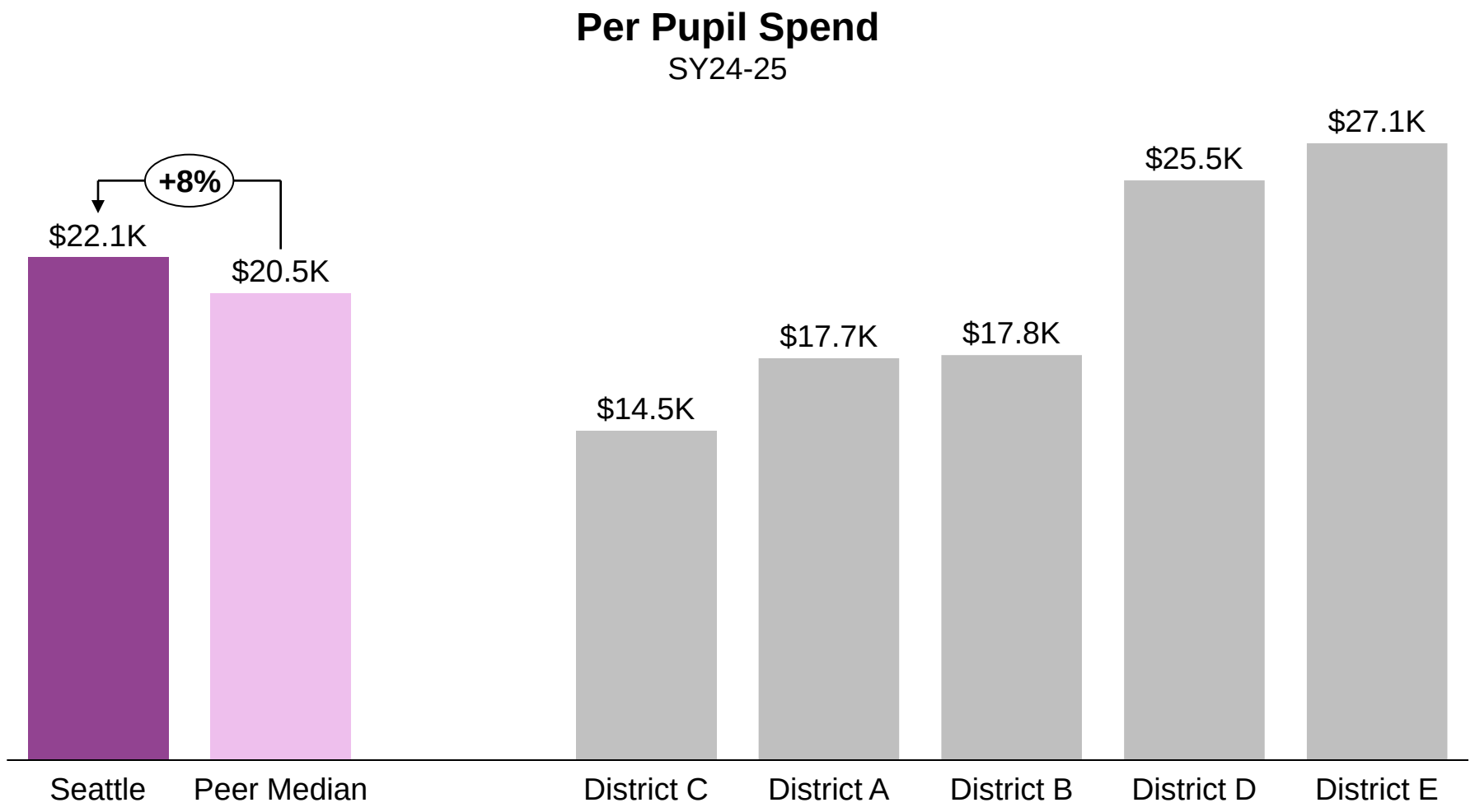
Understanding overall resource levels is critical to SPS's financial sustainability



- Per-pupil spending varies widely because states invest differently in education and districts rely on varying levels of local funding. For SPS, the state is the largest source of revenue for the district.
- To understand SPS's position, we compare revenue and spending levels across major categories and against peer districts.
- These comparisons are not judgments of "good" or "bad" spending, but points of inquiry to better understand SPS's cost structure.
- Seattle's high-cost structure and limited state revenue requires additional local support to cover competitive staffing costs.
- In several key areas, state funding is insufficient, requiring SPS to rely on local levy support.
- Local revenue enables SPS to provide critical services such as special education, transportation, and student programs.

Source: SPS 2024-25 Recommended Budget
Note: Revenue categories have been collapsed into high level categories

SPS budgeted $22k per pupil in SY2425, more than comparison districts even after controlling for regional cost difference



Source: SPS FY25 Budgeted Expenditures; ERS Comparative Database

Context

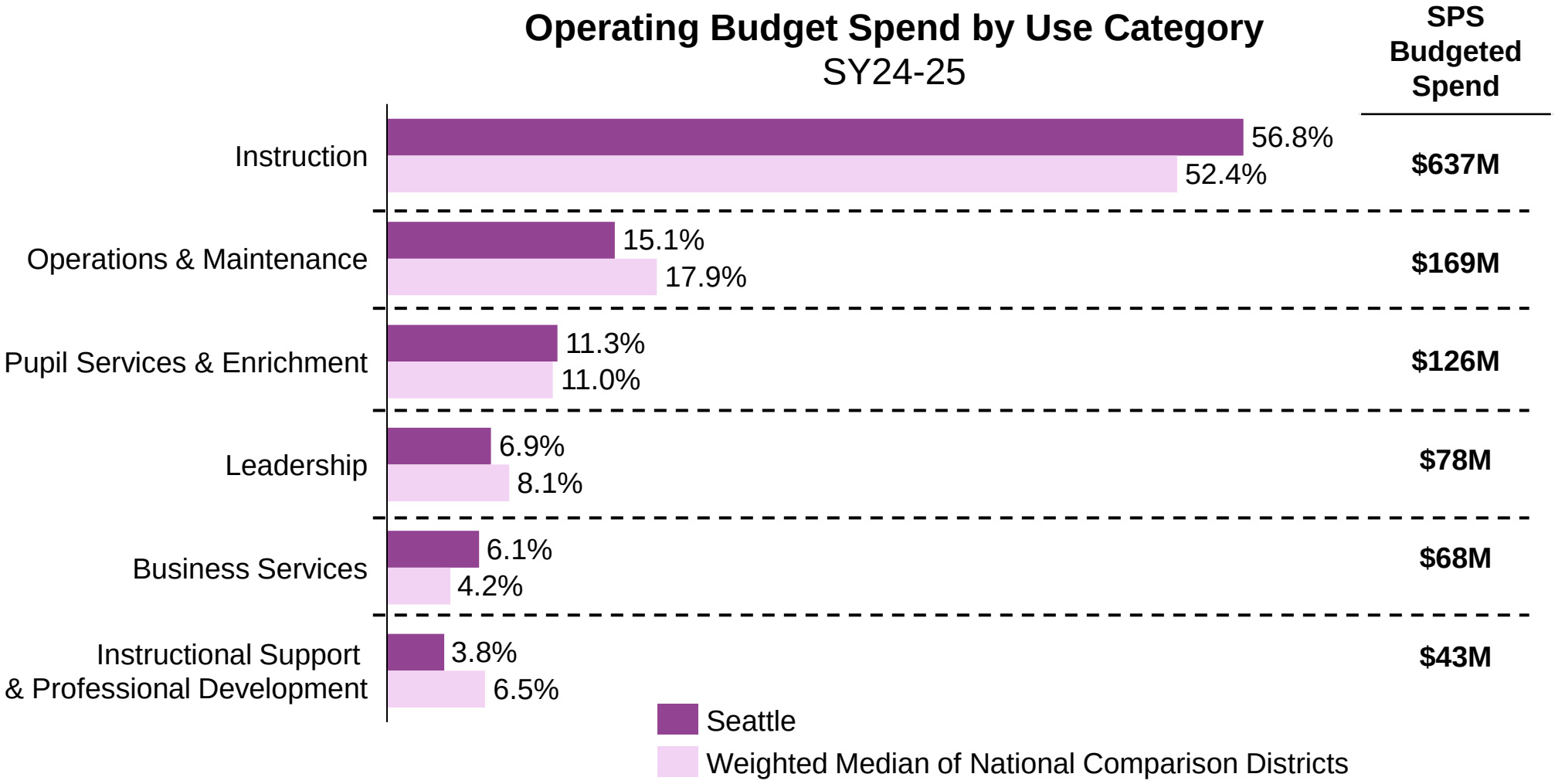
For this analysis, we selected national peer districts with similar enrollment levels and demographics as Seattle. The comparisons are not intended to imply certain levels spending are “good” or “bad,” but rather to serve as point of inquiry.

Districts and regions can have differences in cost of living**. Our methodology adjusts for that by using the Comparable Wage Index for Teachers (CWIFT) from the National Center for Education Statistics.**

Explore

Even after adjusting for regional costs of difference, Seattle’s budgeted per pupil expenditures are higher than national peer districts. Seattle spends about 8% more per pupil than national peer districts.

SPS spends most of its budget on Instruction, followed by Operations & Maintenance



Source: SPS FY25 Budgeted Expenditures; ERS Comparative Database

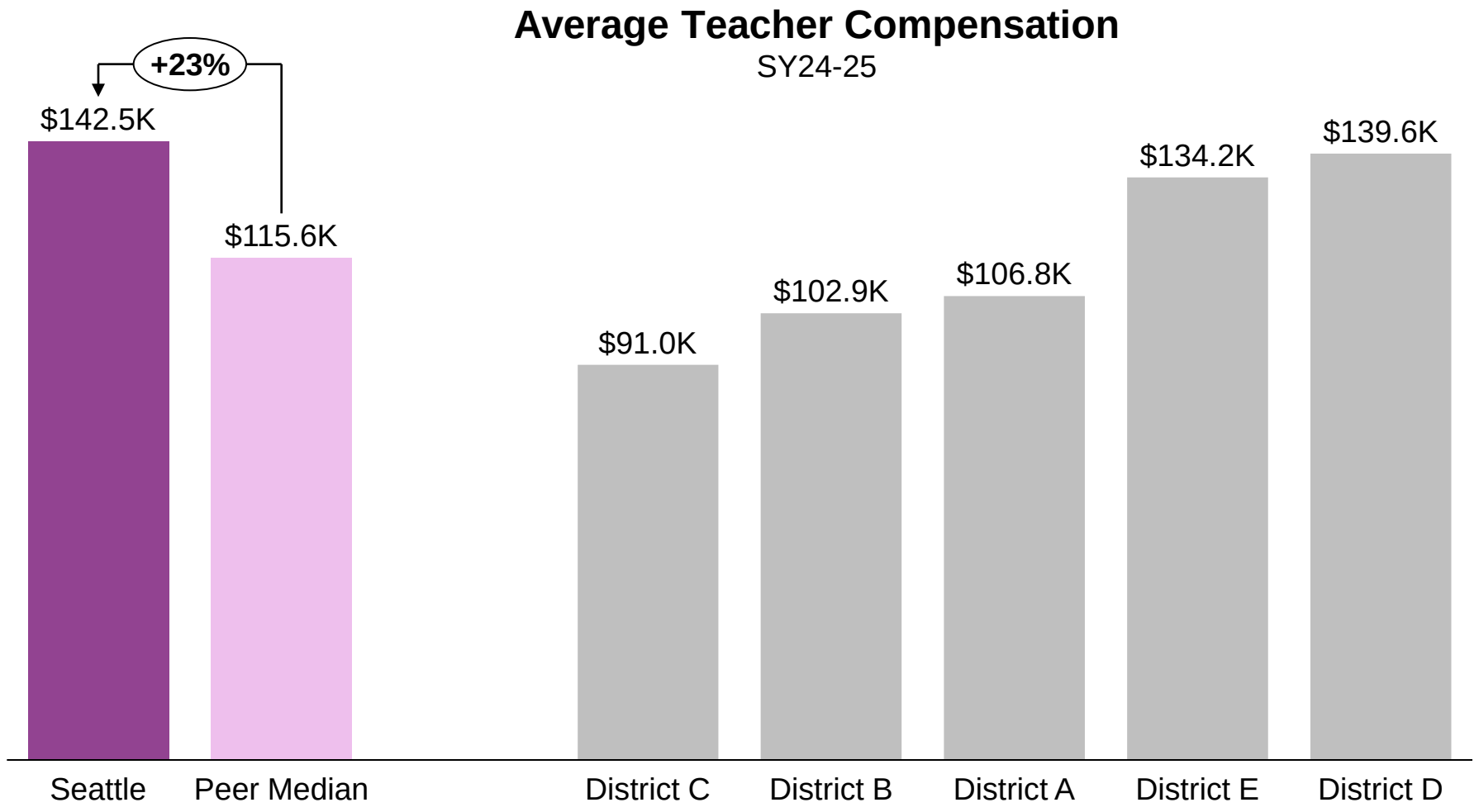
Context

Use is an ERS coding category that helps us understand exactly what the dollars are used to do. The high-level categories for use are Instruction, Pupil Services & Enrichment, Instructional Support and Professional Growth, Leadership, Operations & Maintenance, and Business Services.

Explore

Instruction accounts for the highest proportion (57%) of total dollars spent and has a direct connection to the student experience. This totals nearly $637M in SPS. Instruction sending includes teachers, aides, substitutes, instructional materials & supplies, and library & media. Later in this presentation, we will look more closely at the SPS instruction related spending.

Within Instruction, Seattle spends significantly more per teacher in compensation than national comparison districts



Source: SPS FY25 Budgeted Expenditures; ERS Comparative Database

Context

Understanding how teacher compensation in SPS compares to other large, urban school districts nationally can reveal how unique the Washington state context is.

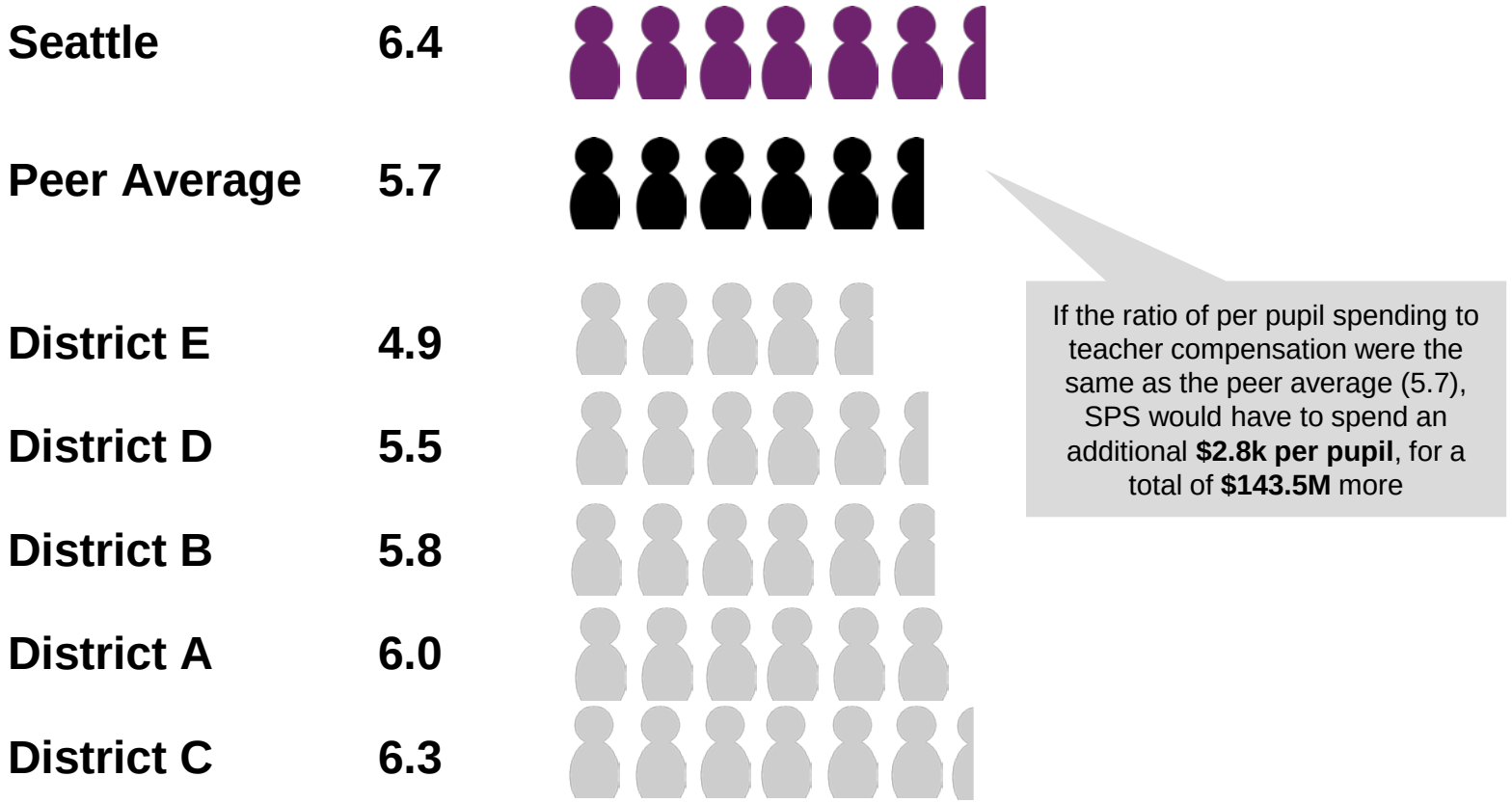
Explore

This data shows that average teacher compensation in Seattle is *higher* than other national peer districts, even after adjusting for geographic differences.

Data on the prior slide showed that per pupil spending in Seattle is 8% higher than national peer districts. However, spending on average teacher compensation is 23% higher. This speaks to the unique cost structure challenges that Seattle faces.

SPS needs more revenue than comparison districts to cover the costs of a single teacher

How many students does it take to cover the cost of a teacher?
(Average Teacher Compensation / Per Pupil Spending)



If the ratio of per pupil spending to teacher compensation were the same as the peer average (5.7), SPS would have to spend an additional **$2.8k per pupil**, for a total of **$143.5M** more

Source: SPS FY25 Budgeted Expenditures; ERS Comparative Database

Context

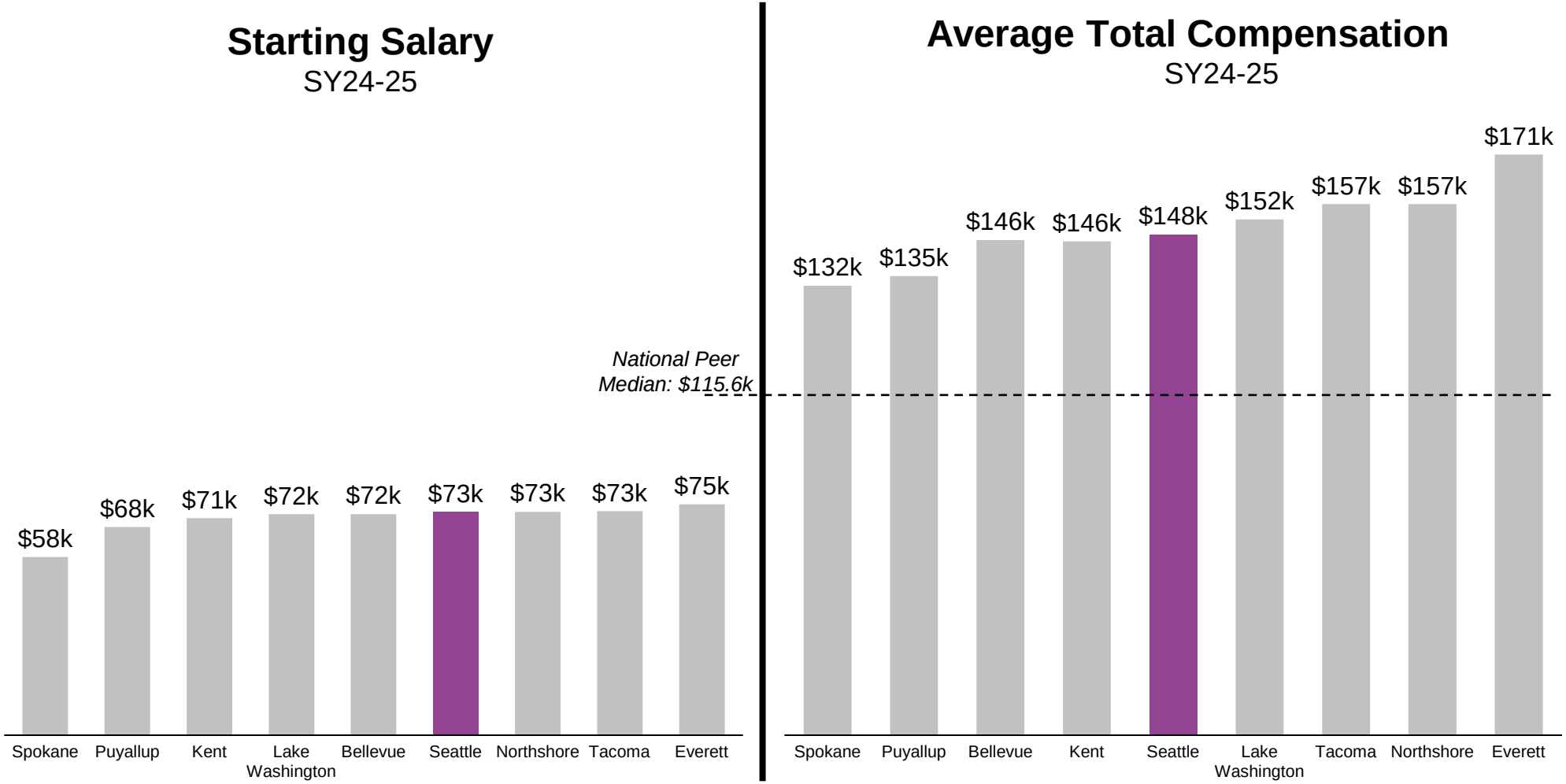
Here we examine the relationship between per pupil expenditures and teacher costs. In general, districts are funded based on the number of students they serve. Therefore, in districts where a teacher's cost represents a higher multiple of the per pupil expenditures, more students are needed to cover the cost of an individual teacher.

This might suggest either that position costs are misaligned or that there are challenges with how a district is funded.

Explore

In Seattle, even after adjusting for geographic differences, the ratio of per-student expenditures to teacher compensation is higher than in most comparable districts. On average, it requires the funding generated by approximately 6.4 students to cover the cost of one teacher. This reflects an average per-pupil expenditure of just over $22,000 and an average teacher compensation of $142,000.

However, SPS teacher compensation levels reflect alignment with the Washington labor market



Source: OSPI Preliminary School District Personnel Summary Reports (SY24-25); District SY24-25 Salary Schedules

Context

While Seattle appears higher than national peers, looking within Washington shows a different picture. Teacher compensation across the state tends to be above Seattle's national peer districts, and Seattle's levels are right in line with its local peers. Therefore, though the high compensation looks unusual nationally, it reflects the broader state context, in which Seattle must remain competitive to attract and retain talent.

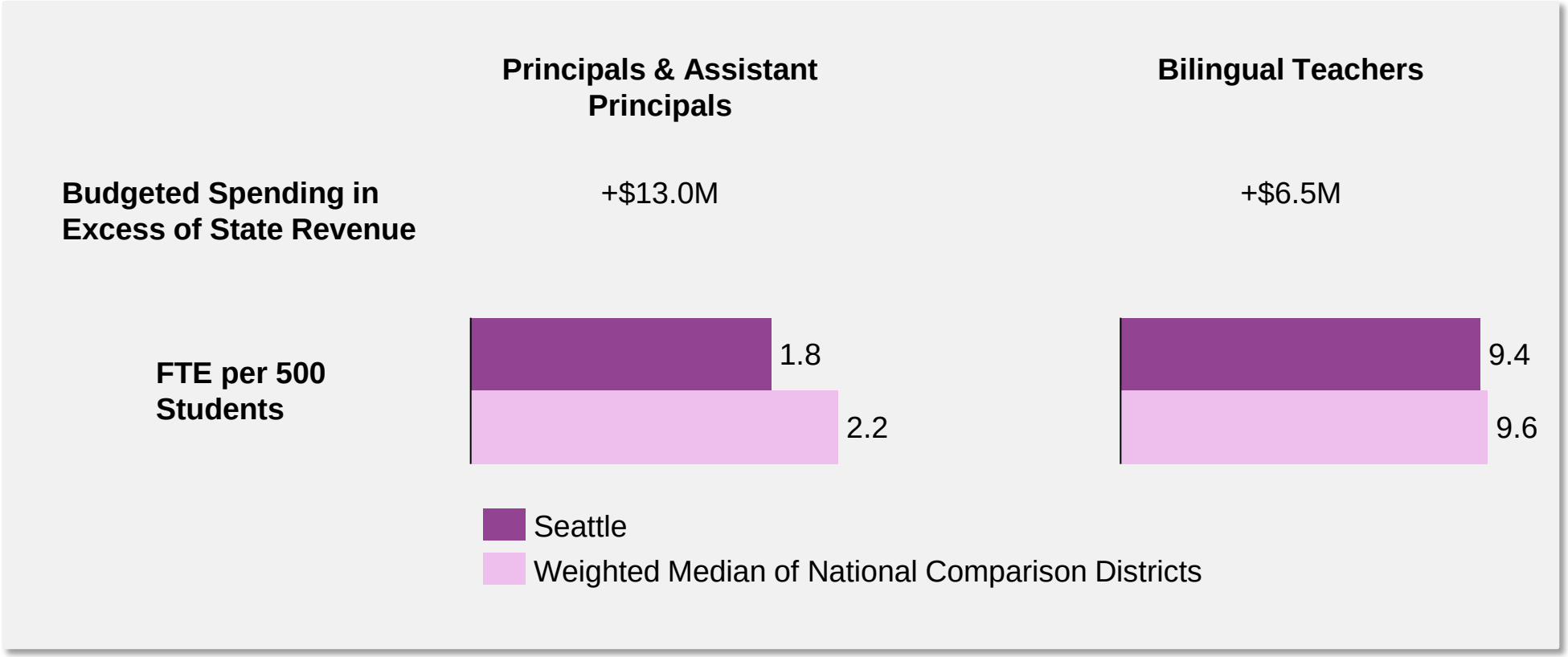
Explore

Seattle's average teacher compensation is aligned with other large Washington districts, and its starting salary sits near the middle of other local districts. Viewed alongside the national comparison, this suggests that Seattle is not an outlier but rather reflects the broader state context.

Consider

If Seattle's teacher pay looks similar to other Washington districts, what else should we be asking about how compensation supports student learning?

Other instructional staff positions where state revenue does not cover the costs are school administrators and bilingual teachers



Context

SPS spends more in several areas relative to the revenue it receives from Washington state. But, are these spending patterns different than national peers?

Explore

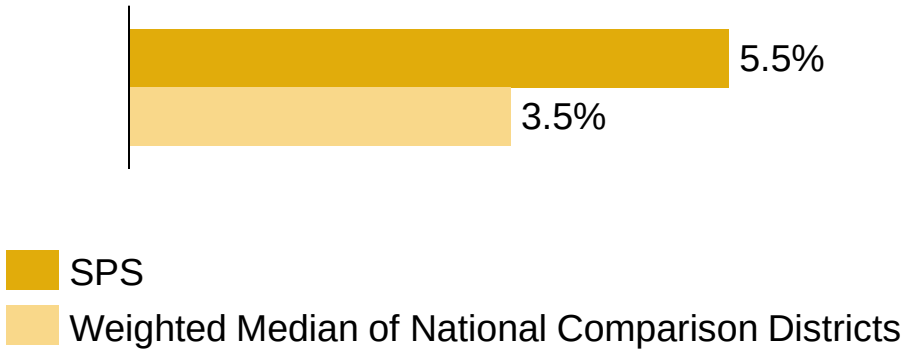
Included in this chart are two areas where Seattle spends more than it receives from the state funding formula. For example, Seattle spends about $13.0M more annually on principals and assistant principals than it receives from Washington state to cover those positions. There is a similar trend with bilingual teachers as well.

However, SPS has lower staffing per student than national comparisons for these positions, suggesting its over-investment relative to revenue stems from a broader funding challenge

Source: SPS FY25 Budgeted Expenditures; ERS Comparative Database

Spending on transportation exceeds both local and national comparisons – an area worth examining

Compared to other national peer districts, SPS spends a greater overall percentage of its budget on student transportation.



Compared to other local peer districts in the state, SPS has the…

- Highest percentage of its budget spent on student transportation
- Highest cost per rider: $9,155/rider in SPS vs. $2,230/rider for peers
- Fewest riders per bus throughout the day compared to WA state peers
  - *Basic:* 38 riders/bus, on average, in SPS vs. 89 for peers
  - *Students with Disabilities:* On average, 6 riders/bus in SPS vs. 9 for peers.

Context

The previous slide showed areas where SPS spending exceeds state revenue, but staffing matches national peers. This slide highlights a different case: student transportation. Basic program transportation refers to home-to-school transport for basic education, while special program transportation covers specialized programs.

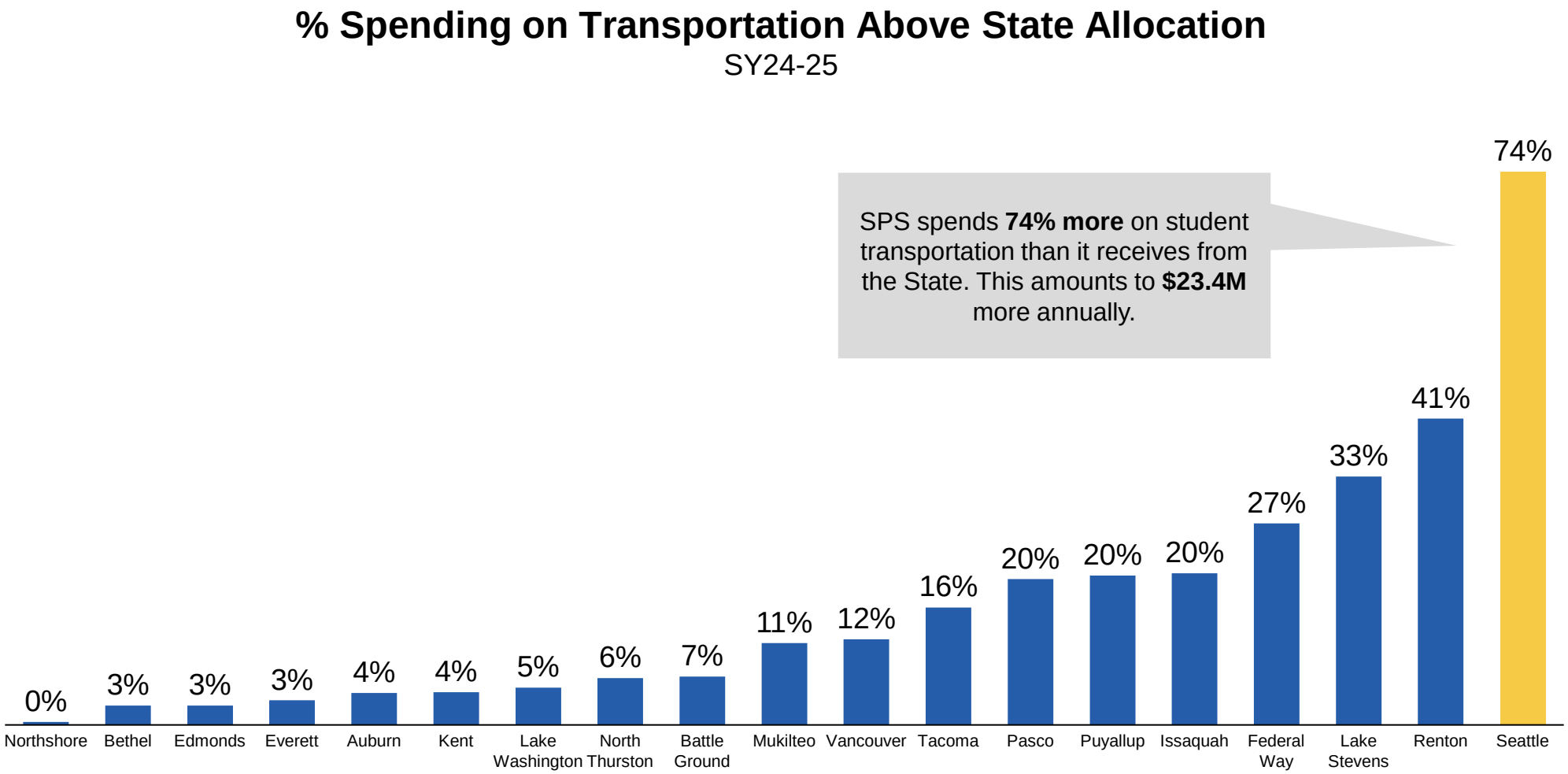
Explore

Compared to national peers, Seattle spends a larger proportion of its budget on student transportation. About 62% of the transportation spend can be attributed to special education transportation.

Seattle spends about four times as much per rider than other Washington districts ($9.1K vs $2.2K). One contributing factor is the number of students transported per bus, with Seattle transporting only about 40% as many basic education students per bus as other Washington districts (38 vs 89) and about 67% of students with disabilities per bus as other Washington districts (6 vs. 9)

Source: SPS FY25 Budgeted Expenditures, OSPI April 2025 Key Performance Indicators Technical Assistance Paper Customized for Seattle Public Schools; Seattle Public Schools 2024-25 Operation Allocation Detail Report 1026A

SPS' additional spend on transportation beyond the state allocation greatly exceeds other Washington districts



Source: OSPI Efficiency Detail Report SY24-25; OSPI Operations Allocation Detail Report

Context

SPS receives funding for student transportation from WA state. The state considers a variety of factors like land area, average distance driven, the number of destinations, and overall ridership levels to determine district funding.

Explore

For SY23-24, SPS received $38.4M from WA state for student transportation. However, in SY24-25 SPS spent $58.9M – 74% more than it received in funding from WA state for a total of $23.4M.

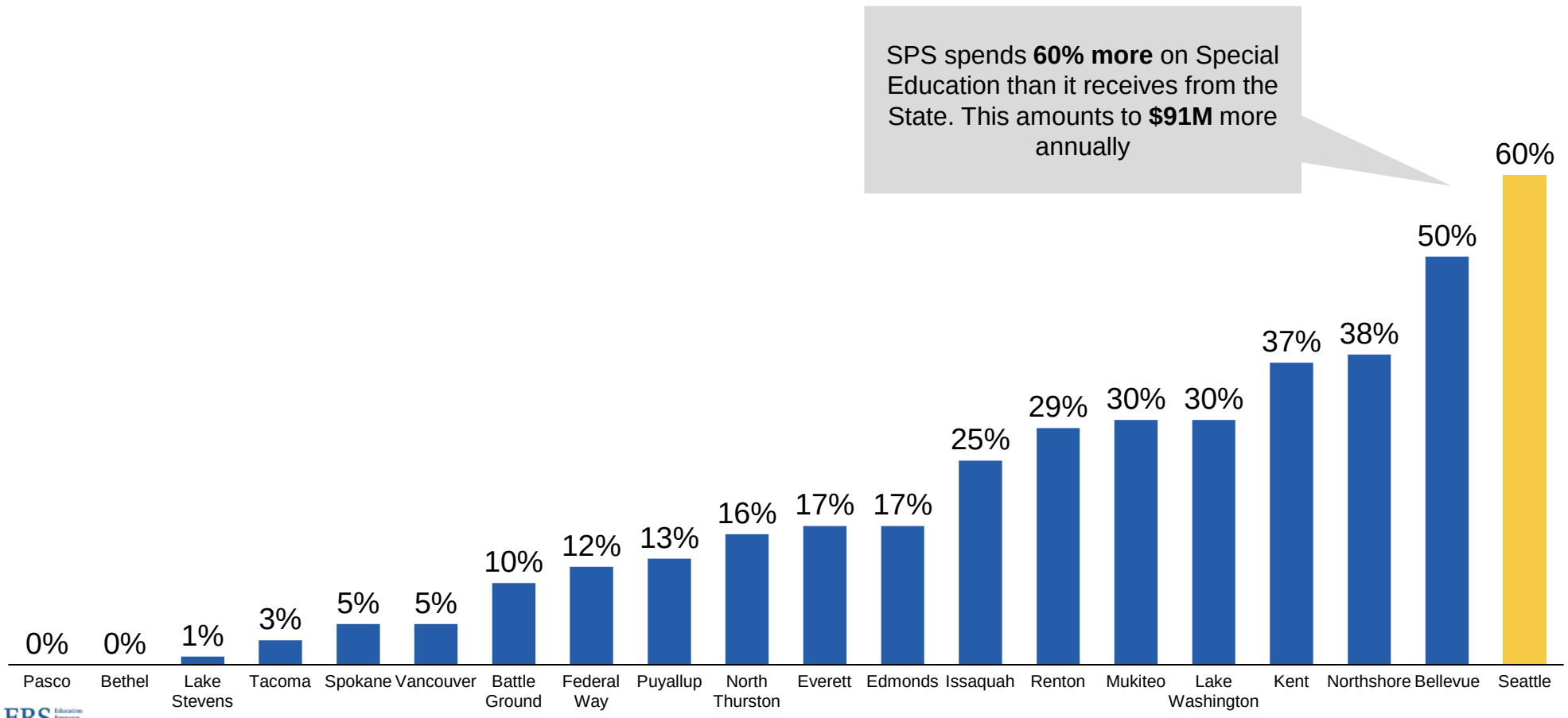
Consider

SPS's transportation investments go beyond what the state funds, but they provide critical benefits for students and families. The district extends service to specialized programs for equitable access, and later secondary start times support adolescent sleep needs even though two busing tiers add significant cost. Contracting with two yellow bus providers has also ensured strong on-time performance for students, though at a higher price.

This trend is also true for special education spending

% Spending on Special Education Above State Allocation

SY23-24



Source: OSPI F-196 Reports for SY 23-24

Context

SPS receives funding from both the state and federal government for special education. The state special education formula has two parts. The first part is for calculating funding for students ages 3–5 who are not enrolled in kindergarten and are eligible for and receiving special education services. The second part applies to students ages 5–22 who are eligible for and receiving special education services and enrolled in K–12.

Explore

This chart shows the percent of special education spending above special education revenue for both state and federal sources. SPS is spending $90 million more than is received. Local levy funds have enabled SPS to strengthen services for students with disabilities, from expanding 1:1 instructional aide support to steadily raising the share of students learning alongside peers in general education classrooms. Later in this report, we will explore the factors that drive special education spending in SPS.

Overall Resource Levels: Closing

Go Back to Table of Contents

Insight Summary

- Seattle's **high-cost structure and limited state funding create significant challenges for investing** in critical student services
- Spending patterns generally align with urban peers, but **transportation and special education stand out as significantly higher cost areas**
- SPS state **revenue is not sufficient to cover staffing costs** at competitive Seattle pay rates
- Local levy support allows SPS to fund **important student services and programs**
- **Additional revenue is critical** to ensure SPS can deliver the services and supports that strengthen the experiences of both students and staff.

Potential Action Implications

- Assess district portfolio and school configurations to **balance efficiency with student and staff experience**, addressing challenges like limited access to Specials, small teacher teams, and under-resourced.
- Develop a **multi-year fiscal strategy** that **aligns resources with student priorities**, accounts for enrollment decline, pursues additional revenue, and positions SPS to navigate its budget deficit while **protecting equity and instructional quality**
- **Advocate for additional revenue and explore cost reduction opportunities** in higher spending areas (e.g., special education and transportation) by reviewing district policy / practices

Analytic Insights

Teachers & Instructional Support

Teachers & Instructional Support: At a Glance

Why it Matters	• Teaching quality typically impacts student learning more than any other in-school factor.
How it's Assessed	• Teacher evaluation scores based on Seattle's evaluation system and years of experience • Teacher assignment to schools and the resulting impact on student groups • Access to coaching resources, such as instructional coaches • Investments in instructional materials and supplies (like curriculum)
Report Insights	• The highest poverty schools have the lowest proportion of Distinguished teachers and the greatest proportion of teachers with fewer than three years of experience. • Certain subgroups disproportionately attend schools with either a) higher proportions of teachers with fewer than three years of experience or b) fewer teachers rated as distinguished, which has potential implications for the guardrail focused on access to high quality teaching. • SPS staffs fewer Instructional Coaches than other large, urban school districts. • Outside of formal coaching positions, there are other instructional support positions providing coaching support, but they span multiple departments which can create potential alignment challenges. • SPS spends less per pupil on instructional materials and supplies (like curriculum) than national peer districts.

Analysis in this section directly connects to the first District Guardrail

0025 Guardrails for the District

District Guardrails

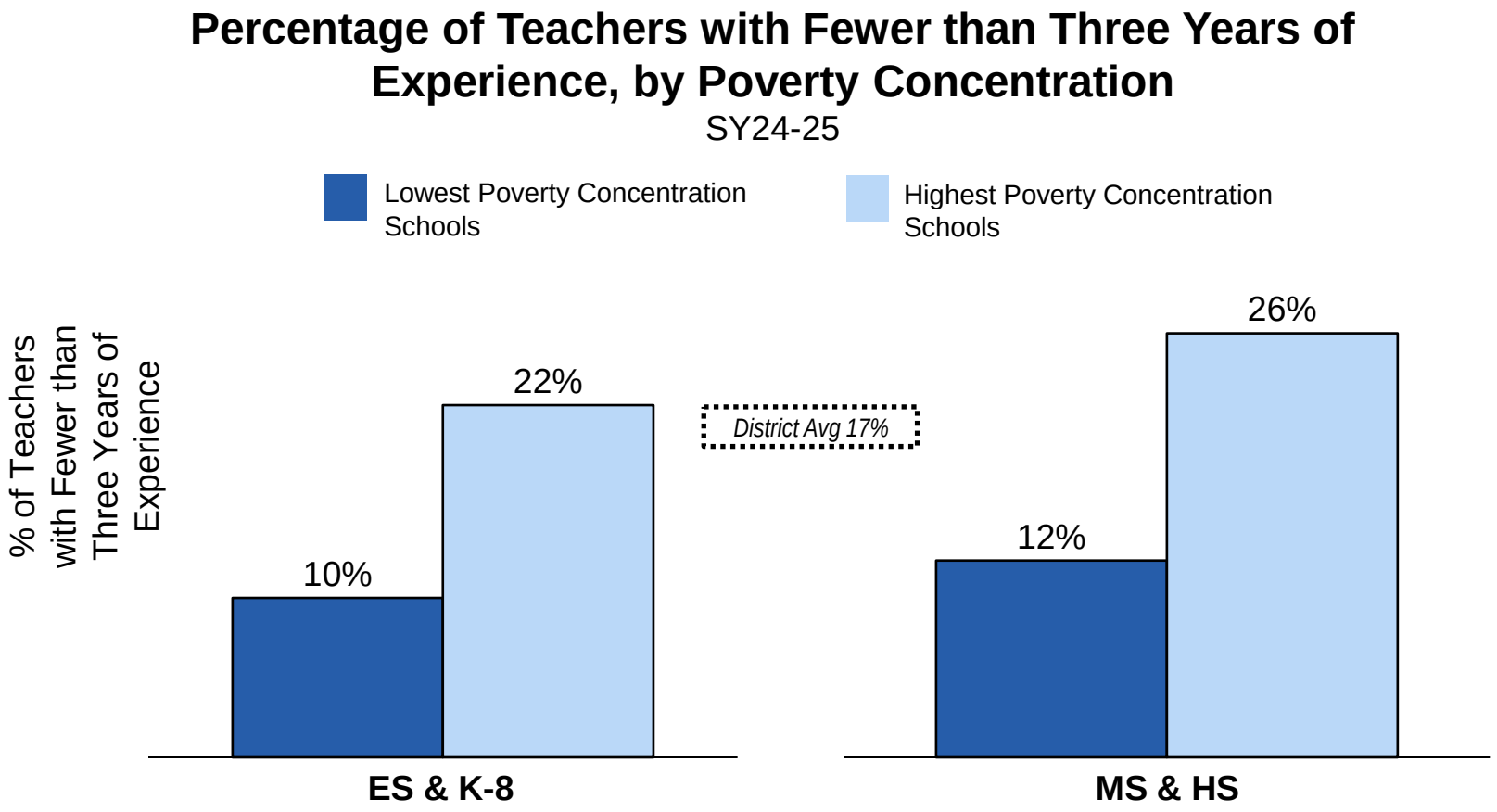
The Board adopts these District Guardrails consistent with Board Policy No. 1010, Oversight and Progress Monitoring:

1. The Superintendent will not allow a student's school assignment, family income, race or ethnicity, need, or identity to determine access to high standards, rigorous programming, high-quality teaching, and supports.
2. The Superintendent will not allow the existence of any learning environments that do not promote physical and emotional safety.
3. The Superintendent will not allow adult behaviors in school buildings and classrooms that are misaligned with the anti-racist values of Seattle Public Schools, including the use of curricula, materials, and practices that are inconsistent with those values.
4. The Superintendent will not make major decisions or bring major recommendations to the Board without first implementing an engagement strategy that includes students, parents, teachers, and community members.
5. The Superintendent will not allow people, time, money, and other resources to be allocated in a manner inconsistent with student need.

> The Superintendent will not allow a student's school assignment, family income, race, need, or identity to determine access to high standards, rigorous programming, **high-quality teaching, and supports**.

Source: Seattle Public Schools

The highest poverty schools have the highest proportion of teachers with fewer than three years of experience



Note: Teachers in schools categorized as "Other" (including Interagency Programs, Cascade Parent Partnership, BRIDGES Transition) are excluded from analysis
Source: SPS HR File (SY24-25); SPS Teacher Experience File (SY24-25); SPS Schools File (SY24-25)

Context

As noted in SPS' Guardrails, all students should have access to high-quality teaching. One way to potentially measure access to high quality teaching is by looking at the distribution of novice teachers, who are defined as teachers in their first three years of teaching. This does not mean that teachers with fewer than three years of experience are not high-quality teachers, but we see in most large school systems that school-level turnover is usually higher for those teachers. It's important that districts are strategic about supporting less experienced teachers.

Explore

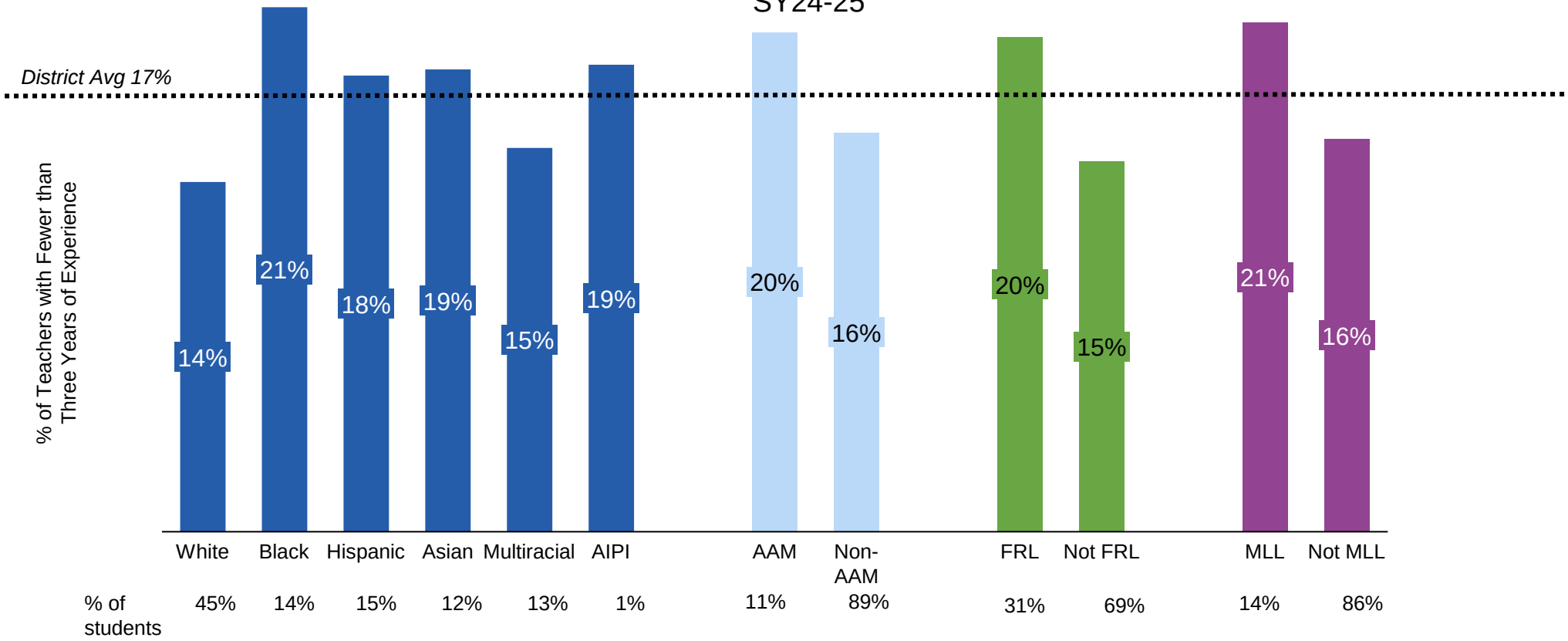
In this analysis, we compare schools with the highest poverty concentration to those with the lowest. Poverty is measured by how many students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch (FRL). The data shows that schools with higher concentrations of poverty are more likely to have teachers who are new to the profession, with fewer than three years of experience.

Students of color, multilingual learners, and students experiencing poverty are in schools with higher percentages of teachers with fewer than three years of experience

Access to Teachers by Student Group

Focus: Teachers with fewer than three years of experience

SY24-25



Note: AIPI is shorthand referring to students identified as American Indian and/or Pacific Islanders; results are a weighted average based on proportions of each student and teacher group at each school

Source: SPS Schools File (SY24-25); SPS Teacher Experience File (SY23-24)

Context

Given the district's focus on equity, it was important to examine whether all student groups have equitable access to experienced teachers. The analysis shows that the likelihood of being assigned a teacher with fewer than three years of experience varies by student group, highlighting potential disparities in access to high-quality instruction.

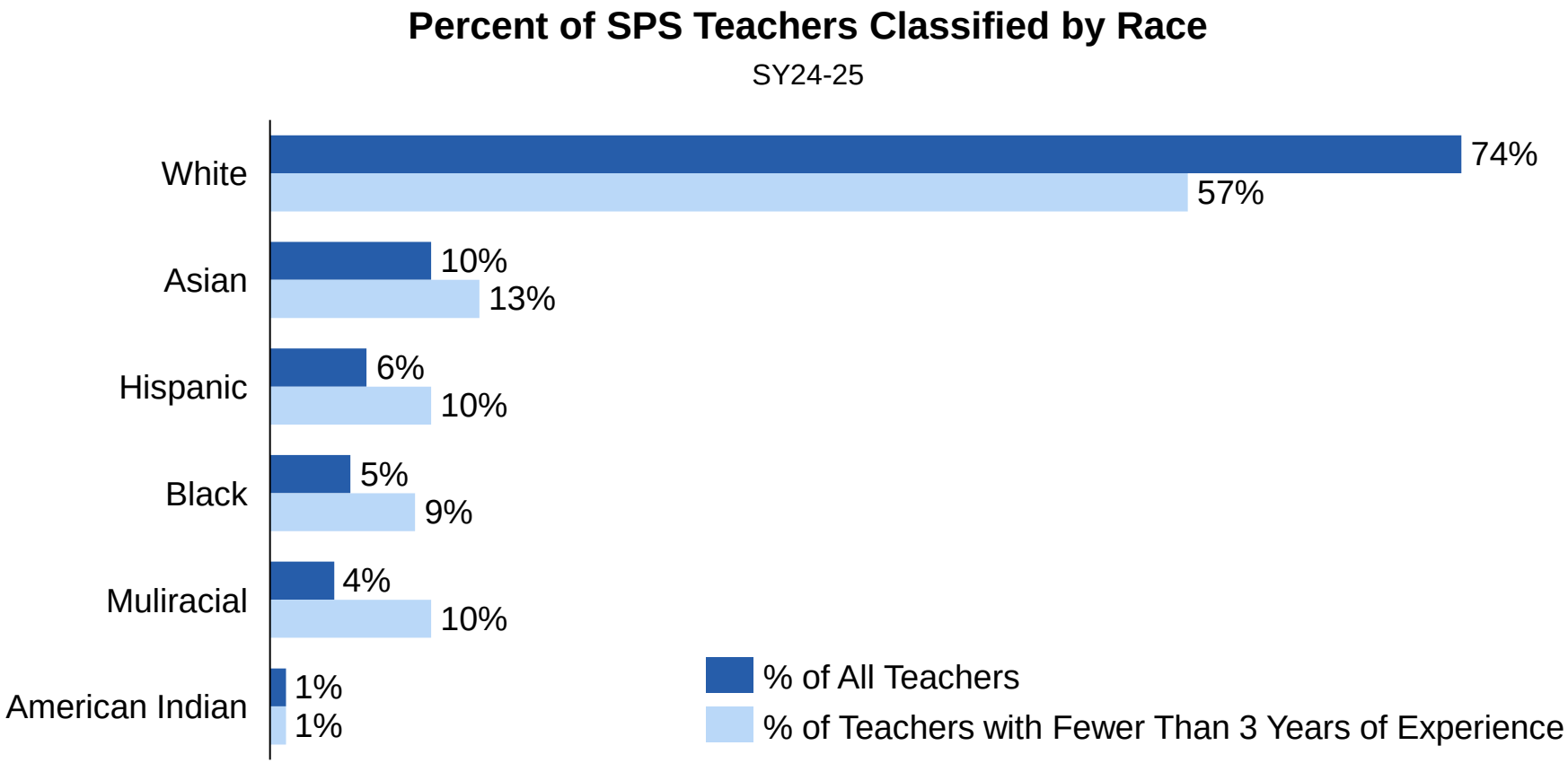
Explore

Black students, African American Males (AAM), students receiving free and reduced-price lunch (FRL), and multilingual learners (MLL) are more likely to attend schools with higher proportions of teachers with fewer than three years of experience. This trend also holds true for Hispanic and Asian students in Seattle. For example, black students, on average, attend schools where 21% of teachers have fewer than three years of experience.

Consider

Policy choices can impact this data. For example, SPS's intentional efforts to recruit teachers of color to diversify its teaching force may be driving this metric, as many of these new hires are teachers of color.

Teachers of color remain a small share overall but are a growing share of teachers with fewer than three years of experience



Note: Teachers in schools categorized as 'Other Schools' (Interagency Programs, Cascade Parent Partnership, and BRIDGES) are excluded from analysis
Source: SPS HR File (SY24-25); SPS Teacher Evaluation File (SY23-24); SPS Teacher Experience File (SY24-25)

Context

Teacher diversity is beneficial for all students, especially students of color. Research has proven that students of color with access to same-race teachers are more likely to graduate from high school, attend school regularly, take advanced courses, and aspire to attend college.

Explore

In this chart, we can see that while teachers of color are a smaller portion of overall teachers, their representation in teachers in their first three years of teaching is increasing. Efforts to recruit teachers of color may be having an impact on these results.

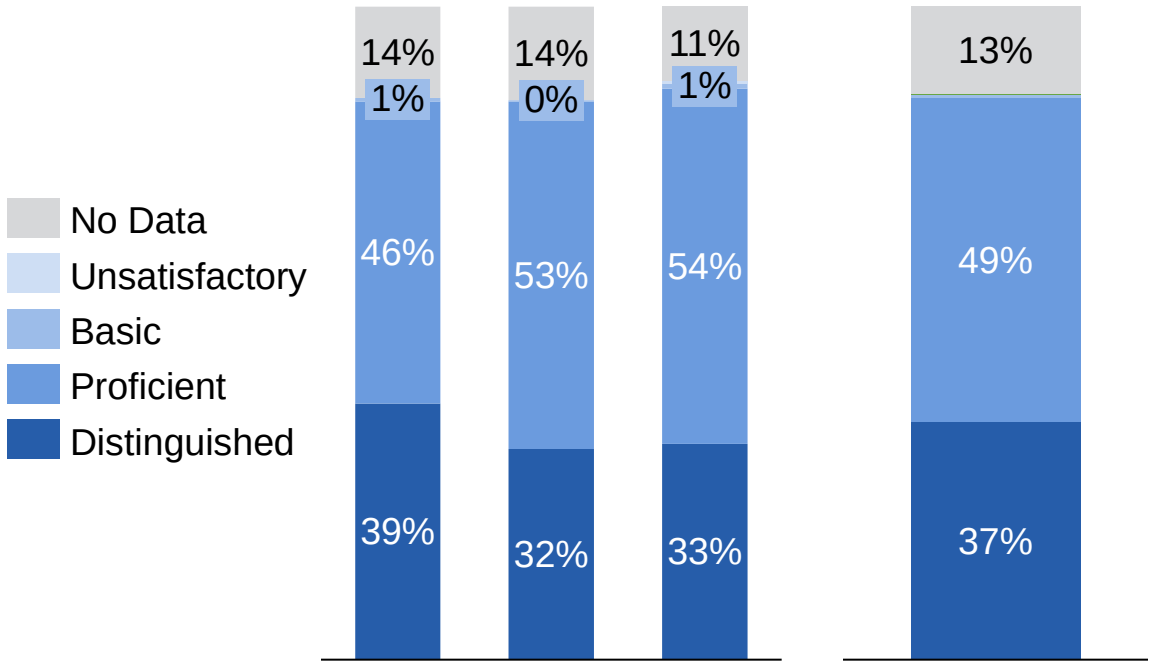
Consider

Do retention rates differ for teachers of color and linguistically diverse teachers, compared to other teachers?

SPS has a high proportion of teachers rated Distinguished

SPS Teacher Evaluations by School Level

SY23-24



	ES / K-8	MS	HS	SPS
Total Teachers	1704	468	787	2959

Note: Teachers in schools categorized as 'Other Schools' (Interagency Programs, Cascade Parent Partnership, and BRIDGES) are excluded from analysis
Source: SPS HR File (SY24-25); SPS Teacher Evaluation File (SY23-24); SPS Teacher Experience File (SY24-25)

Context

Another measure of access to high quality teaching is using staff evaluation data. This allows us to understand the overall distribution of highly effective teachers in the district. By further breaking down the distribution by school level, we can identify whether certain grade levels have more access to effective teachers (as rated on Seattle's evaluation system) than others.

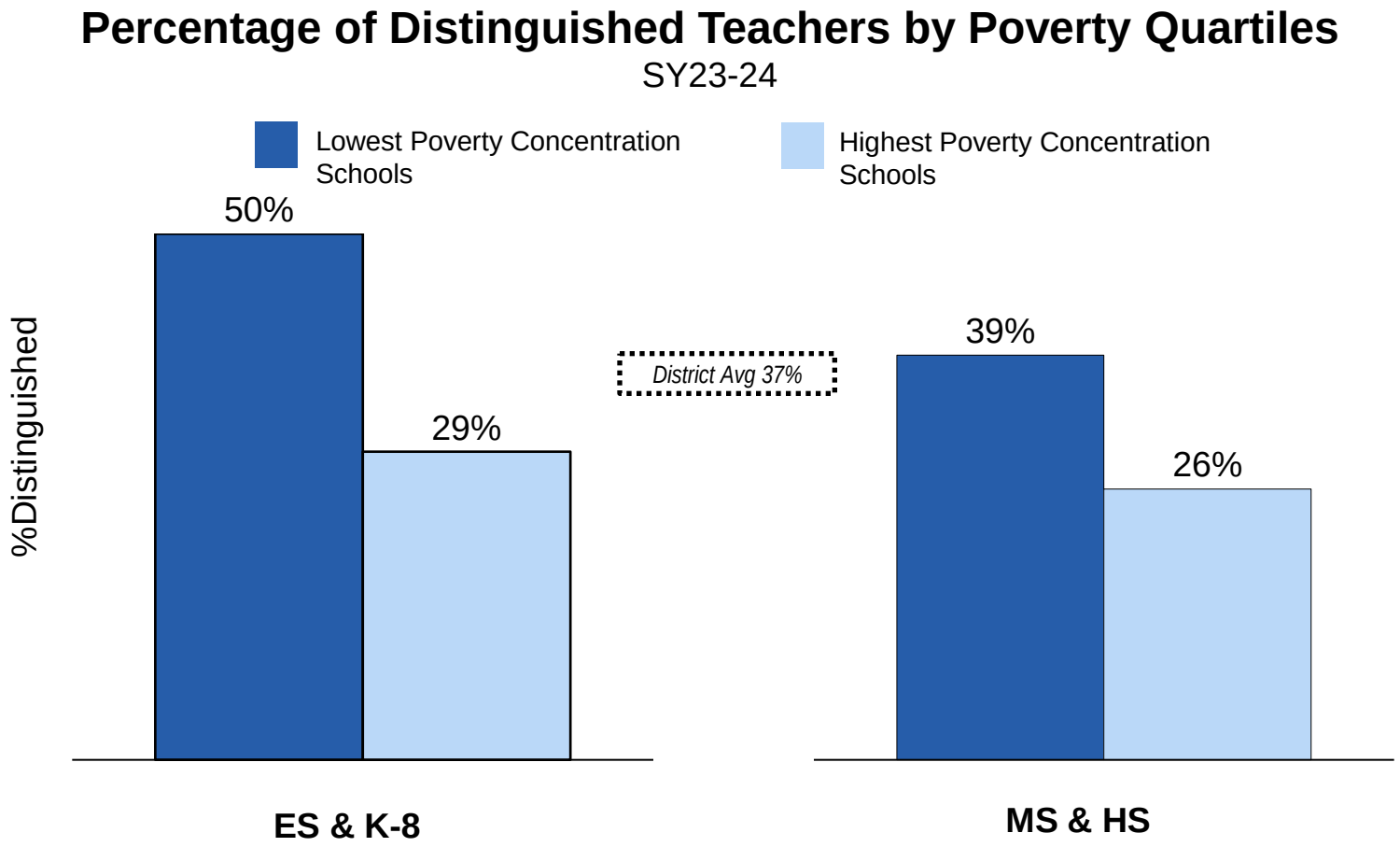
Explore

Overall, the majority of teachers in Seattle are rated as either proficient or distinguished. Altogether, these two groups account for 86% of teachers. There are more distinguished teachers at the elementary and K-8 level. Teachers new to Seattle or those that weren't evaluated in the prior year did not have evaluation data.

Consider

When implemented effectively, teacher evaluation systems are helpful tools for strengthening the teacher workforce and improving student outcomes. How aligned are these findings with student outcomes?

The highest poverty schools have the lowest proportion of Distinguished teachers



Explore

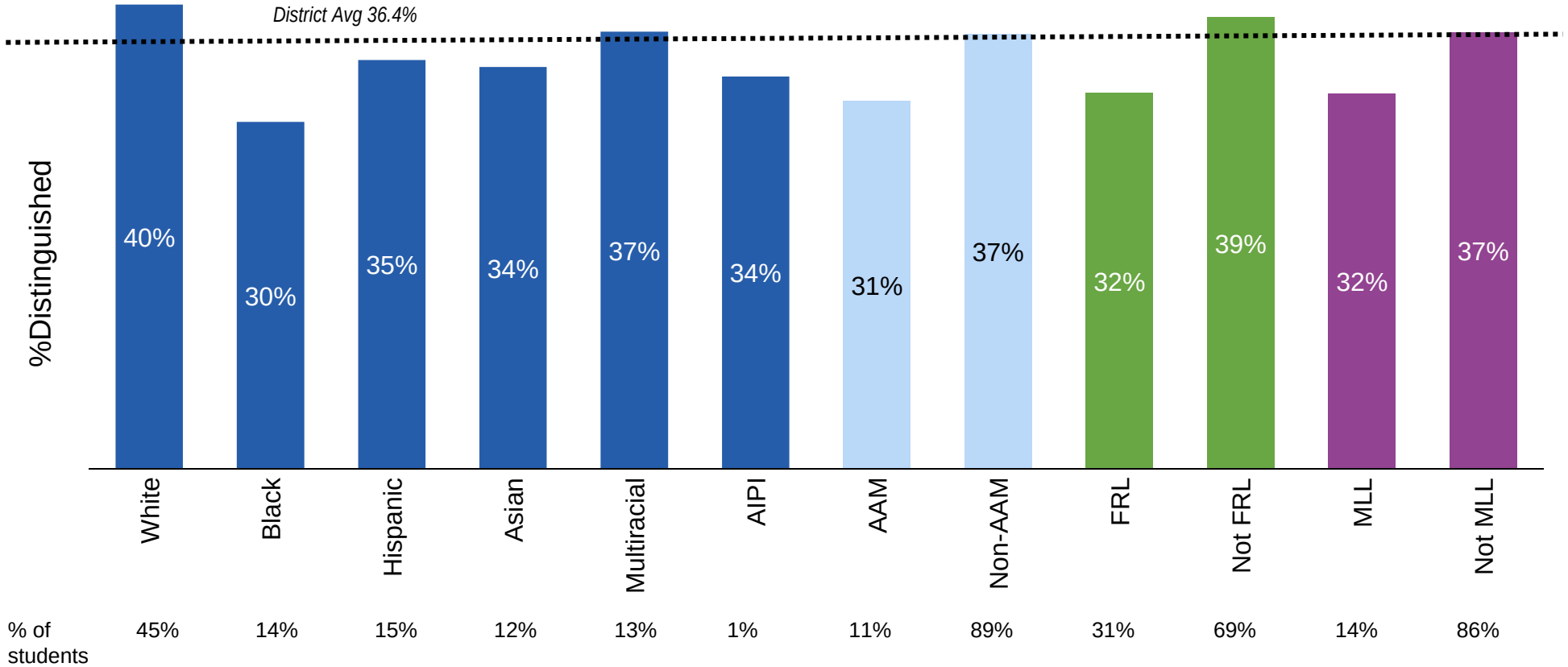
Similar to the trends with teachers with fewer than three years of experience, the analysis shows that, at both the elementary and secondary level, higher concertation of poverty schools have a lower percent of their teaching staff rated “Distinguished” based on Seattle’s evaluation system.

Note: Teachers in schools categorized as ‘Other’ (Interagency Programs, Cascade Parent Partnership, and BRIDGES Transition) are excluded from this analysis
Source: SPS HR File (SY24-25); SPS Teacher Evaluation File (SY23-24); SPS Schools File (SY24-25)

Black, FRL, and MLL students are in schools with a lower proportion of Distinguished teachers

Access to Distinguished Teachers by Student Group

SY24-25



Note: AIPI is shorthand referring to students identified as American Indian and/or Pacific Islanders; results are a weighted average based on proportions of each student and teacher group at each school

Source: SPS Schools File (SY24-25); SPS Teacher Evaluation File (SY23-24)

Context

Access to highly effective teachers is another important dimension of equity. Looking across student groups, we see differences in the percentage of teachers in their schools that are rated Distinguished using the district's evaluation system, suggesting that not all students benefit equally from the district's strongest instruction.

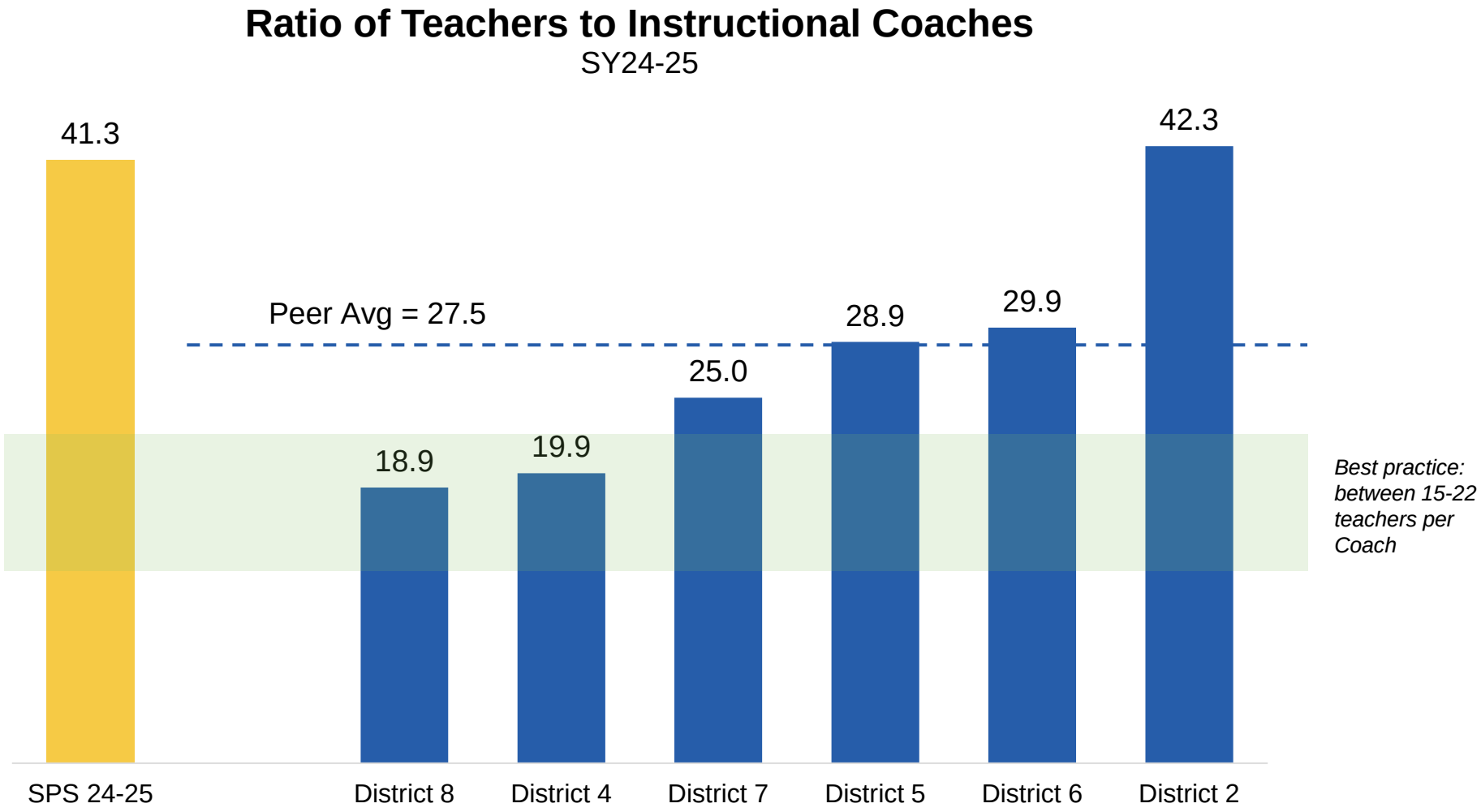
Explore

40% of White students have access to at least one Distinguished teacher across their classes, whereas the rate for Black students, students qualifying for free and reduced lunch, and English learners is much lower at 30% / 32% / 32% respectively.

Consider

Teacher quality is the most important factor influencing student achievement. If Distinguished teachers are disproportionately concentrated in certain schools and disproportionately serve certain student groups, what implications might teacher placement have on student outcomes?

SPS has fewer coaches than national peers, resulting in coaches supporting more teachers, on average



Source: SPS FY25 Budgeted Expenditures, ERS Analysis

Context

Research is clear that well-executed coaching can drive instructional improvement, teacher retention, and student achievement. Research based evidence and observed best practice recommends15-22 teachers per coach. This chart shows, on average, how many teachers there are for each instructional coach in the district. We know in practice that based on how coaches are assigned, their actual caseloads may be much lower. But, this ratio helps understand the total investment in instructional coaches.

Explore

Overall, Instructional Coaches in Seattle have to support larger numbers of teachers on average (41.3) than national peers (27.5). This ratio is significantly higher than the best practice recommendation.

We know that instructional coaches are one position that provides instructional support to staff – upcoming slides will detail others.

However, Instructional Coach staffing at Priority Schools is much lower and more in line with best practice

Bright Spot Example – Coaching in Priority Schools

- Increased coaching staffing for priority schools, including:
  - 11 coaching FTE supporting the 13 Early Literacy Schools
  - 4.1 coaching FTE the 6 SEMI schools
- These coaches support teachers in using the curriculum, facilitating Professional Learning Communities (PLC's), and leading professional development sessions.
- Coaching focus aligned with overall district priorities (elementary literacy and middle school math)

Context

We know that Seattle has a targeted strategy around instructional coaches. For example, there are early literacy coaches that serve the 13 identified priority schools and math coaches that serve at a subset of secondary schools.

Explore

While the overall ratio of teachers to instructional coaches is above best practice, we see that teachers in Priority Schools have greater access to instructional coaches as evidenced by their smaller coach to teacher ratio.

Consider

What can be learned from the piloting of instructional coaching positions at these schools? Is this a potential practice to scale across the district?

Source: SPS FY25 Budgeted Expenditures, ERS Analysis

Outside of formal coaching positions, several positions across multiple departments provide instructional support

Other Instructional Leadership Positions		
School-Based Positions		
Position	Focus	FTE
School-Based Teacher/Educator Leadership Cadre (TLC)	Leading professional development and study groups; each school allocated two positions	*stipend role
Content Demonstration Teacher	Demonstrating exemplary practice for teachers	*stipend role
Academic Coaches	Facilitating PLC's, professional development	11.0 FTE
Centrally Managed Positions		
Position	Focus	FTE
Curriculum Specialists	Development and ongoing support Of SPS's standards-based learning system	15.0 FTE
Instructional Services Academic Coaches	Supporting teachers and students in variety of academic areas (Bilingual Ed, Music, Student Support, etc.)	25.6 FTE
PGES Consulting Teachers	Coaching new-to-profession teachers and those requiring continued support	17.0 FTE
SPED Program Specialists	Supporting students and schools in the implementation of IEPs	10.0 FTE

Source: SPS FY25 Budgeted Expenditures, ERS Analysis

Context

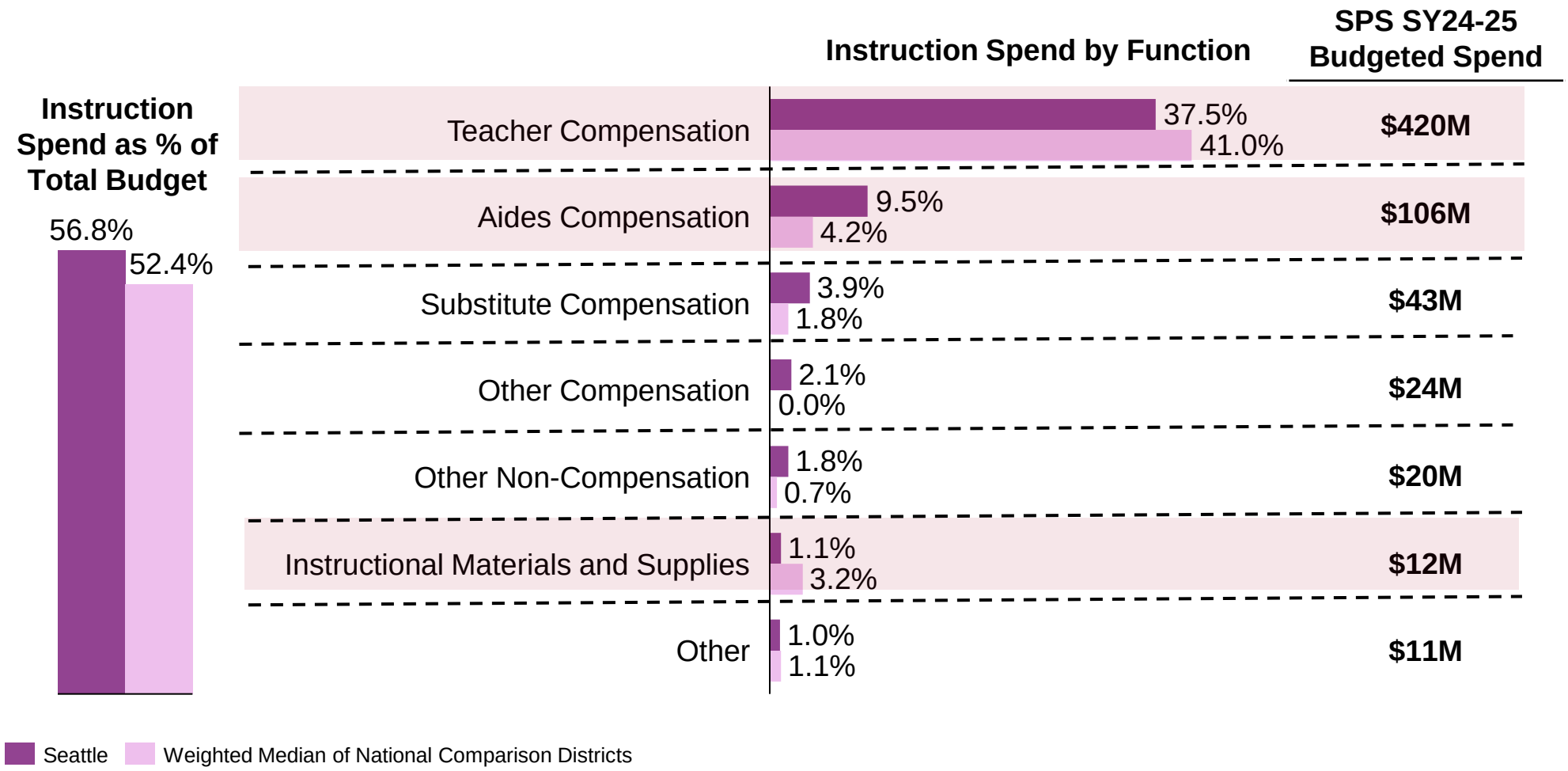
Instructional coaches are just one of many types of different positions that can support instructional improvement in schools. Seattle has a variety of other instructional leadership positions – both at schools and in the central office, that focus on instructional improvement. The purpose of this table is to outline examples of other positions, though not intended to be exhaustive, as we know positions like principals and assistant principals also provide instructional support to teachers.

Consider

Sufficiency: Do these positions (and any others) altogether provide teachers with the instructional support and expertise they need to be successful?

Alignment: How are all these different instructional leadership positions aligned and working together on district instructional priorities?

SPS budgets a higher percentage of its budget on instruction than peer districts, mostly driven by higher spend in aides



Note: Other represents spend on Extended Time & Tutoring and Library & Media Functions
Source: SPS FY25 Budgeted Expenditures; SPS Payroll; SPS Employee Level Budgeted Salary Payments; SPS Vacancy Report; ERS Comparative Database

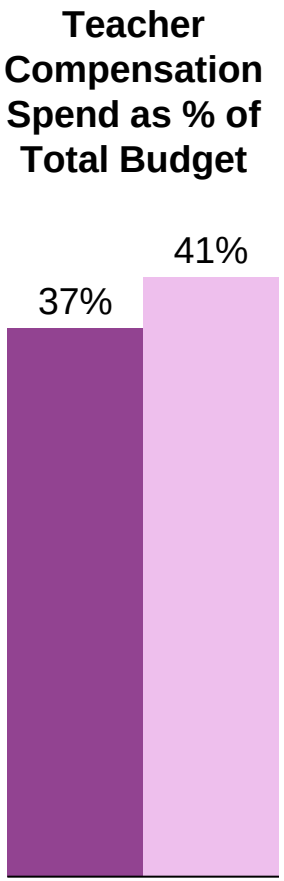
Context

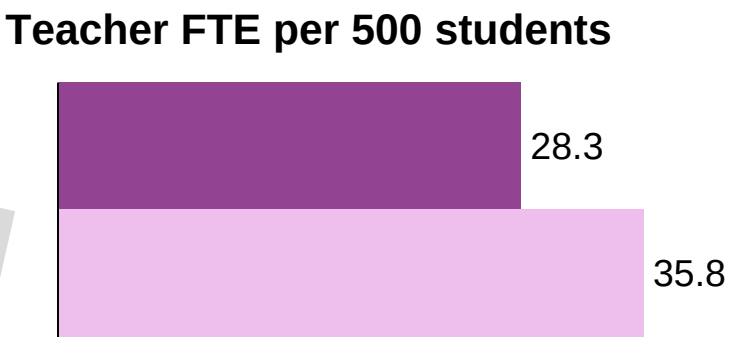
Teachers account for the largest share of instructional spending, followed by instructional aides (IAs) and substitutes. While instructional materials and supplies represent a smaller portion of the budget, they are essential for equipping teachers with the tools they need to deliver effective instruction. Without access to high-quality materials, teachers are often forced to create their own content—placing an added burden on their time and capacity.

Explore

Compared to national comparison districts, Seattle spends a lower portion of their total budget on teacher compensation but a higher portion on instructional aides compensation. In the next few slides we will dig more deeply into these two pieces. As for instructional materials and supplies, Seattle spends about 1% of its total budget – which is only a third of how much other districts devote to this spend area in their total budget (3%), which will be discussed in upcoming slides.

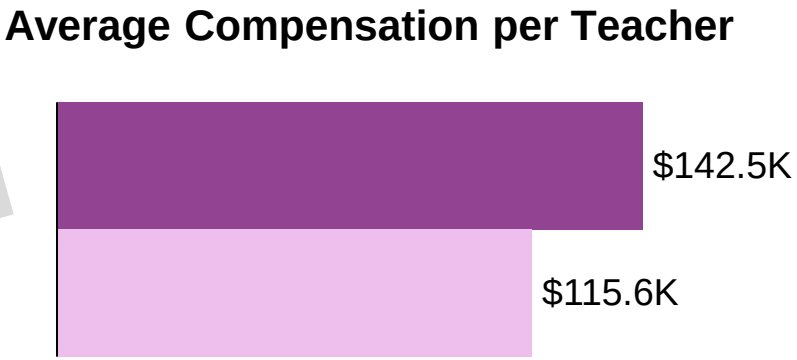
SPS has fewer teachers than national comparison districts but higher average compensation





What factors influence this?

- Class size and staffing policies
- Teacher utilization policies



What factors influence this?

- Negotiated salary scales
- Teacher experience
- Other factors like benefits rates

Seattle | Weighted Median of National Comparison Districts

Source: SPS FY25 Budgeted Expenditures; SPS Payroll; SPS Employee Level Budgeted Salary Payments; SPS Vacancy Report; ERS Comparative Database

Context

Two factors drive spend on teacher compensation: how much teachers get paid, and how many teachers Seattle employs. These two factors are influenced by various district and state policies (class sizes, negotiated salaries, etc.)

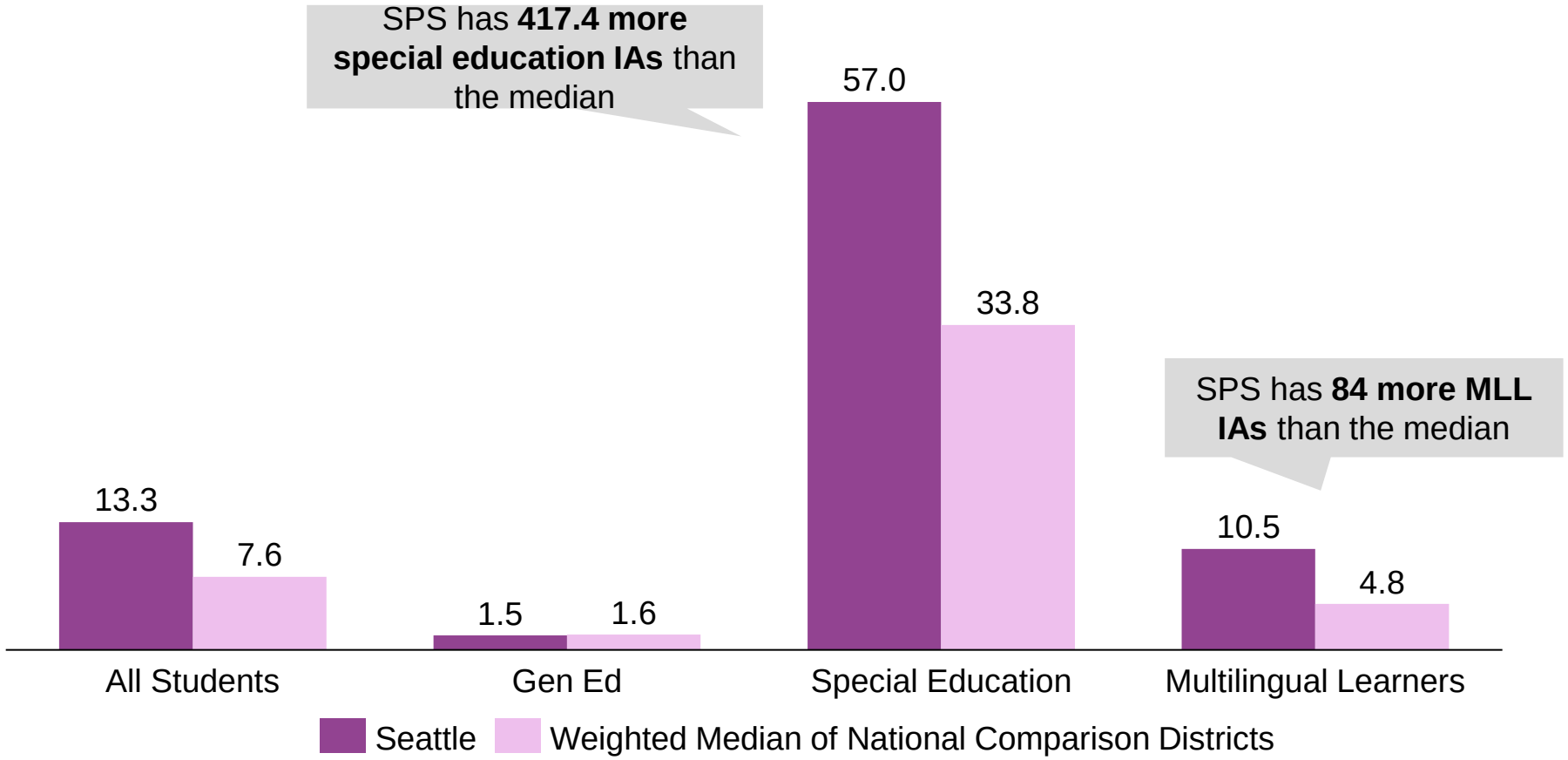
Explore

Even after accounting for enrollment differences, Seattle employs fewer teachers than comparable districts—about 20% fewer overall. However, Seattle teacher compensation is approximately $27,000 more per year, on average, even after adjusting for local labor costs. Despite the higher salaries, the smaller teacher workforce results in Seattle spending a lower share of its total budget on teacher compensation compared to national peer districts.

High instructional aide (IA) staffing is a significant driver of relative instruction spend variation, especially for Special Education IAs

Instructional Aide FTE / 500 Students by Student Type

SY24-25



Note: Includes all students with primary enrollment to an SPS school; includes FTE associated with vacant; Gen Ed staffing levels per 500 students includes all students, including those in self contained classes, due to limited data availability for comparison districts
Source: SPS FY25 Budgeted Expenditures; ERS Comparative Database

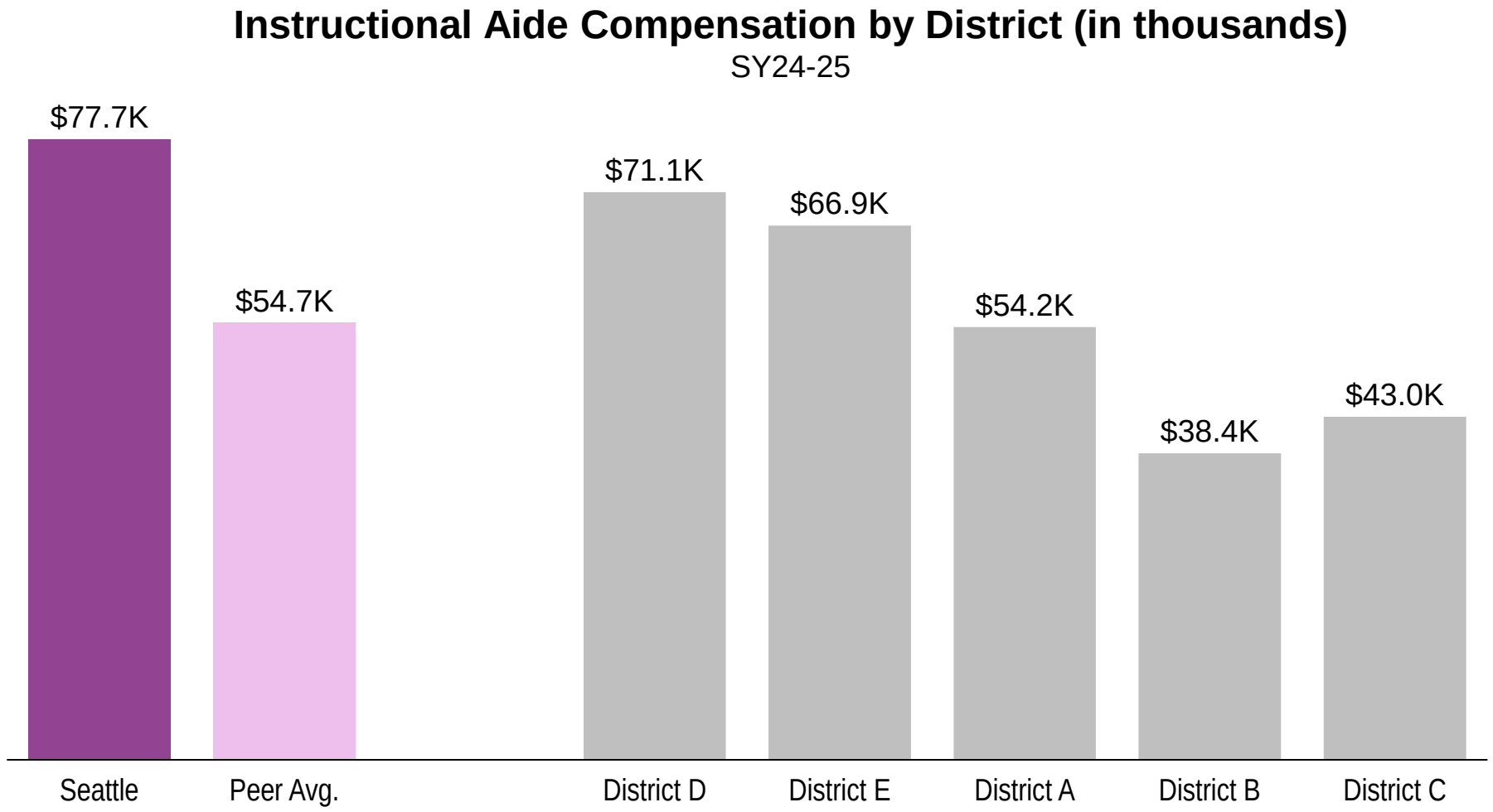
Context

The state of Washington does *not* provide funding for bilingual instructional aides through its prototypical model, though any students served primarily through these aides still benefits the district financially due to lower cost per staff member. In total, Seattle spends about $10M on bilingual aides. These choices, though costly, can improve the experiences of students if utilized well.

Explore

Seattle employs more bilingual and special education instructional aides than other large urban districts—about twice as many, even after adjusting for differences in the number of English learners and students with disabilities. In contrast, general education instructional aide staffing is nearly identical between Seattle and its national peers. We will explore special education staffing in more detail later in this presentation,

Higher instructional aide compensation is also a driver of higher spend relative to peer districts



Source: SPS FY25 Budgeted Expenditures; ERS Comparative Database

Context

In addition to the *number* of instructional A, overall spend on these staff members is also driven by their *average compensation.* This slide shows how compensation levels for instructional assistants compares to other national districts.

Explore

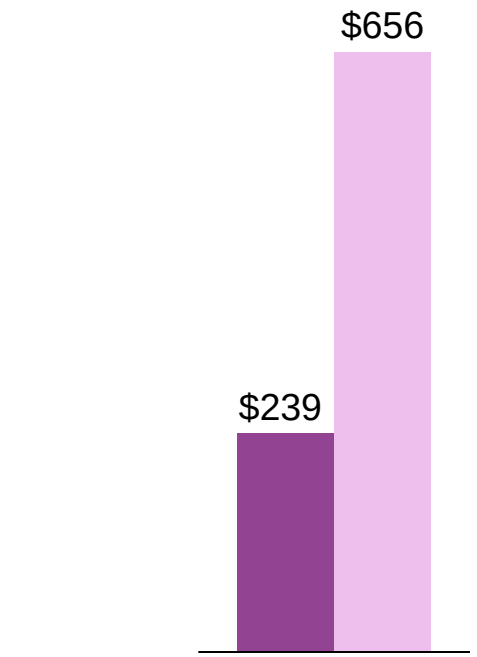
Seattle spends approximately $20k more per instructional aide than national peers, even after adjusting for local labor costs. While compensation ranges significantly in the districts examined (gray bars), Seattle still sits higher than all comparisons.

Consider

So far, the data shows how position costs in Seattle are generally higher than national peers but consistent with districts locally. This speaks to the unique context of Seattle and the resource challenges this can create.

SPS spends less per pupil on instructional materials and supplies than peer districts

Per Pupil Spend on Instructional Materials & Supplies



What does research say?

Why it Matters: When aligned with engaging instruction, curriculum and materials that are comprehensive and aligned to high standards can improve learning, especially for students with less effective teachers.

What to Look For: Schools across the district have access to high-quality curricula, instructional strategies, and materials that are aligned with grade-level, subject specific content standards and reflect students' racial and cultural backgrounds.

Note: Seattle used roughly $5M in Tech Levy funds during SY24-25 on instructional resources, or about $98 per pupil that are *not* included in the $239 per pupil figure above to ensure comparability with national data. Per pupil spending in SY24-25 would still fall below national comparisons if it were included.
Source: SPS FY25 Budgeted Expenditures; ERS Comparative Database

Context

High-quality instructional materials are considered a foundational block to effective school design and research speaks to how high-quality instructional materials can improve student outcomes. This slide shows how Seattle's investment in instructional materials and supplies compares to national peers.

Consider

Does this level of investment ensure that teachers across all grade levels and subject areas have access to high-quality instructional materials?

SPS has planned adoption schedules to update and provide high quality instructional materials in the next five years

Adoption Schedule Excerpt, by Grade Level and Subject Area					
	Subject Area				
Grade Level	English / Language Arts (ELA)	Math		Science	Social Studies
Elementary	**2017; SY26-27 Planned**	**2022**		**2019**	**1998; SY27-28 Planned**
Middle	**2024**	**2017**		**2019**	**2015**
High	**2010; SY27-28 Planned**	**2024; Algebra, Algebra II, Geometry**	**SY27-28 Planned (Precalc & Calc)**	**2020**	**2013; SY28-29 Planned**

Time Since Last Adoption
More than 8 Years
Between 5 and 7
Less than 5

Source: Taken from SPS Proposed Prioritization for Curriculum Material Adoption Purchase and Implementation, 2018-24

Explore

This chart shows the year of release for curriculum for each subject area and school level for core curriculum. The color coding allows us to see how long ago the latest curriculum adoption occurred. Curricula for elementary ELA and social studies, and high school ELA and math have not been updated in more than 8 years, while subjects like elementary math, middle school ELA, and high school math and science have been updated less than 5 years ago.

Consider

Is the planned adoption schedule sufficient in ensuring that all students and staff have access to high-quality instructional materials?

Overall, there are limited levers for SPS to consider around its instruction spending

Levers	Opportunity	Details
Across-the-board class size increases	**Low**	Current staffing ratios are at or near CBA and state policy. For example, secondary class sizes have staffing ratios of 31 while CBA policy is 32.
Consolidate secondary course offerings, or offer them virtually	**Low**	About 10% of electives in SPS high schools have class sizes fewer than 20 students.
Utilization adjustments	**Low**	Current utilization rates are at or near CBA policy.
Adjust special education IA staffing ratios in Extended Resource Pathway	**Medium**	Instructional Asst in the Extended Resource Pathway account for 45% of all IAS while this pathway serves 19% of non-PK students in special education pathways.
Substitute spending	***Not Explored in Analysis***	
Retirement incentives		
Benefit adjustments		

Source: SPS Collective Bargaining Agreement (SY24-25); SPS Purple Book (SY24-25); SPS Classroom Rosters (SY24-25); SPS FY25 Budgeted Expenditures

Context

Seattle's spending in instruction is largely driven by spending on instructional staff. We examined the most common levers for cost reduction and found limited opportunity for cost reduction. Pursuing these options could results in negative impacts on the student and staff experience.

Explore

We investigated other areas of potential savings for instructional spend and found limited opportunity for reductions. Seattle keeps staffing ratios very close to the maximums allowed in the collective bargaining agreement for teachers. Similarly, electives in Seattle almost always have high student enrollment. Teacher utilization (i.e., the amount of time they spend doing direct instruction per day) is at or close to the rates in the collective bargaining agreement.

Consider

Though not examined in this report, might substitute pay, retirement incentives, or leaves offer any potential opportunities to consider?

Teachers & Instructional Support: Closing

Go Back to Table of Contents

Insight Summary

- The schools with highest rates of poverty have the lowest proportion of Distinguished teachers and the greatest proportion of teachers with fewer than three years of experience.
- Certain student groups disproportionately attend schools with either a) higher proportions of teachers with fewer than three years of experience or b) fewer teachers rated as distinguished, which suggests a district need for improvement regarding the district guardrail on access to high quality teaching.
- SPS staffs fewer Instructional Coaches than other large, urban school districts.
- Outside of formal coaching positions, several positions across multiple departments provide instructional support but alignment and collaboration across these positions can prove challenging.
- SPS spends less per pupil on instructional materials and supplies (like curriculum) than national peer districts.

Potential Action Implications

- Because total district spending is heavily guided by district spend on instruction, districts typically examine this area in depth when trying to identify areas for reduction. However, opportunities to save or streamline resources in instruction are likely limited in Seattle.
- Seattle keeps staffing ratios very close to the maximums allowed in the collective bargaining agreement for teachers. Similarly, electives in Seattle almost always have high student enrollment. Teacher utilization (the amount of time they spend doing direct instruction per day) is at or close to the rates in the collective bargaining agreement.
- The analysis did not look at spending on substitutes, retirement incentives, or benefit adjustments, which are levers that other districts have considered for reduction opportunities given fiscal constraints.
- Research speaks to the value of high-quality curricula and instructional materials, and Seattle should continue to review curricula and determine whether they meet high-quality standards and invest to refresh those that do not.

Analytic Insights

Course Access & Opportunity

Course Access & Opportunity: At a Glance

Why it Matters	• Providing all students with access to a full range of academic coursework—including advanced and specialized classes—is essential to ensure they are academically prepared for college and career. • Course experiences and opportunities help students build the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in postsecondary education. When key courses are not available, students may face gaps in preparation that can hinder their progress and limit future opportunities. Expanding access is critical to promoting equity and readiness for all students.
How it's Assessed	• Student enrollment in advanced courses (Advanced Placement or AP, International Baccalaureate or IB, and Dual Enrollment) by proficiency level and demographic group • Advanced course enrollment within and across schools for proficient students • Student enrollment in Math sequences by demographic group
Report Insights	• Overall, Black and Hispanic students enroll in advanced courses less often than other racial student groups. • Low Black and Hispanic enrollment happens in both AP and IB. Why? o *Overall Proficiency:* After controlling for proficiency, gaps in enrollment for Hispanic students narrow significantly but remain or expand for Black students (for both AP and IB). o *Course Offerings and Enrollment in High:* The remaining gap for Black students is evenly driven by what school they go to and what courses they take in their school (for both AP and IB). o *Course Offerings and Enrollment before High:* Enrollment disparities are likely present before students reach AP and IB courses. In one example (AP Calculus), disparities begin in 8th grade.

Analysis in this section directly connects to the first District Guardrail

0025 Guardrails for the District

District Guardrails

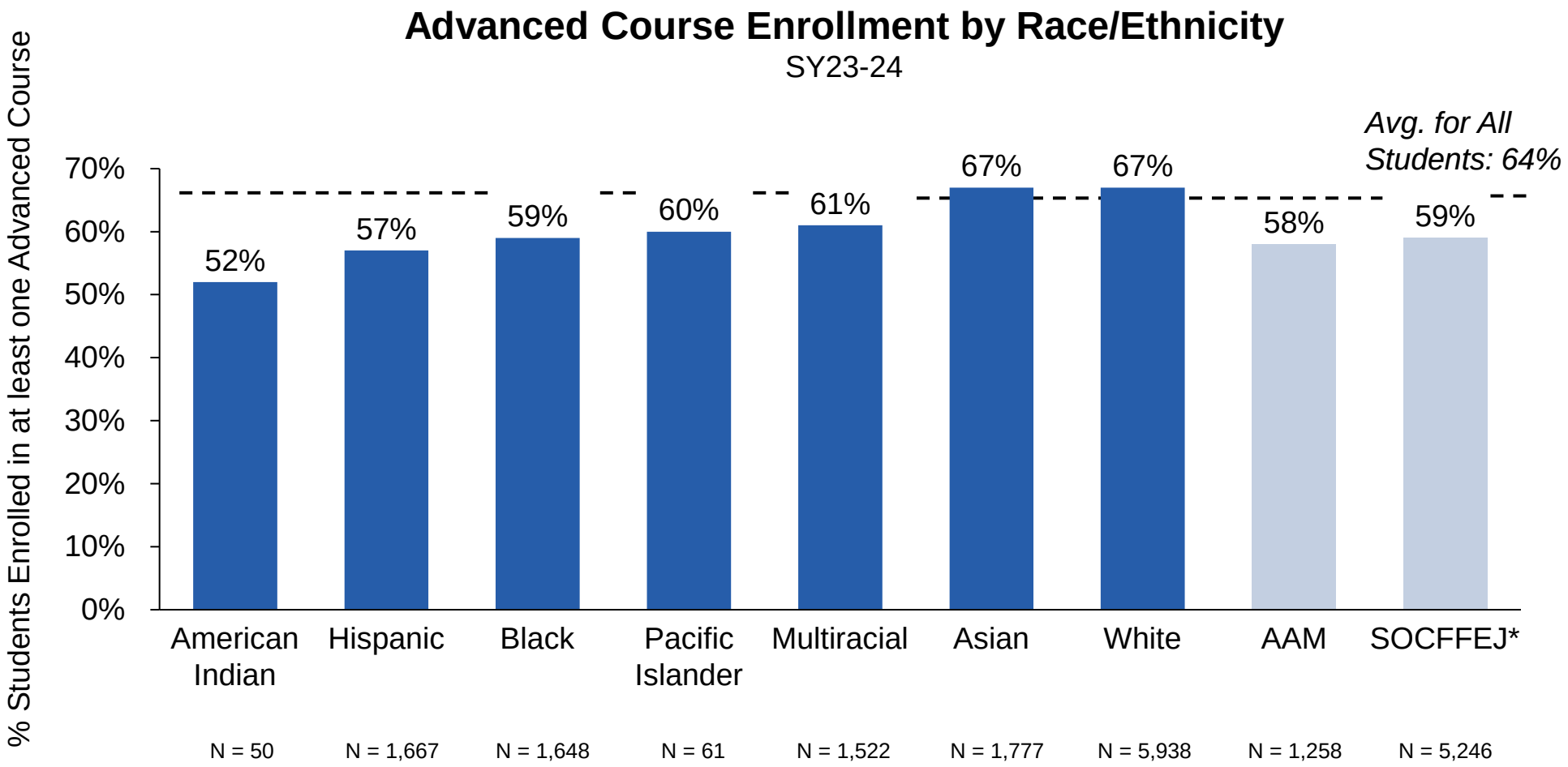
The Board adopts these District Guardrails consistent with Board Policy No. 1010, Oversight and Progress Monitoring:

1. The Superintendent will not allow a student's school assignment, family income, race or ethnicity, need, or identity to determine access to high standards, rigorous programming, high-quality teaching, and supports.
2. The Superintendent will not allow the existence of any learning environments that do not promote physical and emotional safety.
3. The Superintendent will not allow adult behaviors in school buildings and classrooms that are misaligned with the anti-racist values of Seattle Public Schools, including the use of curricula, materials, and practices that are inconsistent with those values.
4. The Superintendent will not make major decisions or bring major recommendations to the Board without first implementing an engagement strategy that includes students, parents, teachers, and community members.
5. The Superintendent will not allow people, time, money, and other resources to be allocated in a manner inconsistent with student need.

> The Superintendent will not allow a student's school assignment, family income, race, need, or identity to determine **access to high standards, rigorous programming**, high-quality teaching, and supports.

Source: Seattle Public Schools

American Indian, Hispanic, and Black students enroll in advanced courses less often than peers across high schools



Note: ~1800 students excluded due to not being in SPS testing pool; non-comprehensive high schools excluded due to program focus; SOCFFEJ stands for students of color furthest from economic justice, a term developed by Seattle in collaboration with the community

Source: ERS Snapshot Analysis of SY23-24 Transcript Data

Context

Consistent with the SPS guardrail this analysis looks at how advanced course enrollment (Advanced Placement or AP, International Baccalaureate or IB, dual enrollment) differs by race/ethnicity and specific student groups.

Explore

The graph shows the percentage of high school students in a given demographic group that enrolled in at least one advanced course in school year 2023-24. 67% of White and Asian students enrolled in at least one advanced course, whereas for American Indian, Hispanic, and Black students those rates are lower at 52% / 57% / 59% respectively.

Consider

What might be contributing to difference in enrollment patterns across these student groups?

Ongoing work is driving improvement, with room for continued growth

- **African American male students:** Four-year graduation with advanced coursework rose from **53.4% (2019)** to **74.1% (2024)**, exceeding SPS's strategic plan target.
- **Students of Color Furthest from Educational Justice:** Increased from **60.8% (2019)** to **73.9% (2024)** in four-year graduation with advanced coursework.
- **Math access and success:** Students passing at least one advanced Math course grew significantly across all groups between 2019 and 2024.
  - African American males: **18.3%** → **53.5%**
  - Students with IEPs: **5.5%** → **39.5%**

Source: Seattle Public Schools Strategic Plan: Seattle Excellence 2019-2024 Progress Monitoring Data

Context

Seattle s been focused on increasing access to advanced coursework for multiple years. The prior slide shows a snapshot of data about enrollment in advanced courses for SY23-24.

The data on this slide shows how progress on students graduating with advanced coursework has increased since 2019.

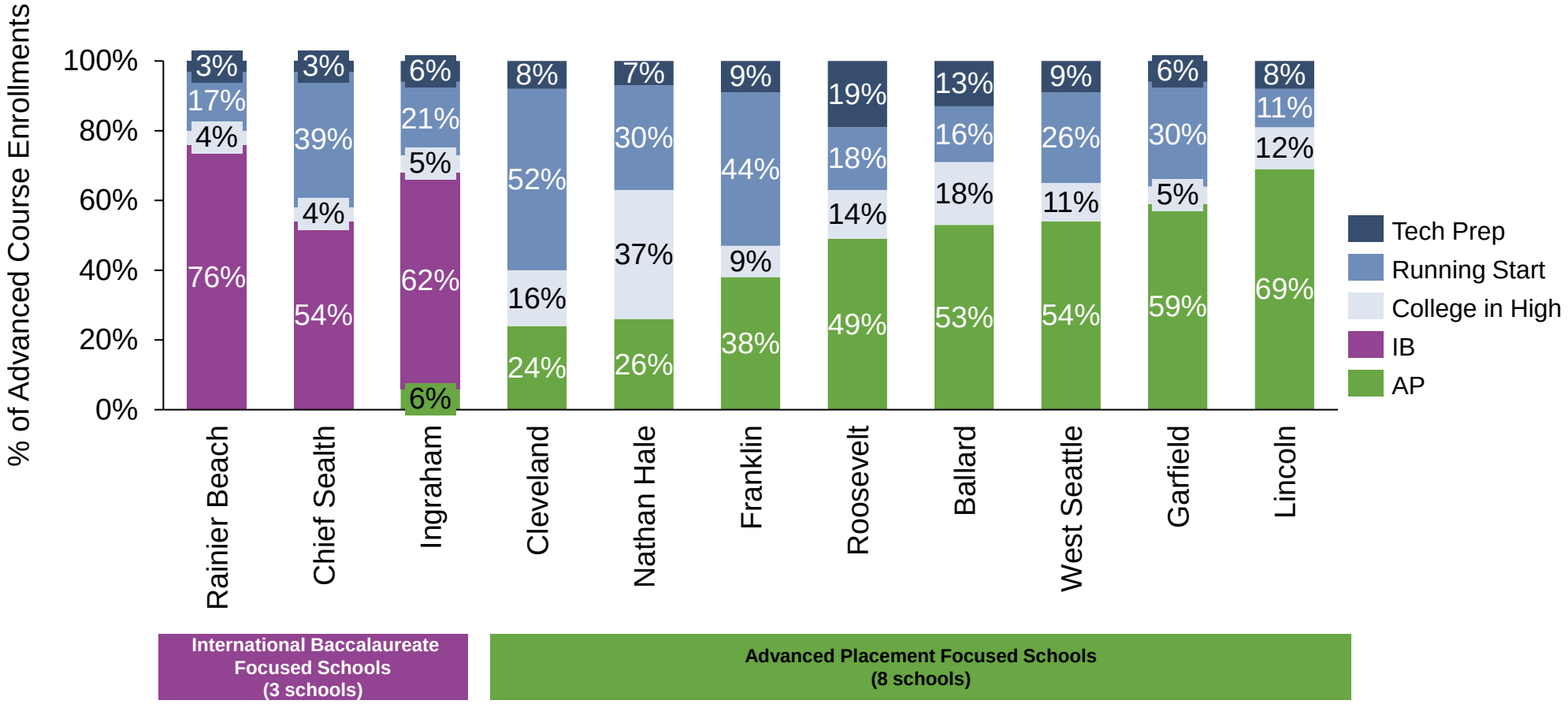
What factors can influence enrollment patterns?

1	**Student Incoming Performance**	Incoming performance impacts which courses students may enroll in.
2	**Course Availability Across Schools** ***(Courses not offered at certain schools)***	Course availability at certain schools can limit or enable opportunities to take certain courses. This could be related to a school's programmatic focus, overall size, or other factors.
3	**Course Enrollment Within Schools** ***(Courses offered, but certain students not enrolled)***	Even for students with the same incoming performance, course enrollment may vary based on assignment practices within schools – such as advising practices and student data considered. This could also be driven by differences in student interest or previous credits.

High schools generally offer either AP or IB, whereas dual enrollment opportunities are available universally

Percent of Advanced Course Enrollments by Course Type and High School

SY23-24



Note: ~1800 students excluded due to not being in SPS testing pool; non-comprehensive high schools excluded due to program focus

Source: ERS Snapshot Analysis of SY23-24 Transcript Data

Context

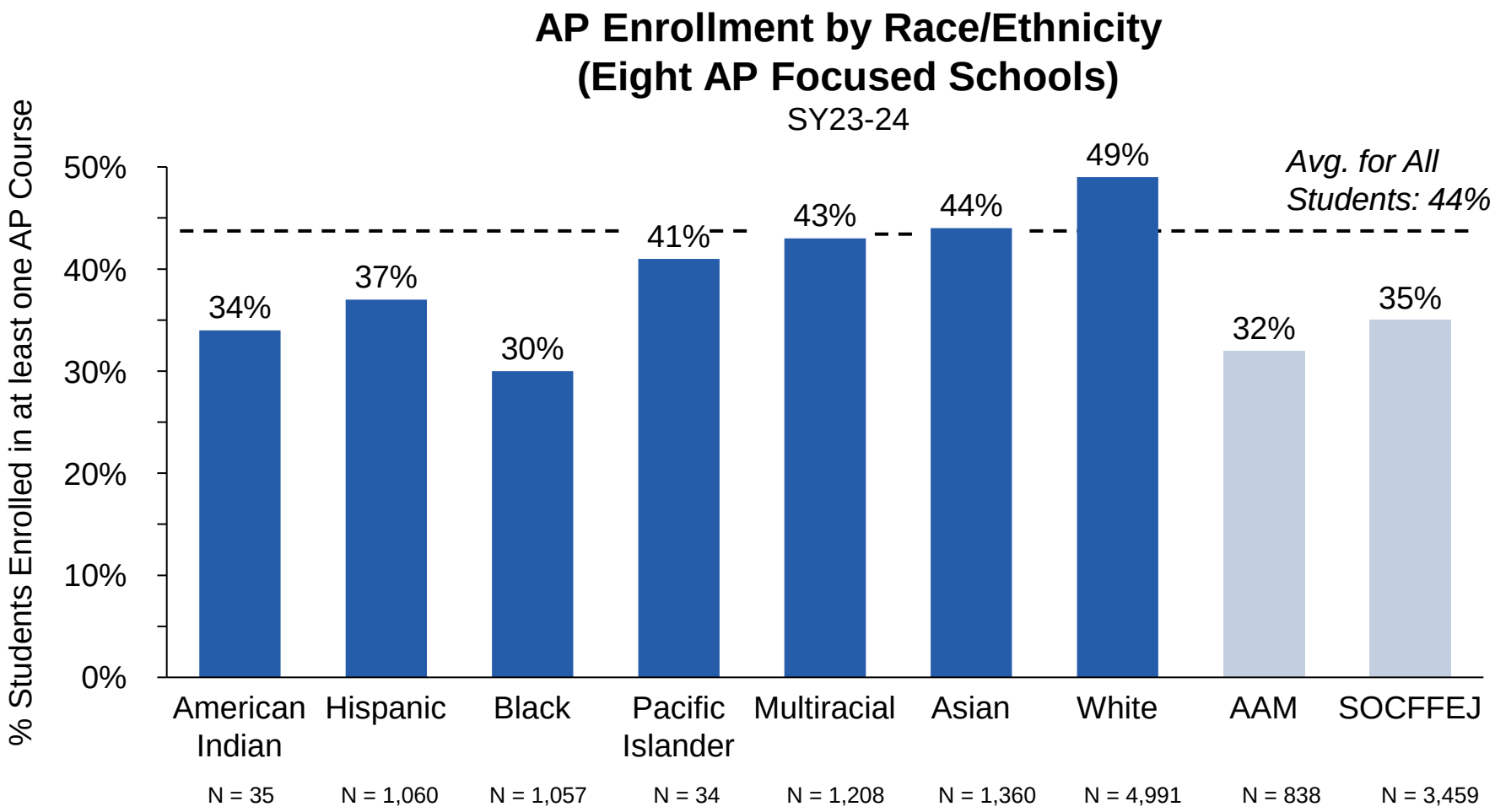
The analysis first sought to understand how course offerings may differ at comprehensive schools in Seattle because differences in school-level offerings could skew aggregated metrics and district wide-averages.

Explore

All schools offer dual enrollment courses, though the frequency in these courses does vary across schools. For example, 76% of advanced courses in Cleveland High are dual enrollment, whereas in Rainier Beach only 24% are. Within dual enrollment, Running Start seems to have the largest representation of courses across schools. Notice also that all schools have either AP or IB offerings, which suggests that all high schools in Seattle offer an appropriate breadth of advanced courses for students.

Because of the differences in International Baccalaureate (IB) /Advanced Placement (AP) offerings across schools, the next set of slides will explore these two types of courses separately.

American Indian, Hispanic, and Black students enroll in AP courses less often than other racial groups



Note: ~1800 students excluded due to not being in SPS testing pool; non-comprehensive high schools excluded due to program focus
Source: ERS Snapshot Analysis of SY23-24 Transcript Data

Context

Earlier, the analysis showed the percentage of students within each demographic group that enroll in at least one advanced course. Here, we have narrowed to only eight schools that primarily offer AP courses. Subsequent slides will look at rates of enrollment in IB and dual enrollment courses, respectively.

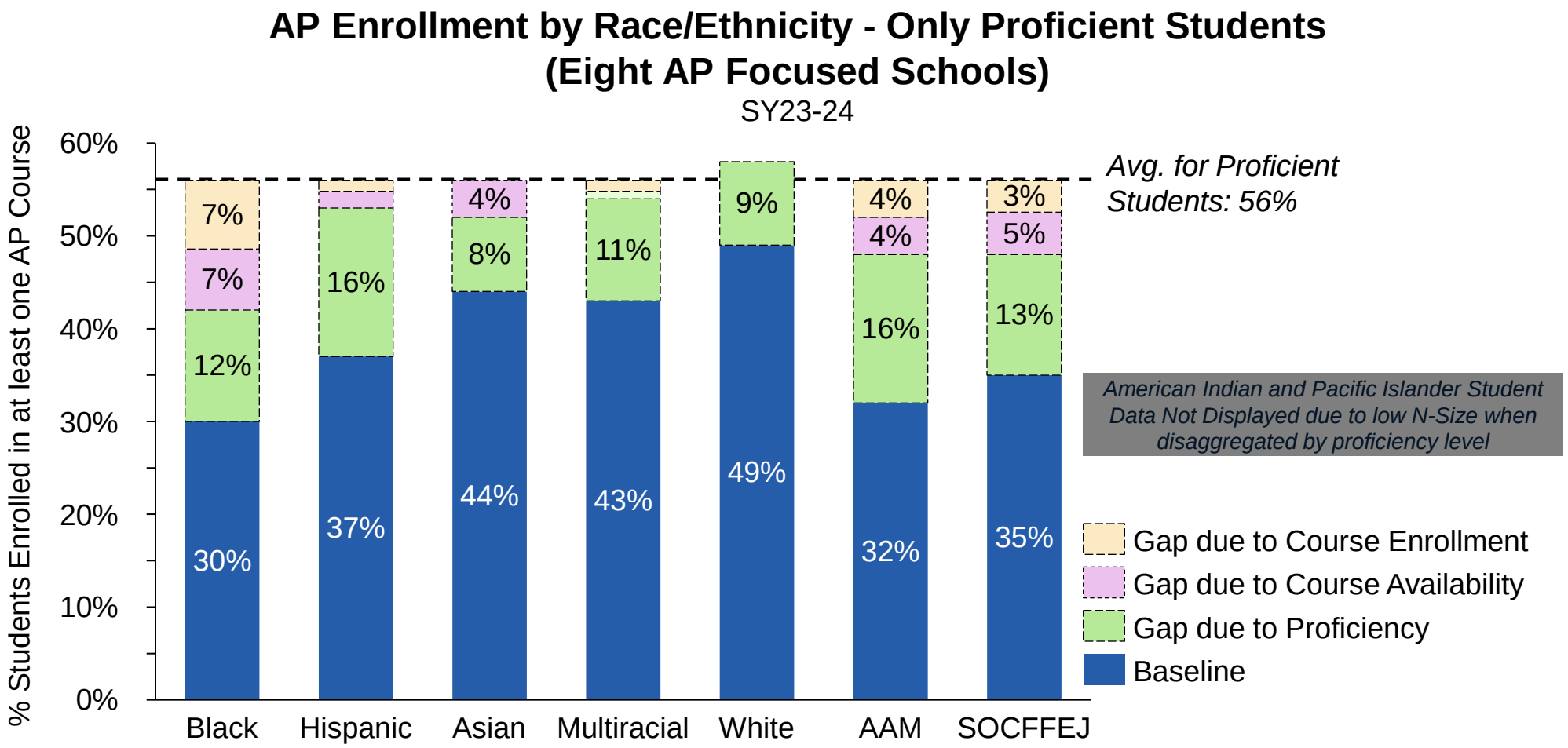
Explore

Black students have the lowest rate of AP enrollment of all racial groups (30%). Contrast this with White students, of whom 49% enroll in AP courses – such that White students are 1.6 times as likely as Black students to enroll in AP courses.

Consider

This data raises important equity implications since enrollment rates are *not* consistent across race/ethnicity and other student groups in Seattle. The following slides will begin to explain what may contribute to these disparities.

Proficiency largely closes the gap in AP enrollment for Hispanic students but not for Black students



Note: American Indian and Pacific Islander groups excluded from graph due to low n-size when disaggregated by proficiency level; ~1800 students excluded due to not being in SPS testing pool; non-comprehensive high schools excluded due to program focus. Proficiency defined as performance on most recent subject-related end of course exams.

Source: ERS Snapshot Analysis of SY23-24 Transcript Data

Context

Recall the three factors explain why students do not enroll in advanced coursework: 1) lack of incoming proficiency 2) lack of course availability in the school they attend and 3) simply not enrolling in an advanced course even if the student is proficient and the course is offered.

Explore

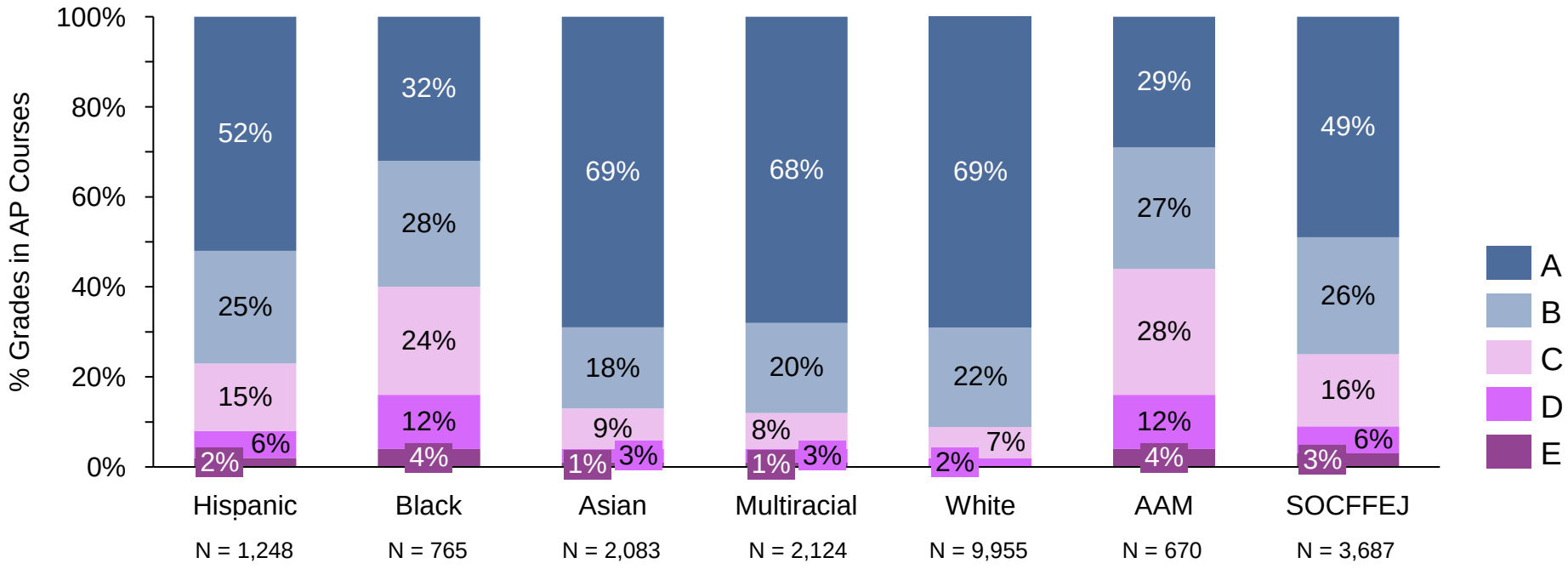
Currently 37% of Hispanic students enroll in at least one AP course (blue bar), which is 19 percentage points away from the average 56% for *all* proficient students. 16 of these 19 percentage points come from proficiency, so if *all* Hispanic students were proficient the enrollment in AP courses would largely disappear. In contrast, Black students are 26 percentage points below the average for all proficient students. However, improving proficiency among Black students would only account for 12 of those 26 points. This indicates that, beyond academic readiness, factors such as limited course offerings and enrollment patterns also significantly contribute to lower AP participation for Black students.

Black and Hispanic students perform worse in AP courses than other racial groups, earning fewer A grades and more C/D/E grades

AP Course Grades by Race/Ethnicity (Eight AP High Schools)

SY23-24

American Indian and Pacific Islander Student Data Not Displayed due to low N-Size when disaggregated by course grades



Note: American Indian and Pacific Islander groups excluded from graph due to low n-size when disaggregated by course grades; ~1800 students excluded due to not being in SPS testing pool; non-comprehensive high schools excluded due to program focus

Source: ERS Snapshot Analysis of SY23-24 Transcript Data

Context

Students having access to advanced courses is necessary but not sufficient – equally important is for students to be able to succeed when they do take advanced courses. When students consistently succeed in advanced courses, students are likely ready for that level of rigor at the start of the course and receive appropriate supports during the course itself. Any strategies focused on increasing enrollment and access to advanced coursework must also be paired with an emphasis on success in those courses. The next set of analysis looks at two measures of course success: course grades and exam scores.

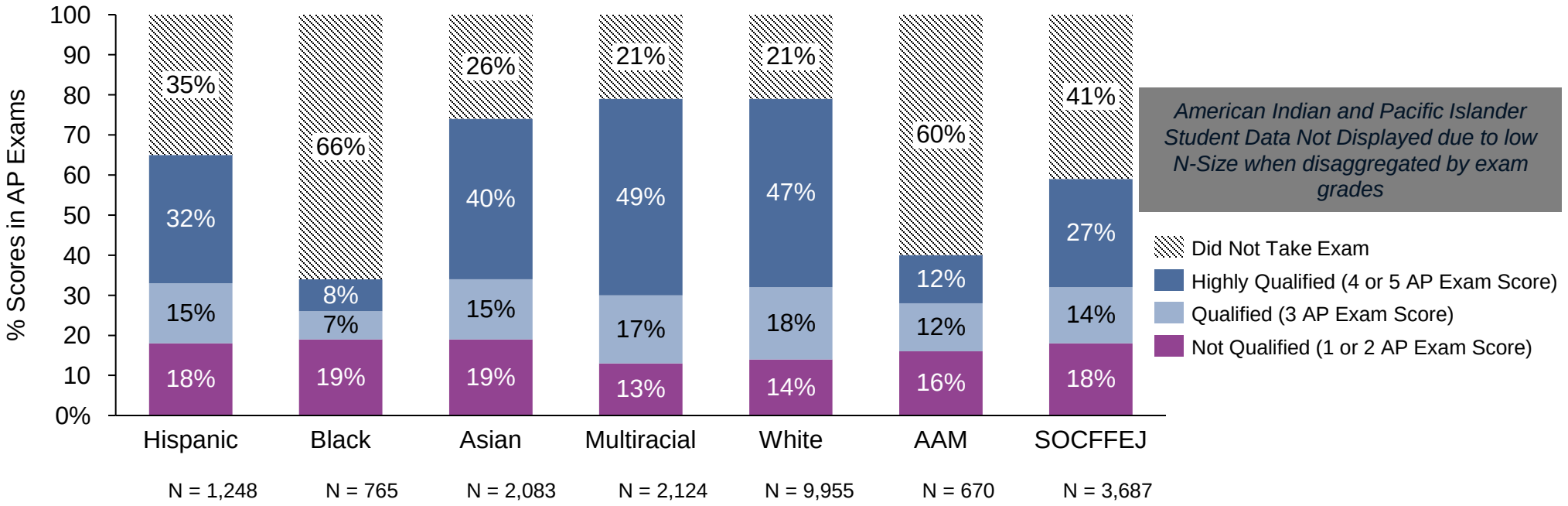
Explore

The majority of Black students enrolled in AP courses earn an A or a B in these courses, but a concerningly high amount (40%) earn no better than a C. For Hispanic students, 77% earn an A or B in AP courses – though this is still lower than Asian, Multiracial, and White, all of which earn As and Bs around 90% of the time.

Black students are much less likely than other students to take the AP exam and much less likely to pass the exam if they take it

AP Exam Scores by Race/Ethnicity (Eight AP High Schools)

SY23-24



Note: American Indian and Pacific Islander groups excluded from graph due to low n-size when disaggregated by exam grades; Highly Qualified defined as a 4 or 5 in AP exam, Qualified defined as 3, Not Qualified defined as 2 or 1; ~1800 students excluded due to not being in SPS testing pool; non-comprehensive high schools excluded due to program focus

Source: ERS Snapshot Analysis of SY23-24 Transcript Data

Context

In addition to course grades, student scores in the end-of-course AP exams helps to assess if a student truly mastered the academic content at hand.

Explore

This slide shows the distribution of end-of-course AP exam scores. The gray bar represents students that took an AP course but did not take the related AP exam. In cases where a Black student enrolls in an AP course, two thirds of the time the student skips the exam. For the remaining third of Black student enrollments in AP courses, roughly half of cases do see the student passing the AP exam (score of 3, 4, or 5) but the other half of cases see the student *not* passing the exam (score of 1 or 2s).

Consider

What might be contributing to different patterns of exam taking by the various student groups in SPS? What types of supports/interventions could lead to greater student success?

AP Calculus Deep Dive: Most students enroll in courses aligned with the typical course progression in Math

Percent of Students in Enrolled in Each Math Course by Grade Level

SY23-24

Middle School			High School			
6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th
Math 6 86%	Math 7 42%	Math 8 41%	Algebra 1 48%	Geometry 45%	*Other* 37%	*Other* 31%
Math 7, 8 or 7/8 13%	Math 7/8 36%	Algebra 1 45%	Geometry 34%	Algebra 2 25%	Algebra 2 30%	Pre-Calc 11%
	Math 8 12%	*Other* 13%	Algebra 2 11%	Pre-Calc 13%	Pre-Calc 21%	AP Statistics 20%
	Algebra 1 6%		*Other* 6%	*Other* 16%	AP Calculus 12%	AP Calculus 13%
	Other 4%					Business Math 13%
						RS Math 12%

Courses aligned with an accelerated math progression are noted in **dark red text.**

Note: Non-comprehensive middle schools and high schools excluded due to program focus
Source: ERS Snapshot Analysis of SY23-24 Transcript Data

Context

The earlier slides focused on access to advanced coursework at the high school level. But access to those courses is a product of course taking far earlier. For example, to access AP Calculus in 12th grade, students need to be taking specific courses in middle school.

Explore

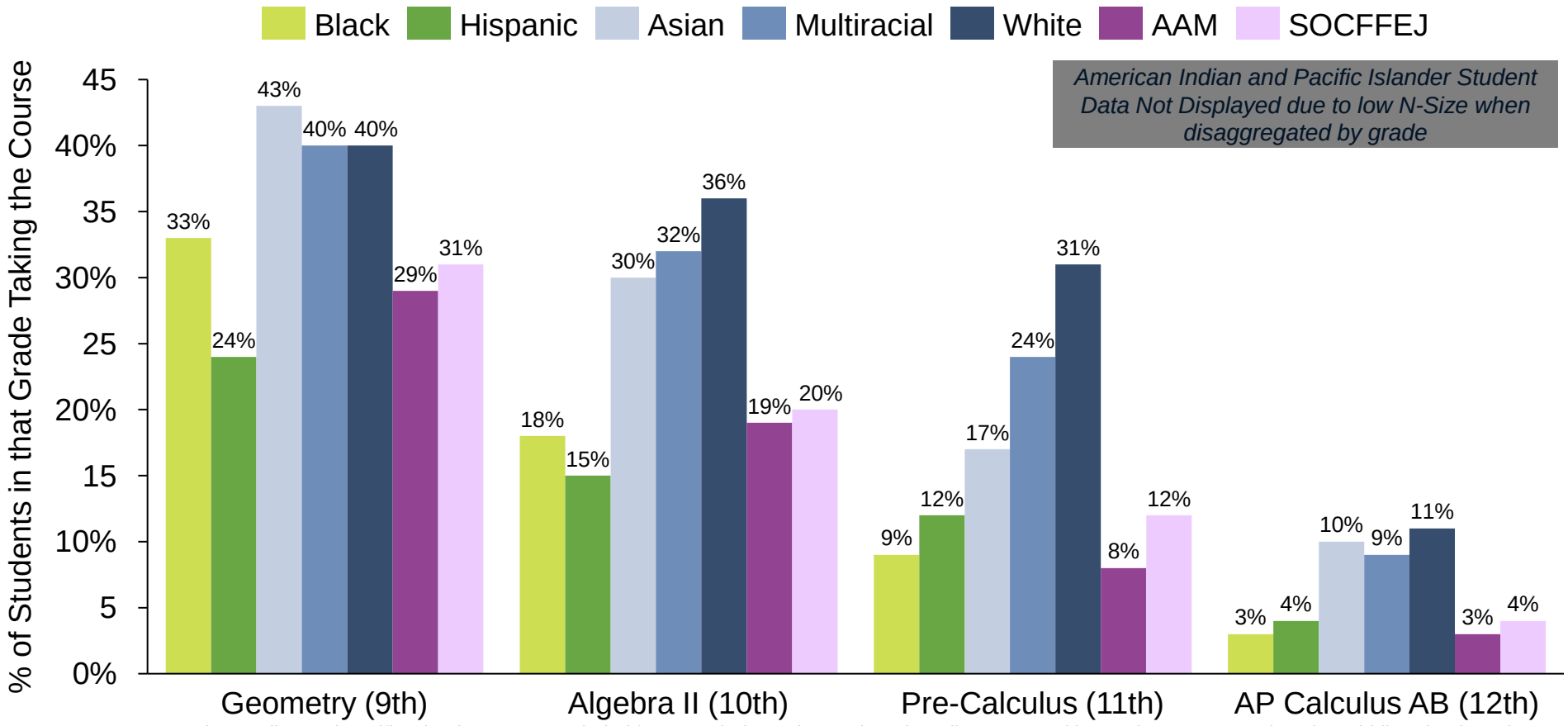
In Math, the typical high school course progression is to enroll in Algebra I in 9th grade, Geometry in 10th grade, Algebra II or another grade-level math course in 11th Grade, and finally Pre-Calculus or another grade-level math course in 12th grade.

As you can see in the diagram, most students are enrolled in courses along this path. However, if a student wants to enroll in advanced math courses like AP Calculus or AP Statistics, they need to take Algebra I before the 9th grade. Courses that are aligned to this accelerated path are noted with dark red text.

AP Calculus Deep Dive: At the high school level, there are notable disparities in accelerated math course enrollment

Percent of Racial Group Enrolled in Math Courses in Preparation of AP Calculus (AB)

SY23-24



Note: American Indian and Pacific Islander groups excluded from graph due to low n-size when disaggregated by grade; non-comprehensive middle schools and high schools excluded due to program focus

Source: ERS Snapshot Analysis of SY23-24 Transcript Data

Context

We already saw that Black and Hispanic students access AP courses less often, but here we see that they also access the Math pre-requisite courses less often – at least for the grade in which they would need to take the course to be "on track" for Calculus (e.g., Geometry in 9th).

Explore

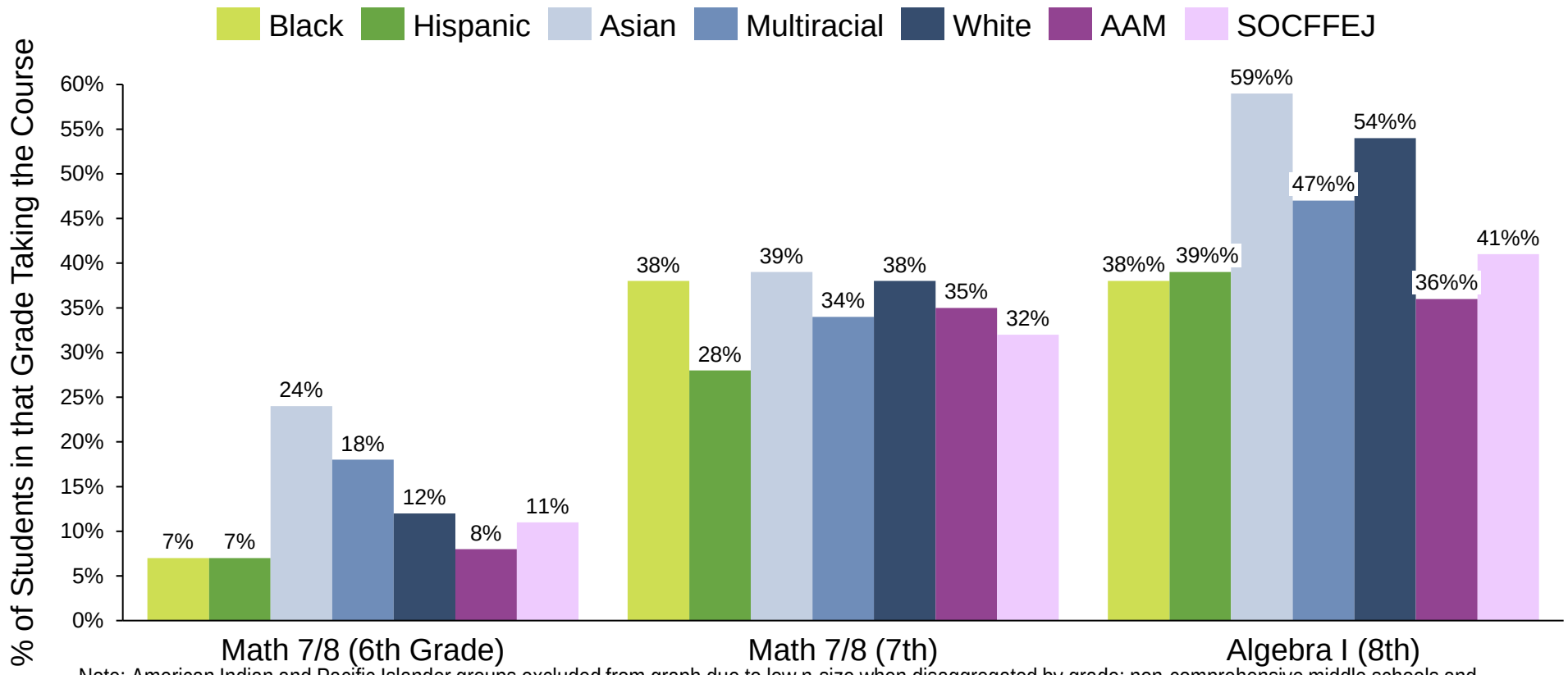
A smaller portion of Black and Hispanic students enroll in accelerated math courses than White, Multiracial, and Asian students.

As mentioned in the previous slide, most students who want to accelerate their math course progression enroll in Algebra I in middle school. If a student has not taken Algebra I by 9th grade, they would need to double up in math to be on track to take AP Calculus by 12th grade.

AP Calculus Deep Dive: These disparities in enrollment rates begin in middle school

Percent of Racial Group Enrolled in Math Courses in Preparation of AP Calculus (AB) in Middle School

SY23-24



Note: American Indian and Pacific Islander groups excluded from graph due to low n-size when disaggregated by grade; non-comprehensive middle schools and high schools excluded due to program focus

Source: ERS Snapshot Analysis of SY23-24 Transcript Data

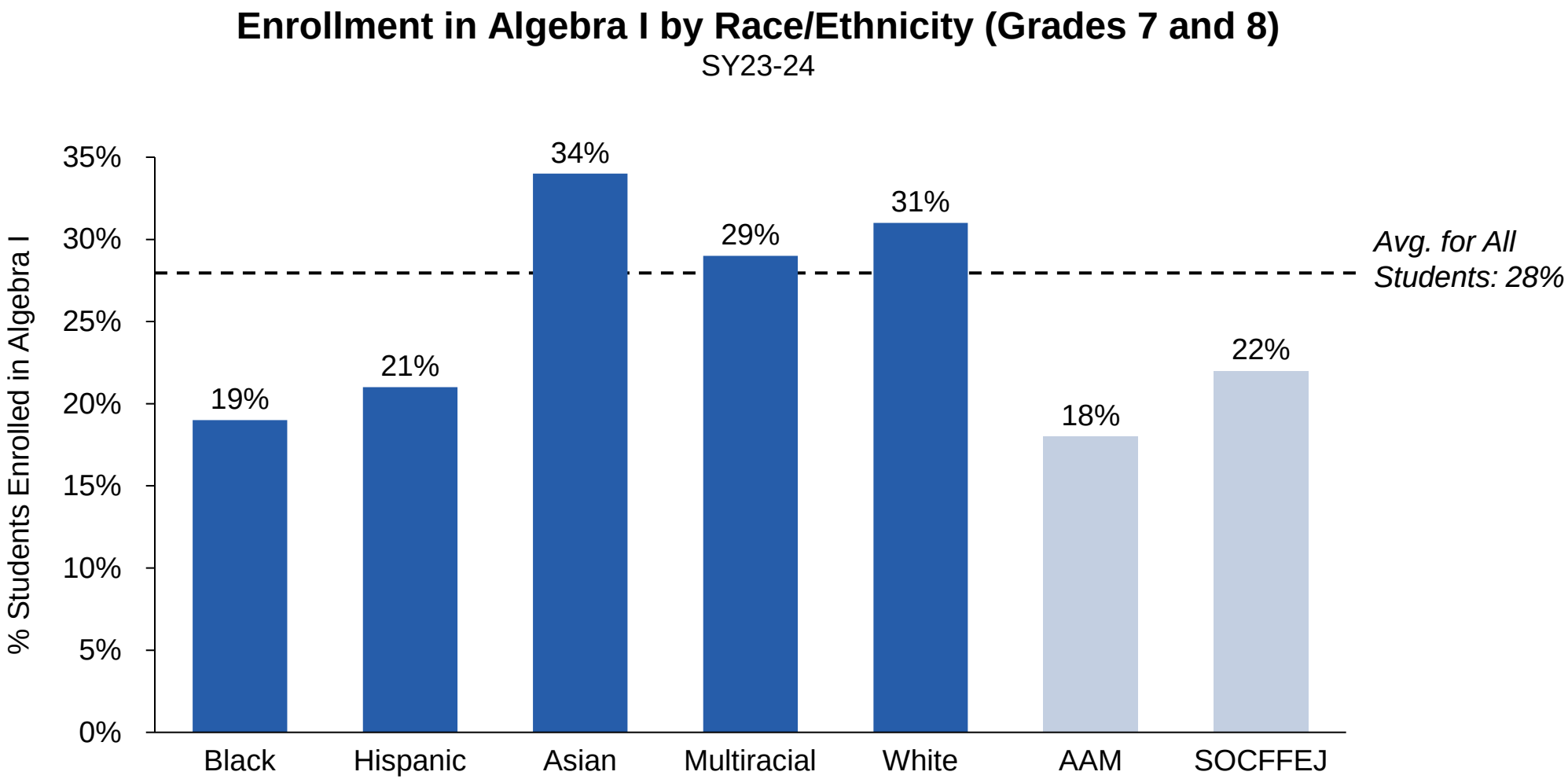
Context

Most students take Algebra I in 8th grade. To do so, they usually take a combined Math 7/8 course in 7th grade. A small percent of students take math 7/8 in 6th grade.

Explore

The most significant variation in enrollment in accelerated courses occurs in 8th grade with a larger percentage of Asian and White students taking Algebra I than Black or Hispanic students. Although very few students start taking accelerated math courses in 6th grade, there is still variation by race.

AP Calculus Deep Dive: A smaller portion of Hispanic and Black students enroll in Algebra I before 9th grade



Note: American Indian and Pacific Islander groups excluded from graph due to low n-size when disaggregated by grade; non-comprehensive middle schools and high schools excluded due to program focus

Source: ERS Snapshot Analysis of SY23-24 Transcript Data

Explore

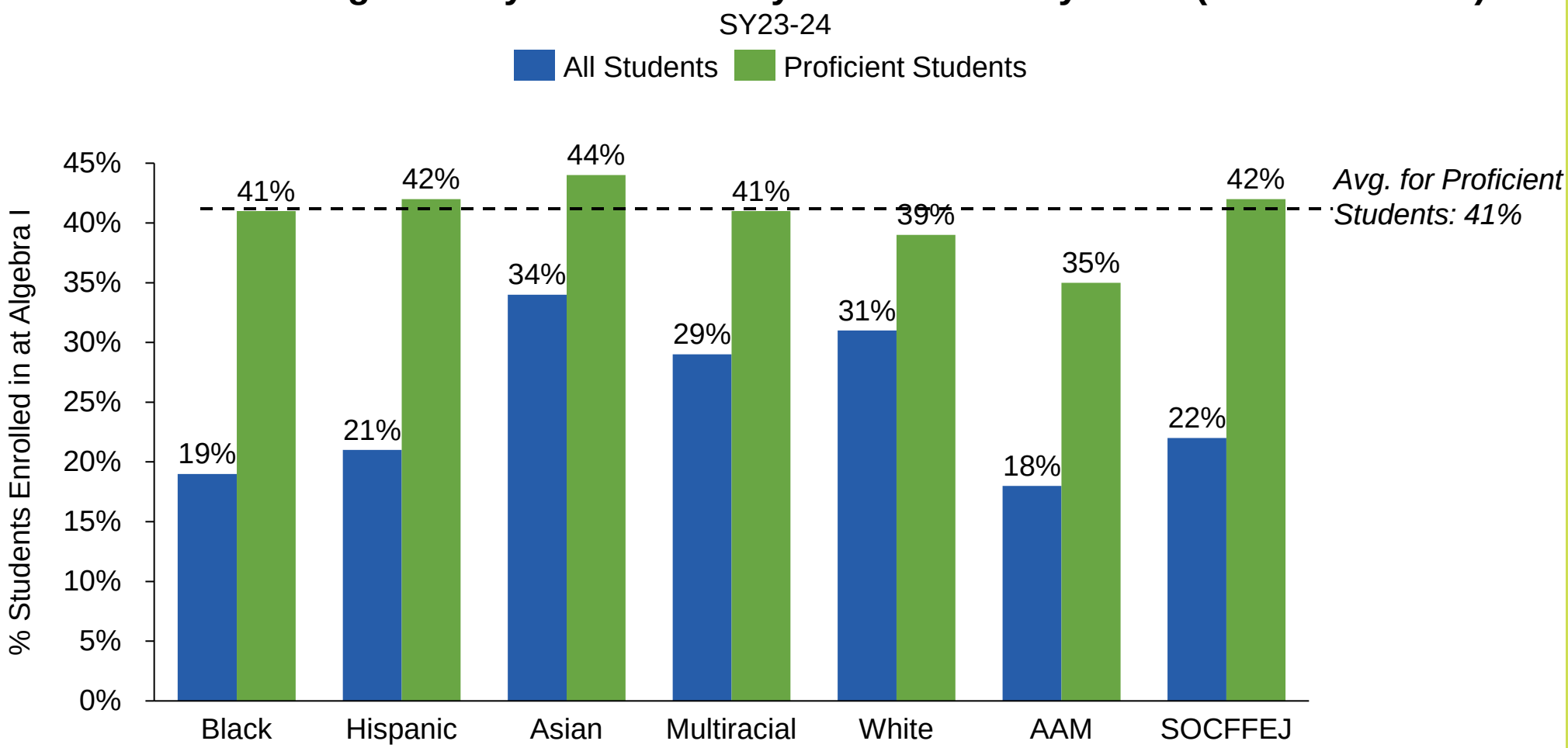
Most students who take Algebra I do so in 8th grade. However, there is still a small portion of students who take it in 7th grade. When we combine the students taking Algebra I in 7th and 8th grade for SY 23-24, we see that a much smaller portion of Black and Hispanic students enroll than White, Asian, or Multiracial students. In fact, White students are 1.5x as likely to enroll in Algebra I before 9th grade than Black and Hispanic students.

Consider

At the beginning of this section, we noted the 3 factors that influence enrollment patterns. Which factors do you think are influencing this trend the most?

AP Calculus Deep Dive: Proficient Black and Hispanic 7th- and 8th-graders enroll in Algebra I comparable rates to other racial groups

Enrollment in Algebra I by Race/Ethnicity and Proficiency Level (Grades 7 and 8)



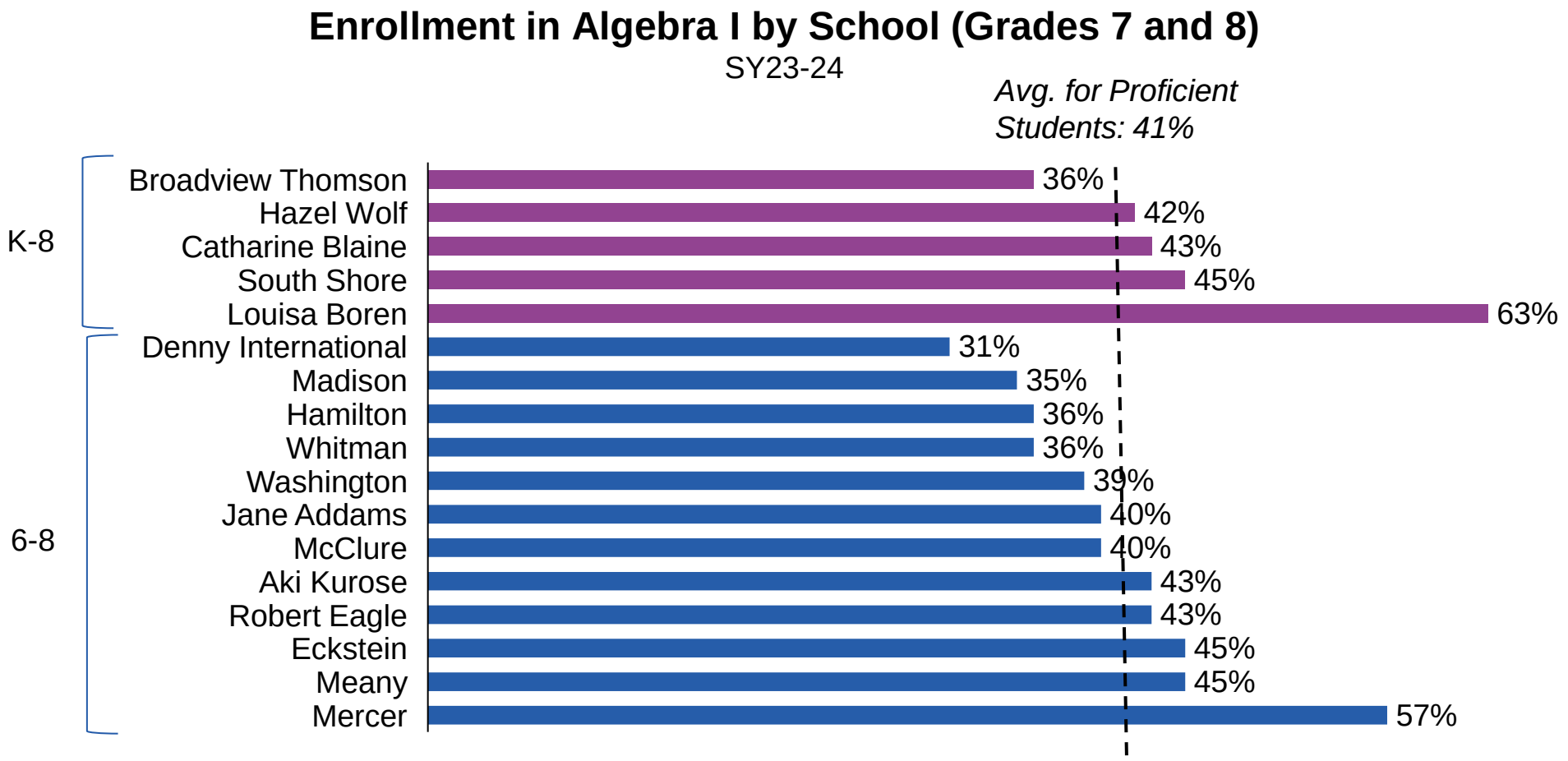
Note: American Indian and Pacific Islander groups excluded from graph due to low n-size when disaggregated by grade; non-comprehensive middle schools and high schools excluded due to program focus

Source: ERS Snapshot Analysis of SY23-24 Transcript Data

Explore

The chart is exploring the percent of students who enroll in Algebra I by incoming performance. Variation by performance level presents key information for understanding what is driving the variation in enrollment in Algebra I. As the headline states, students who demonstrate math proficiency are similarly as likely to enroll in Algebra I before 9th grade regardless of race.

AP Calculus Deep Dive: Which school a student attends has a significant influence on their enrollment



Note: American Indian and Pacific Islander groups excluded from graph due to low n-size when disaggregated by grade; non-comprehensive middle schools and high schools excluded due to program focus

Source: ERS Snapshot Analysis of SY23-24 Transcript Data

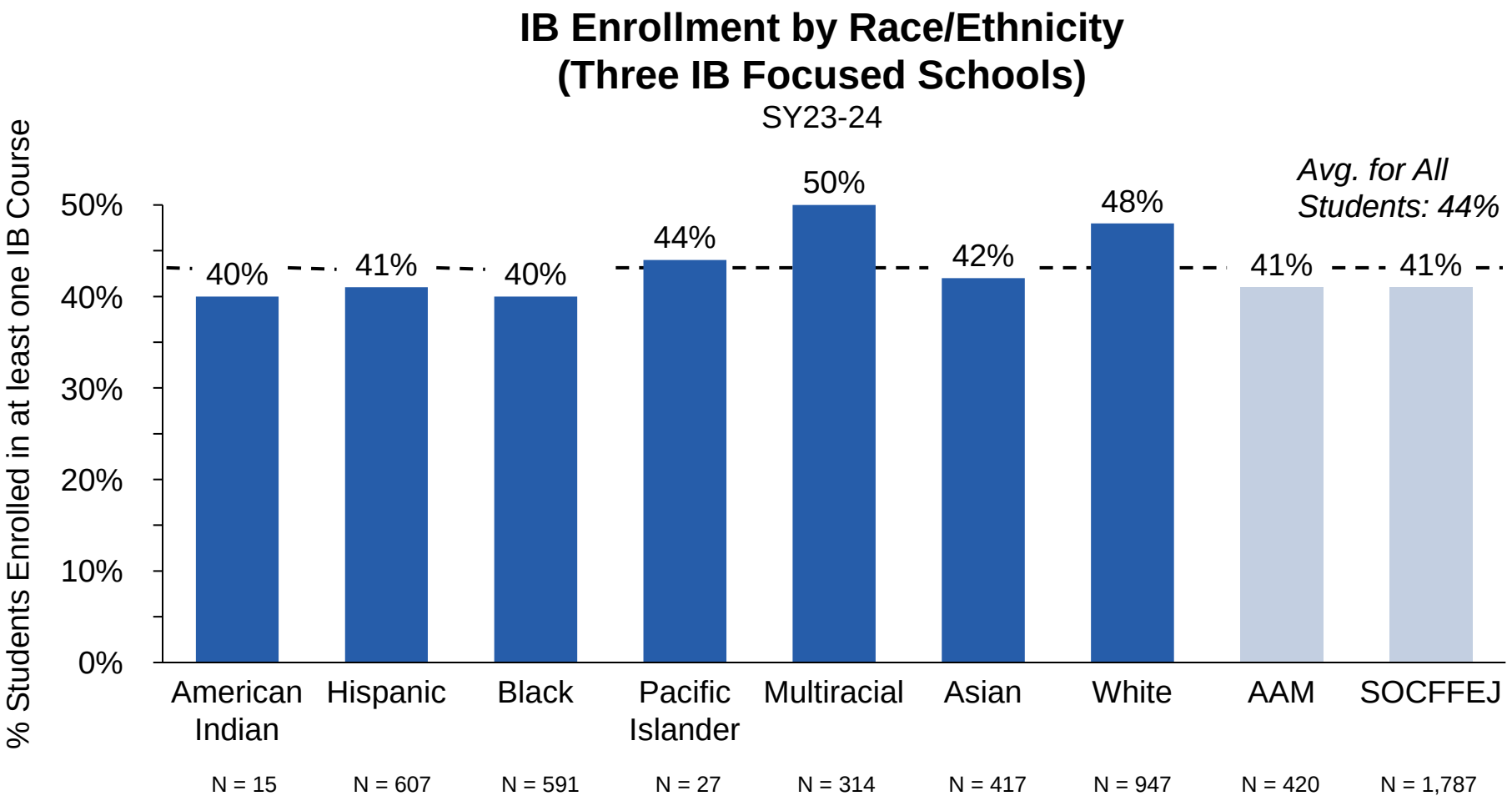
Explore

This chart shows the percent of proficient 7th and 8th grade students in each school that enroll in Algebra I. Proficiency is defined as students who scored in the level 3 or 4 range on the Math SBA. Each bar represents an SPS comprehensive middle school. Louisa Boren K-8 and Mercer Middle School lead the pack in Algebra I enrollment for proficient students.

Consider

What might be making proficient students at some schools enroll in Algebra I more often than at other schools?

Disparities in IB enrollment exist but are less pronounced than the disparities occurring in AP courses



Note: ~1800 students excluded due to not being in SPS testing pool; non-comprehensive high schools excluded due to program focus
Source: ERS Snapshot Analysis of SY23-24 Transcript Data

Context

Switching from AP courses to IB courses, the next set of analysis examines whether students access and succeed in IB coursework.

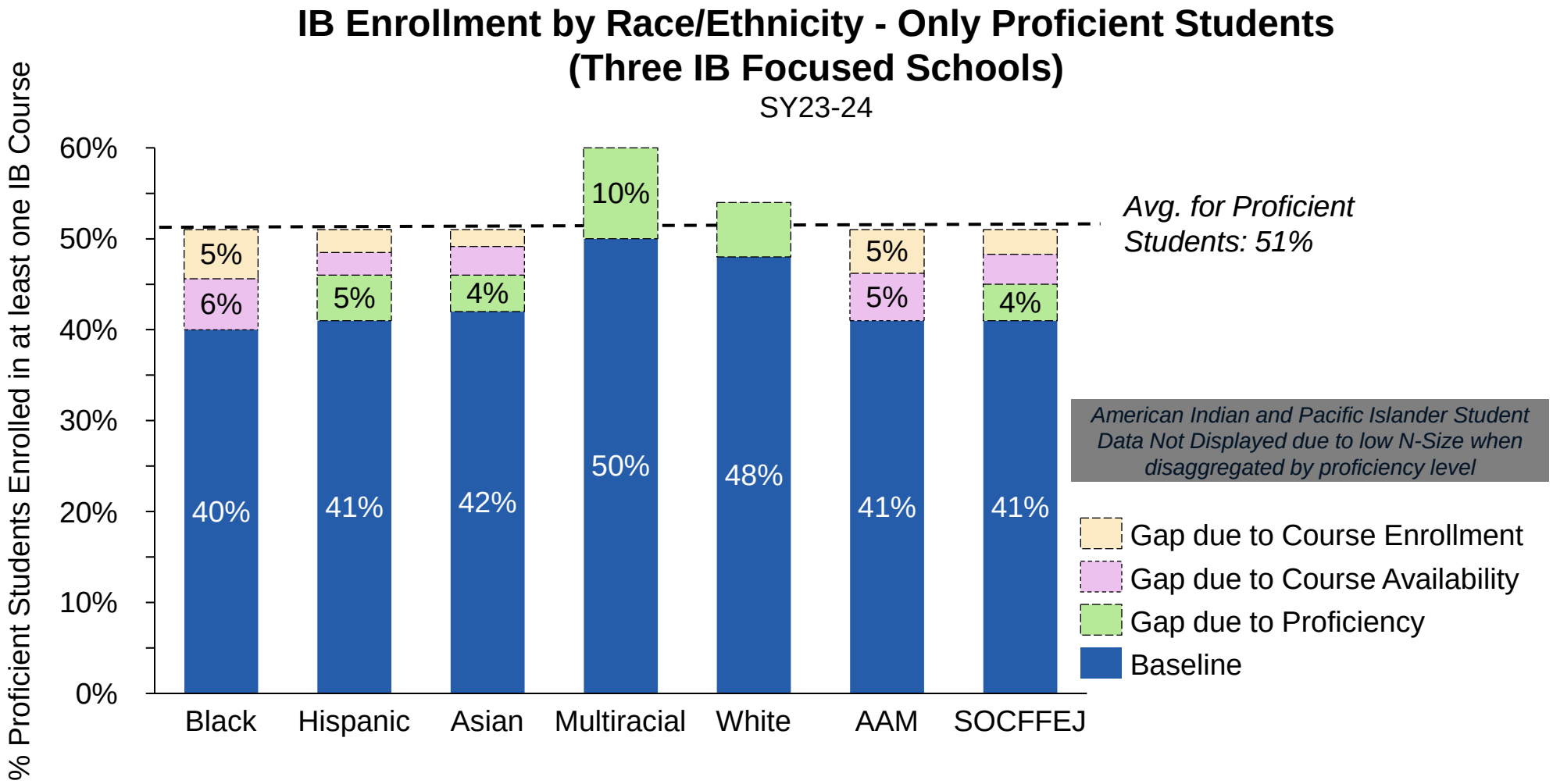
Explore

Black and American Indian students have the lowest rate of IB enrollment of all racial groups (40%), though the gap with other racial groups is lower than it was for AP courses.

Consider

IB courses are only offered in three schools, and in the aggregate these three schools have a higher proportion of Black students than the eight schools focused on AP. What might make Black students at these schools less likely to enroll in IB coursework?

As with AP, the gap for proficient Black students seems evenly driven by what school they attend and what courses they take



Note: Pacific Islander and American Indian students excluded due to low n-size when disaggregated by proficiency level; ~1800 students excluded due to not being in SPS testing pool; non-comprehensive high schools excluded due to program focus
Source: ERS Snapshot Analysis of SY23-24 Transcript Data

Context

As mentioned earlier, three factors explain why students do not enroll in advanced coursework 1) lack of incoming proficiency2) lack of course availability in the school they attend and 3) simply not enrolling in an advanced course even if the student is proficient and the course is offered.

Explore

Unlike with AP courses, lower proficiency levels among Black students do not appear to be the main reason for lower Black student enrollment in IB courses. Instead, the gap of 11 percentage points between Black student IB enrollment and enrollment among all proficient students is roughly evenly split between limited IB course offerings at their schools and lower enrollment rates among proficient Black students.

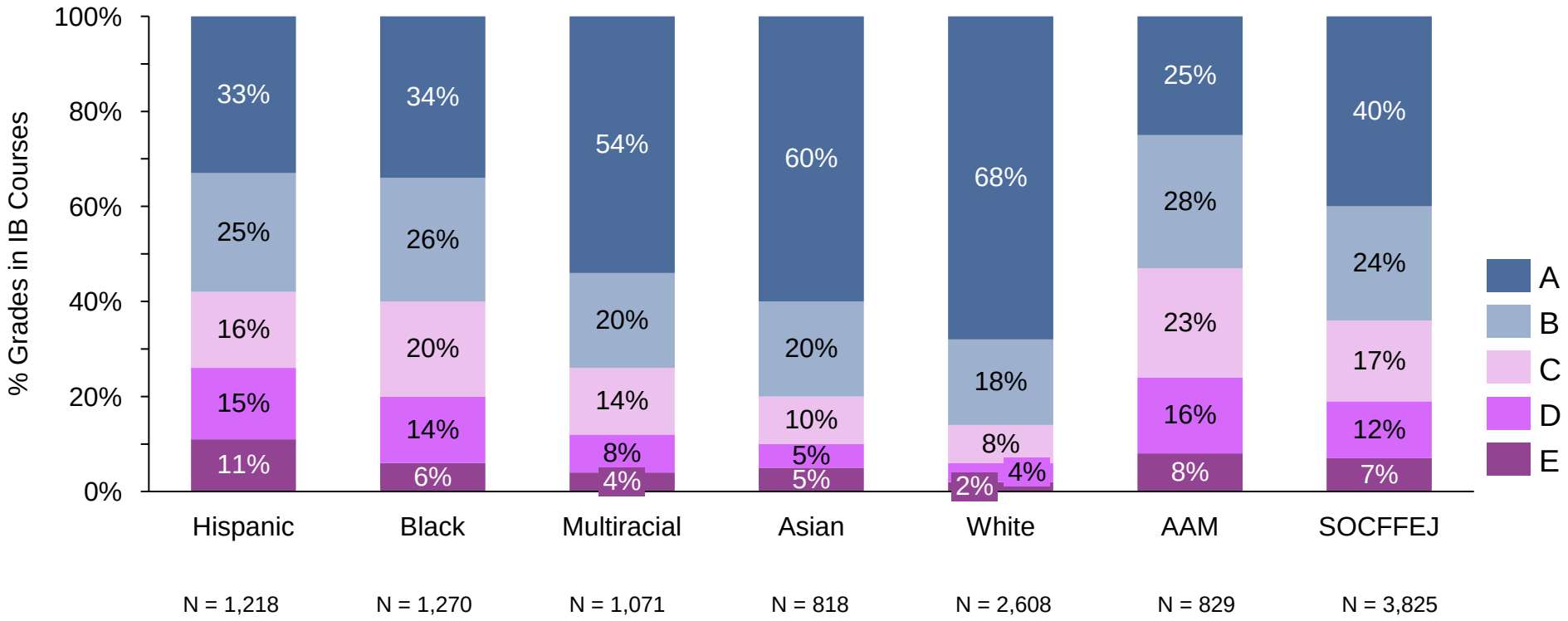
Given this, it's important to understand the student perspective on why they may choose not to enroll in IB available courses. Moreover, it's also important to consider what, if any, expectations there should be for IB offerings at SPS high schools.

Black and Hispanic students perform worse in IB courses than other racial groups, earning fewer A grades and more C/D/E grades

IB Course Grades by Race/Ethnicity for Courses in All Grades (Three IB High Schools)

SY23-24

American Indian and Pacific Islander Student Data Not Displayed due to low N-Size when disaggregated by course grade



Note: American Indiana and Pacific Islander groups excluded due to low n-size when disaggregated by course grade; ~1800 students excluded due to not being in SPS testing pool; non-comprehensive high schools excluded due to program focus

Source: ERS Snapshot Analysis of SY23-24 Transcript Data

Context

As mentioned earlier, students exceling in advanced courses is a key determinant of successful advanced course programming at the district level. If students do not consistently succeed in these courses, widely increasing access to advanced courses might not be enough since students might not be able to thrive in them.

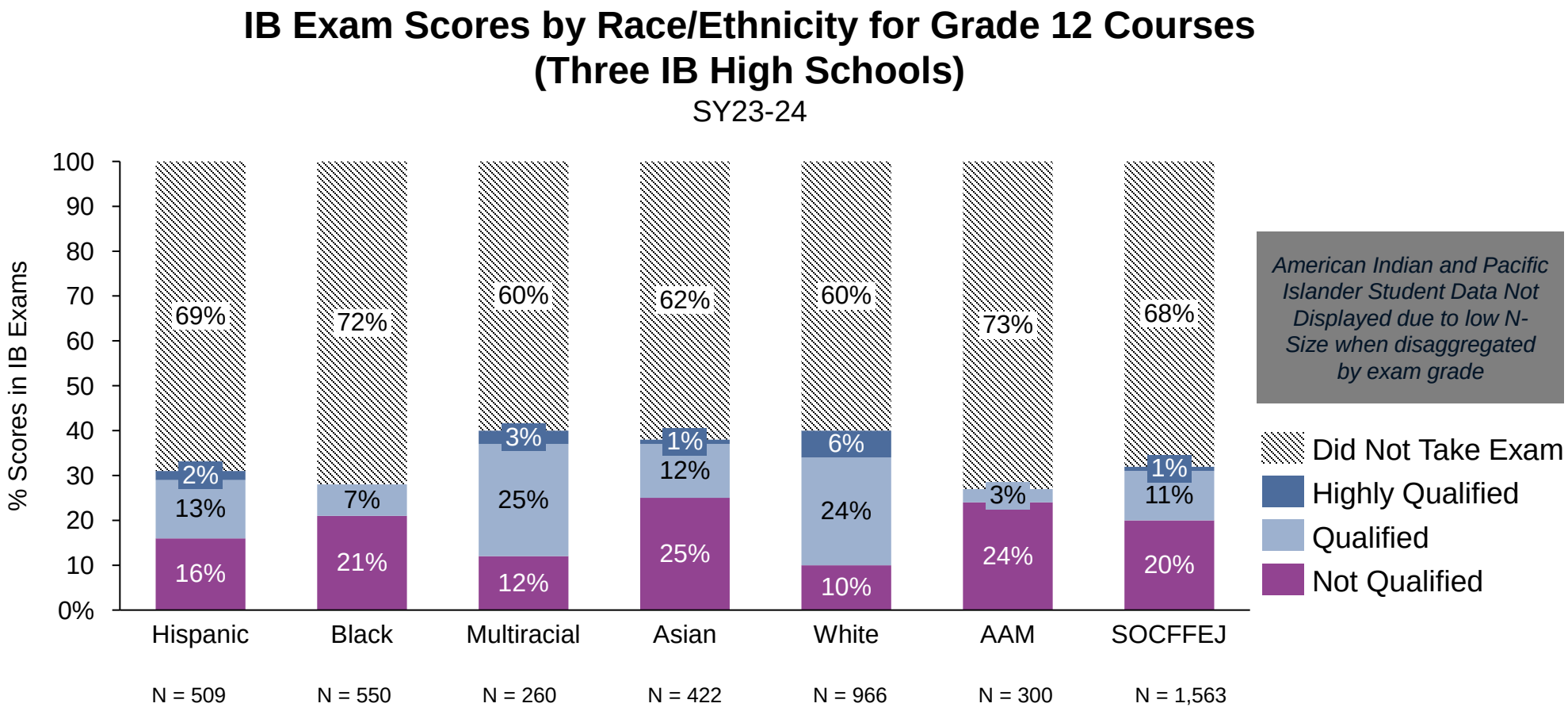
Explore

The majority of Black and Hispanic students enrolled in IB courses earn an A or a B in these courses, but at rates lower than Multiracial, Asian, and White students.

Consider

This analysis reinforces that access and enrollment to advanced coursework is a *start* but can't be the *only* goal. SPS must also consider what supports and practices will lead to student success in advanced coursework, including taking and passing the IB end of course exams, earing an IB diploma, and/or taking at least two IB classes.

Across races, many students skip the IB exams; Black and Asian test-takers underperform peers



Note: Highly Qualified defined as a 4 or 5 in AP exam, Qualified defined as 3, Not Qualified defined as 2 or 1; American Indian and Pacific Islander students excluded due to low n- size when disaggregated by exam grade; ~1800 students excluded due to not being in SPS testing pool; only 12th graders shown since IB exams are taken at the end of high school; non-comprehensive high schools excluded due to program focus

Source: ERS Snapshot Analysis of SY23-24 Transcript Data

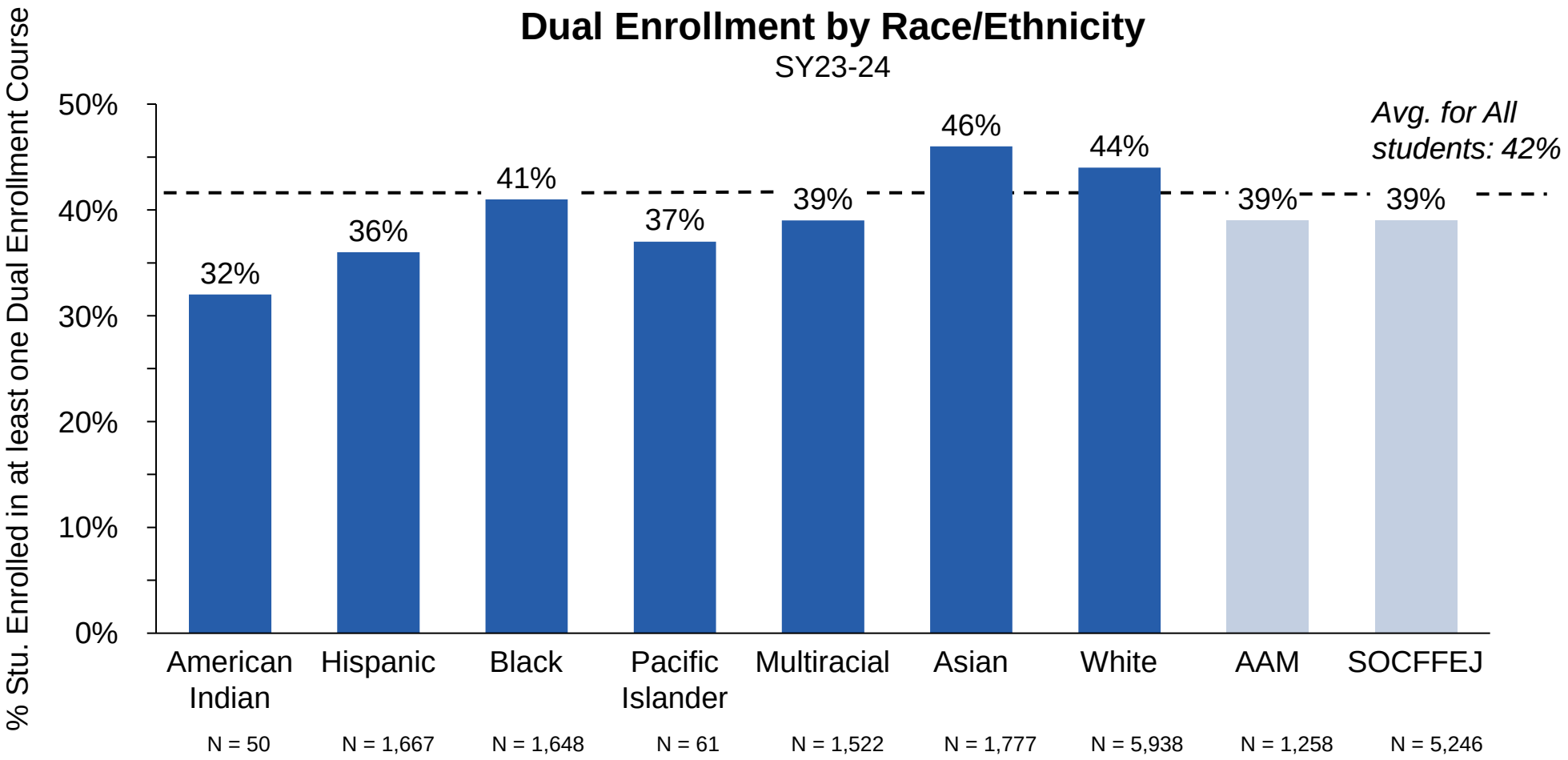
Context

In addition to course grades, student scores in end-of-course IB exams help assess if a student truly mastered the academic content at hand.

Explore

This slide shows the distribution of end-of-course IB exam scores. The gray bar represents students who took an IB course in 12th grade but did not take the related IB exam. Students also take IB courses in 11th grade, but in those cases the exam still occurs at the end of 12th grade, making the analysis less straightforward. Skipping the IB exam is a common practice across all demographic groups, which Seattle anecdotally attributes to whether students pursue the IB diploma—when they do not, they almost always skip the exam. Among students who take the exam, White and Multiracial students are the only groups with relatively high passing rates; Hispanic, Black, and Asian students who take the test receive a non-passing score more often than a passing score.

American Indian, Hispanic, Black, Pacific Islander, and Multiracial students enroll in dual enrollment courses at lower rates than Asian and White students



Note: ~200 Pacific Islander and American Indian students excluded due to low n size; ~1800 students excluded due to not being in SPS testing pool; non-comprehensive high schools excluded due to program focus
Source: ERS Snapshot Analysis of SY23-24 Transcript Data

Context

Our last few looks at advanced coursework will focus on dual enrollment courses. Seattle has three dual enrollment programs: Running Start, College in High, and Tech Prep, which enable students to earn college credit while in high school. All three programs are offered at every high school, and their differences are mostly just which college offers the coursework and what types of courses get offered within the program.

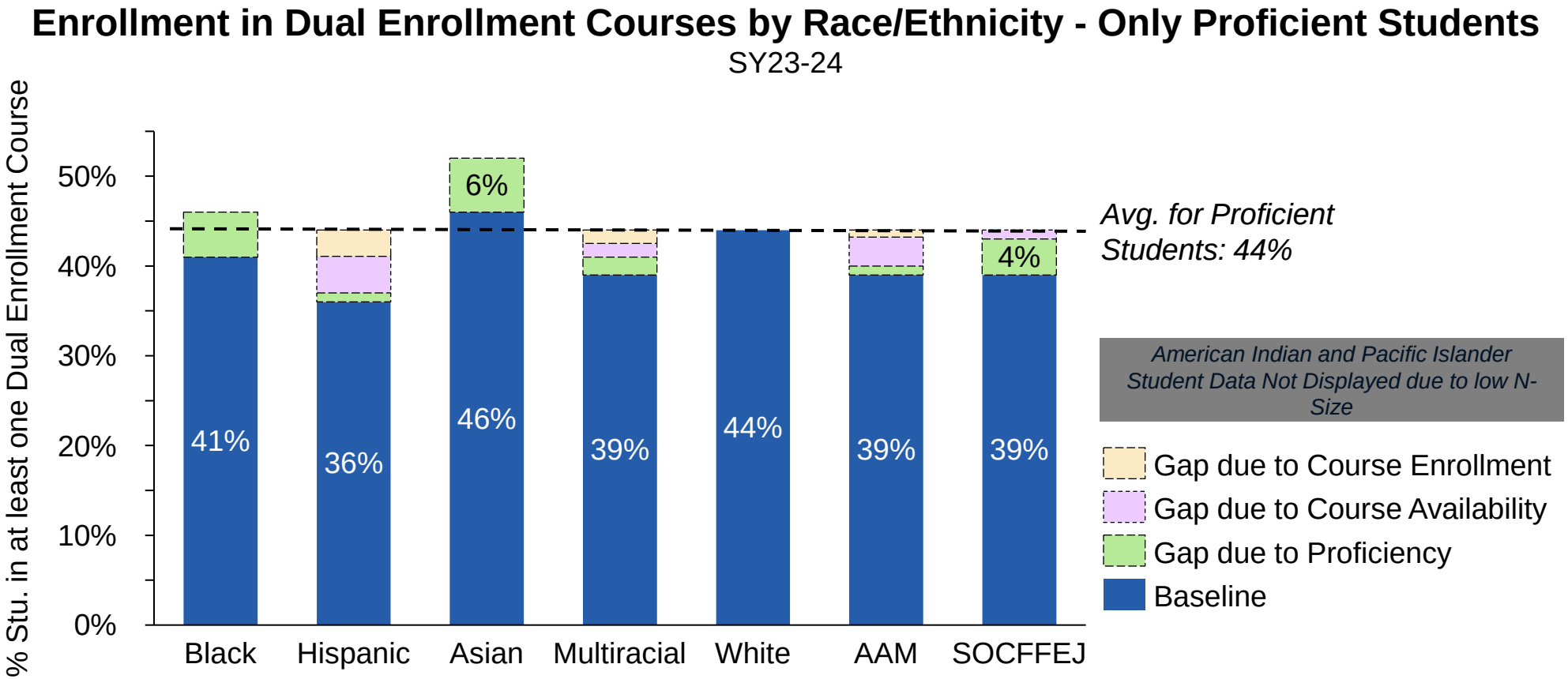
Explore

In contrast to AP and IB courses, Black students enroll in dual enrollment courses at similar or higher rates than other racial groups (though still slightly below Asian and White students.

Consider

What is different about dual enrollment courses that sees Black students taking them at rates similar to other groups, as opposed to AP and IB courses (that they take much less often than other groups)?

The gap for proficient Hispanic students seems evenly driven by what school they attend and what courses they take at their school



Note: ~200 Pacific Islander and American Indian students excluded due to low n size; ~1800 students excluded due to not being in SPS testing pool; non-comprehensive high schools excluded due to program focus
Source: ERS Snapshot Analysis of SY23-24 Transcript Data

Context

As mentioned earlier, three factors explain why students do not enroll in advanced coursework: lack of incoming proficiency (i.e., not ready for advanced content), lack of course availability in the school they attend (i.e., school just does not offer advanced courses), and simply not enrolling in an advanced course even if the student is proficient and the course is offered.

Explore

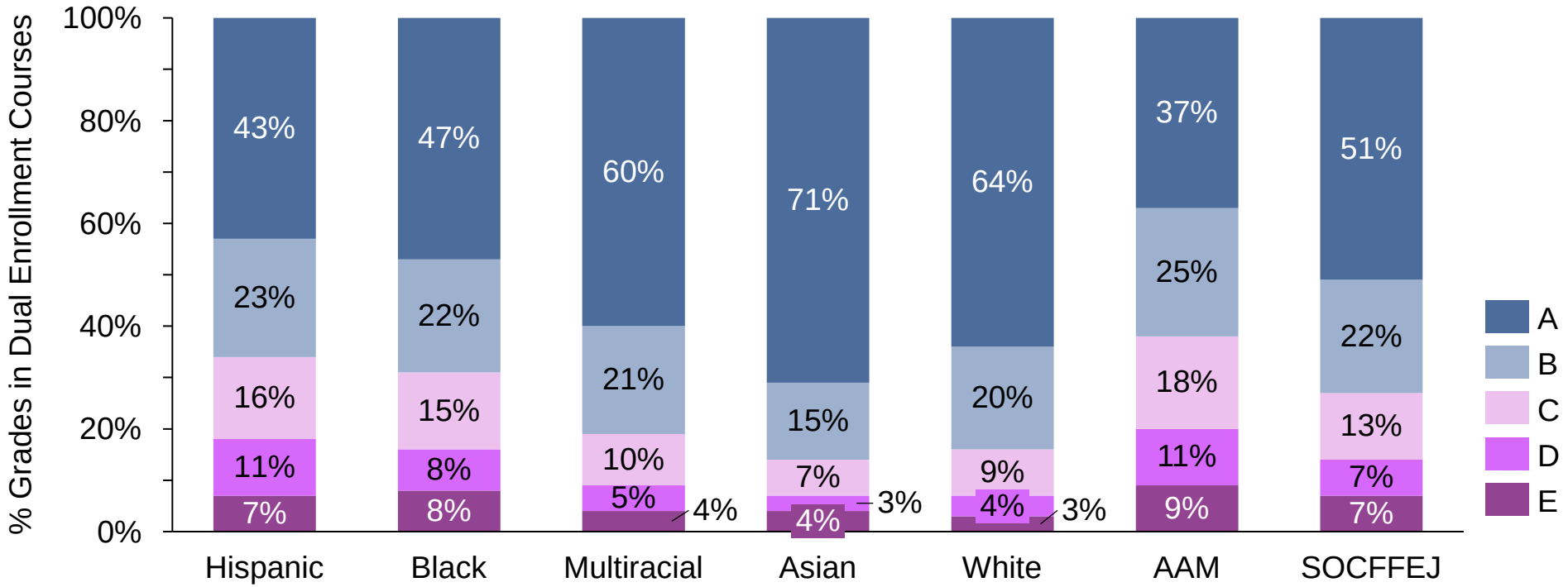
Across race/ethnicity groups, Hispanic students had lower enrollment rates in dual enrollment courses than other groups. The primary factors in these differences are (1) whether or not Hispanic students are attending schools with dual enrollment offerings and (2) whether Hispanic students are choosing to enroll in them when they are available.

As in AP and IB courses, proficient Black and Hispanic students receive lower grades in dual enrollment courses

Dual Enrollment Course Grades by Race/Ethnicity

SY23-24

American Indian and Pacific Islander Student Data Not Displayed due to low N-Size



Note: ~1800 students excluded due to not being in SPS testing pool; non-comprehensive high schools excluded due to program focus

Source: ERS Snapshot Analysis of SY23-24 Transcript Data

Context

As mentioned earlier, students exceling in advanced courses is a key determinant of successful advanced course programming at the district level. If students do not consistently succeed in these courses, widely increasing access to advanced courses might not be enough since students might not be able to successful in them.

Explore

The majority of Black and Hispanic students enrolled in dual enrollment courses earn an A or a B in these courses, but a concerningly high amount (31% and 34% respectively) earn no better than a C. Multiracial, Asian, and White students get As and Bs more often, at 81% / 86% / 84%, respectively.

Running Start is the largest dual enrollment program and has a high representation of Black and Asian students

Type of Dual Enrollment Program	Course Enrollments Counts rounded to nearest 50; % in blue rows is proportion of total enrollments for that dual enrollment type							
	Total	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Multi-racial	White	AAM	SOCFFEJ
Running Start	**11,100** (100%)	**2,450** (22%)	**900** (8%)	**3,250** (29%)	**1,000** (9%)	**3,500** (32%)	**1,050** (9%)	**5,550** (50%)
College in High	**5,000** (100%)	**550** (11%)	**700** (14%)	**550** (17%)	**550** (11%)	**2,650** (53%)	**500** (10%)	**1,850** (37%)
Tech Prep	**3,750** (100%)	**350** (9%)	**400** (11%)	**500** (13%)	**450** (12%)	**2050** (55%)	**350** (9%)	**1,200** (32%)
% of All High School Students	*100%*	*14%*	*13%*	*14%*	*12%*	*47%*	*10%*	*41%*

Note: Pacific Islander and American Indian students excluded due to low n-size when disaggregated by program type; ~1800 students excluded due to not being in SPS testing pool; non-comprehensive high schools excluded due to program focus
Source: ERS Snapshot Analysis of SY23-24 Transcript Data

Explore

Running Start is the most popular dual enrollment program in Seattle, with 11,000 students enrolled per year. College in High has 5,000 enrollments and Tech Prep has 3,750.

Black students enroll in Running Start in much higher numbers than their student head count would suggest (22% of all Running Start enrollments are Black students, while Black students represent only 14% of all Seattle high schoolers). Asian students also take Running Start at disproportionately high rates. Though Hispanics tap dual enrollment options less often overall, College in High has a relatively strong Hispanic presence.

Course Access and Opportunity: Closing

Go Back to Table of Contents

Insight Summary

- Overall, Black and Hispanic students enroll in advanced courses less often than other racial groups.
- Low Black and Hispanic enrollment happens in both AP and IB. Why?
  - *Overall Proficiency:* After controlling for proficiency, gaps in enrollment for Hispanic students narrow significantly but remain or expand for Black students (for both AP and IB).
  - *Course Offerings and Enrollment in High:* The remaining gap for Black students is evenly driven by what school they go to and what courses they take in their school (for both AP and IB).
  - *Course Offerings and Enrollment before High:* Enrollment disparities are likely present before students reach AP and IB courses. In one example (AP Calculus), disparities begin in 8th grade.

Potential Action Implications

- Proficiency plays a key role in student access and success to advanced coursework. Because of this, increasing proficiency levels – especially for American Indian, Hispanic, and Black students – is a key first step.
- As a group, Hispanic and Black students receive lower grades than other groups in all advanced course types (AP, IB, and dual enrollment). However, Black students enroll in Running Start at high rates – which makes strengthening this program a potential way to build toward more advanced course access for *all* students.
- SPS should strengthen advisor training to ensure consistent guidance for all students and investigate enrollment patterns by directly engaging students to learn why some qualified students, especially students of color, do not opt into advanced courses.

Analytic Insights

School Leadership

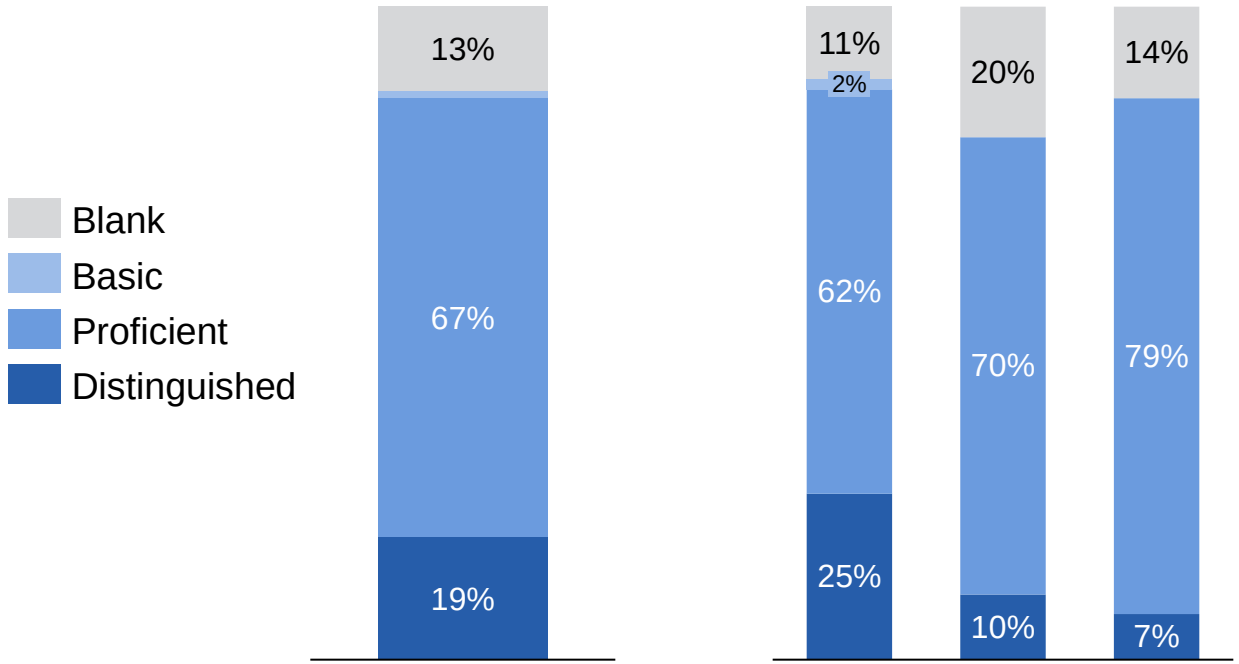
School Leadership: At a Glance

Why it Matters	• School leaders are the main supporters of teachers – who in turn are the most influential factor for student outcomes. Their capacity to effectively support teachers is therefore imperative for student improvement. • School leaders perform best when their supervisory workloads are manageable – and when they're not, school staff might miss out on necessary supports.
How it's Assessed	• Principal evaluation ratings • Ratio of school supervisors to principals • Ratio of school leader positions (principals, assistant principals, instructional coaches) to teachers
Report Insights	• Nearly all principals meet or exceed standards, though with some variation by school level • In elementary schools, distinguished principals are most concentrated in the schools with lowest and highest poverty levels • Principals mostly (but not always) feel that Central Office supports them adequately • Regional Executive Directors in Seattle typically supervise more principals than other large urban school districts • Staffing levels at elementary schools leads to administrators having more staff to evaluate per administrator than other levels, especially when elementaries do not receive and assistant principal • Principals noted difficulty providing instructional leadership beyond formal observations and feedback

Nearly all principals evaluated in SY23-24 met or exceeded standards, though with some variation by school level

SPS Principal Evaluations by School Level

SY23-24



	SPS	ES	K-8	MS/HS
Total Principals	101	63	10	28

Note: Principals in schools categorized as 'Other Schools' (including Interagency Programs, Cascade Parent Partnership, and BRIDGES Transition) are excluded from this analysis

Source: SPS HR File (SY24-25); SPS Principal Evaluation File (SY23-24)

Context

Similar to teachers, principals in SPS receive annual evaluations. As with teachers, principal quality has a sizable impact on student outcomes so the distribution of high-quality principals across schools and student groups plays a large role in shaping student performance. Evaluations in SPS are based on AWSP Framework and include factors around culture, safety, data, instruction, and stakeholder engagement.

Explore

In Seattle, 86% of principals were rated as Proficient or Distinguished. Looking across school levels, effective principals seem to be concentrated in elementary schools – especially when looking at just Distinguished (25% of elementary principals, as opposed to 10% in K-8 and 7% in MS/HS). No principal is rated Unsatisfactory in the 2023-2024 school year.

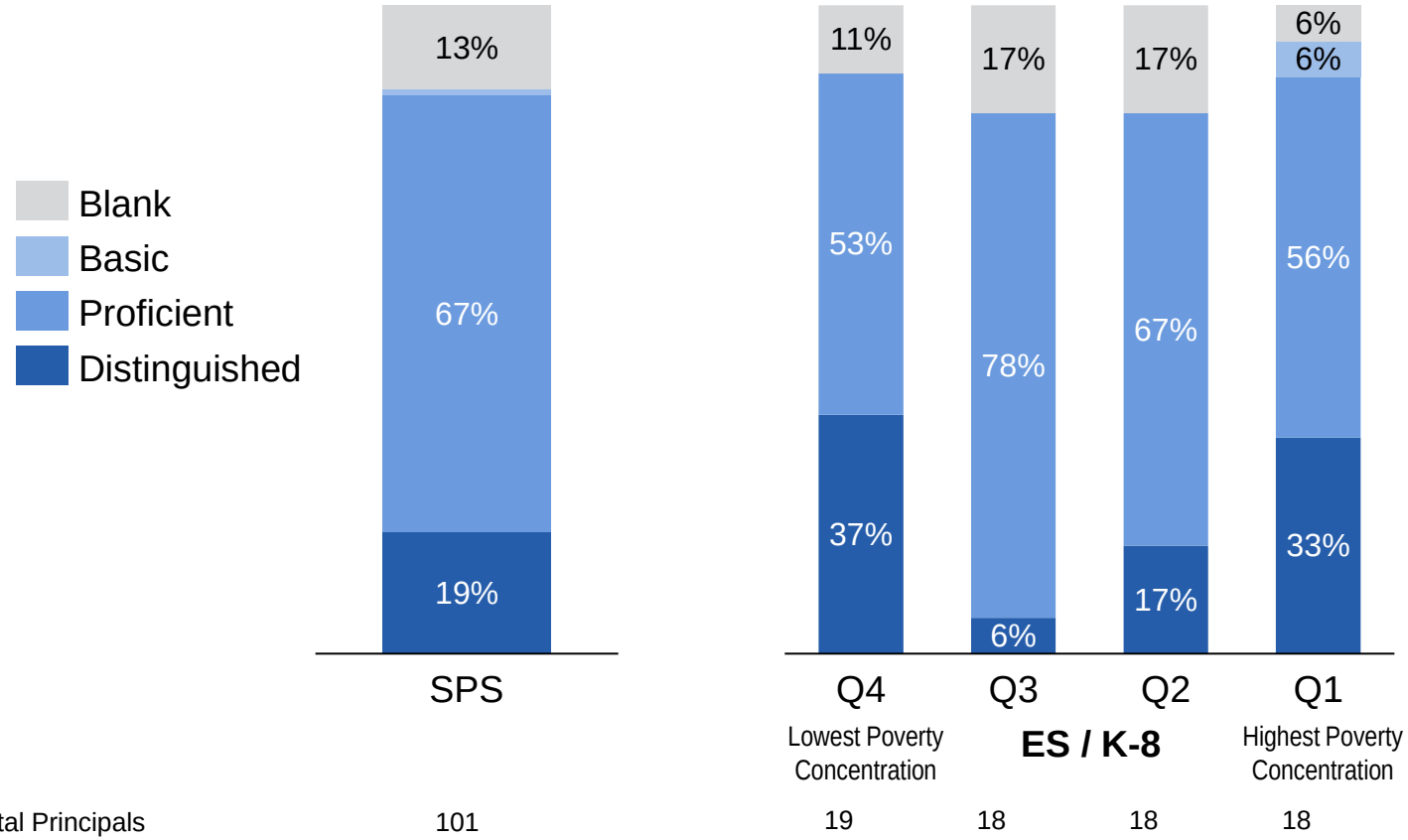
Consider

How can the district be intentional about how effective principals are identified, developed, supported, and placed?

In ES / K-8, Distinguished principals are most concentrated in the lowest and highest poverty quartiles

SPS Principal Evaluations by Poverty Quartiles

SY23-24



Total Principals	101	19	18	18	18

Note: Principals in schools categorized as 'Other Schools' (including Interagency Programs, Cascade Parent Partnership, and BRIDGES Transition) are excluded from this analysis; there are not sufficient n-sizes in MS / HS to report by poverty quartile

Source: SPS HR File (SY24-25); SPS Principal Evaluation File (SY23-24); SPS Schools File (SY24-25)

Context

Effective principals can be unevenly distributed across schools and student groups. This slide examines the distribution of principals rated Proficient and Distinguished across elementary and K-8 schools of varying poverty levels.

Explore

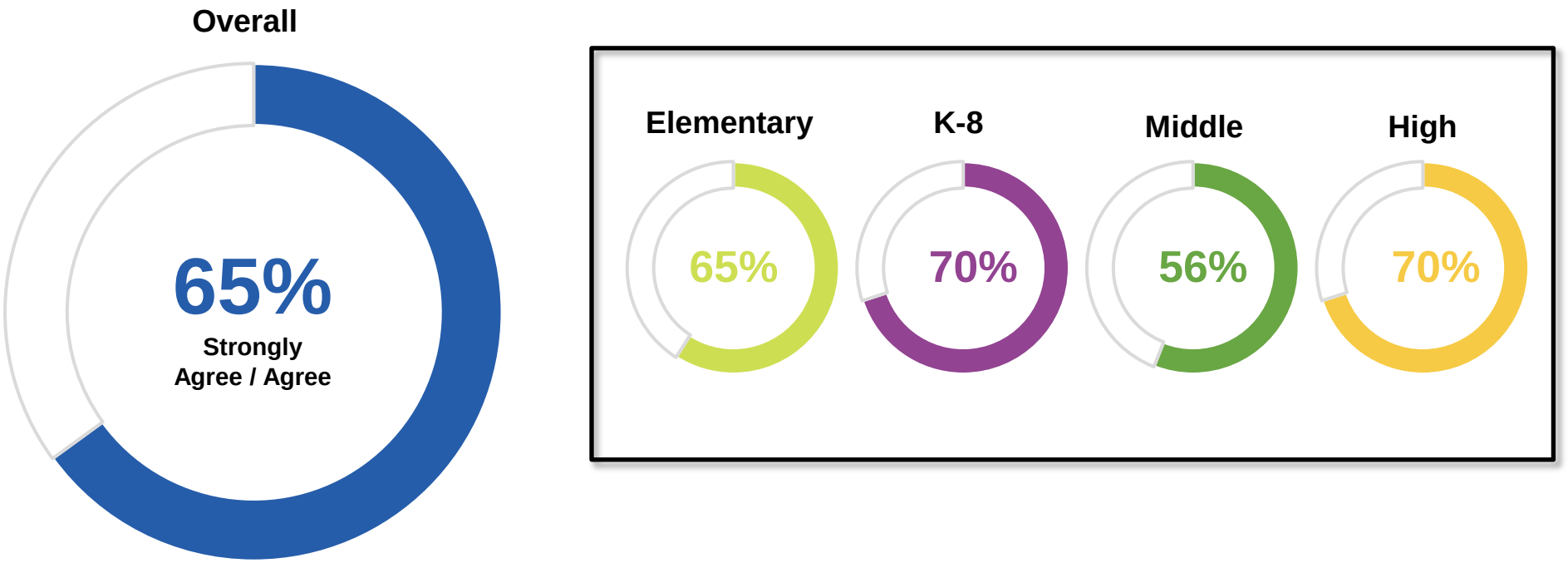
For this analysis, elementary and K-8 schools are divided into quartiles from lowest to highest poverty (Q4 to Q1 respectively, with Q1 being the highest concentration of poverty). Interestingly, the principals with highest rating (Distinguished) concentrate on *both* the schools with highest poverty (Q1) and the schools with lowest poverty (Q4).

Consider

What might be driving this pattern in Seattle? Is it part of a deliberate strategy?

Principals *mostly* agreed that SPS provides them with the support needed to be effective, with some variation by school level

"Seattle Public Schools provides me with the support I need to be effective."



Context

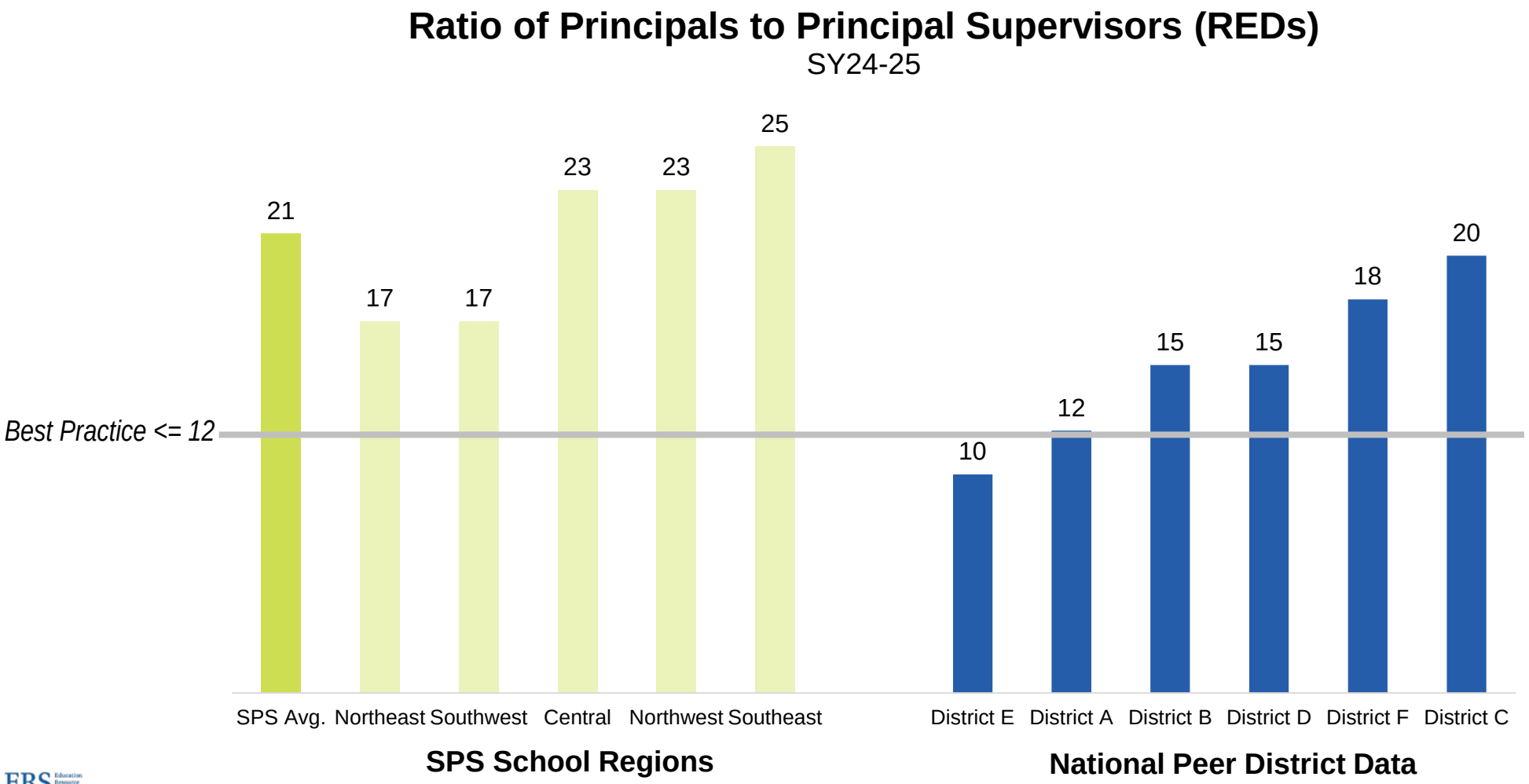
Effective principals do not just happen by chance – they are often a direct result of meaningful support and mentorship by district staff, especially principal supervisors. As a part of this analysis, principals were surveyed to understand their experiences in Seattle. This question directly asked their perceptions of support that they receive.

Explore

Overall, principals generally do feel supported by Seattle Public Schools – with roughly two thirds of principals agreeing that they receive the support they need from the district to be effective. Results vary slightly by school level, with middle school principals reporting enough support the least often (56%) and K-8 / high school principals reporting enough support the most often (70%).

Source: SPS Principal Survey; February 2025

School supervisors in SPS typically support more principals than other large, urban school districts



Source: SPS SY24-25 Budget Data, ERS Analysis

Context

The ratio of principals to principal supervisors is called the span of control. Supervisors with smaller spans of control can spend more time supporting principals with instructional leadership. We recommend a span of control of 12:1 for principal supervisors based on academic research and our work with districts.

Explore

In Seattle, Regional Executive Directors (REDs) have larger spans of control than other peer districts. Across the regions within Seattle, there is significant variation in spans of control with the Southeast region having the largest.

Consider

What does REDs having larger spans of control mean for the experience of principals?

Are there other mechanisms of supporting principals in Seattle?

School and principal needs also vary across each region in SPS

SPS Region Demographics (SY24-25)

	School Count	Enrollment	% FRL	% SOCFFEJ	% AAM	% Novice Principals (<3 years of experience)
Northeast	17	9,000	23%	33%	8%	41%
Southwest	17	9,000	31%	45%	11%	35%
Central	23	9,000	35%	46%	14%	35%
Northwest	23	14,000	17%	29%	6%	43%
Southeast	25	10,000	56%	69%	19%	55%
Total	**105**	**~51,000**	**32%**	**44%**	**11%**	**42%**

Source: SPS SY24-25 Budget Data, ERS Analysis

Context

One lever that districts often consider to provide targeted support is to differentiate spans of control. This can help enable additional supports for higher-need schools from their school supervisors.

Explore

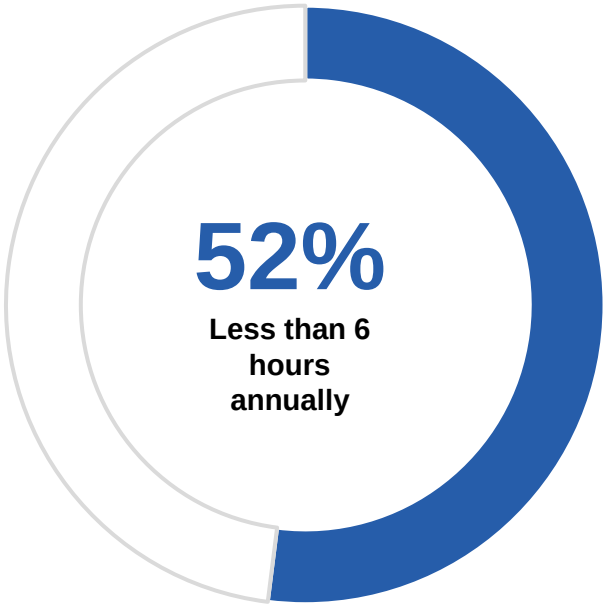
This table shows the demographics of each region including the total number of schools, students, student characteristics, and the percent of principals with fewer than three years of experience. Best practice suggests that principal supervisors support no more than 12 schools, yet all Seattle regional executive directors oversee significantly more. This challenge is compounded in regions with higher concentrations of FRL students, novice principals, and students of color furthest from educational justice.

Consider

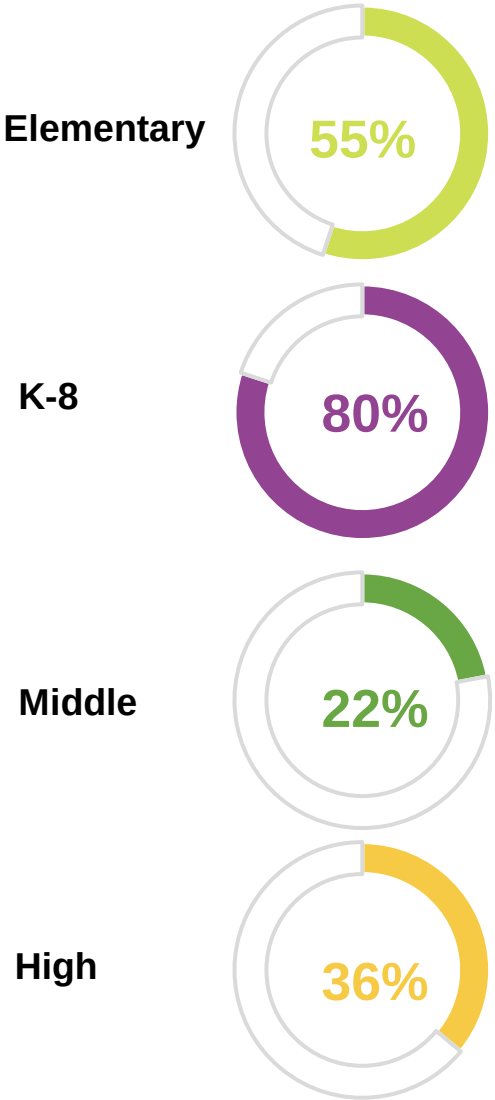
What opportunities are there to ensure that the schools with higher needs are led by experienced supervisors with lower caseloads?

Principals noted difficulty providing instructional leadership beyond formal observations and feedback for teachers

Outside of formal evaluation cycles, how many hours of informal observation and feedback do teachers in your building receive from content specific experts (e.g., teacher leader, instructional coach, AP, principal, etc.)?



Overall



Source: ERS 2025 SPS Principal Survey

Context

Principals need resources to build strong leadership teams, including assistant principals, instructional coaches, and other positions like teacher leaders. Districts can help by assigning key staff to these teams, funding and compensating roles, and providing professional development.

Explore

Right now, principals generally spend less than 6 hours annually on instructional leadership outside of formal evaluations. A larger portion of K-8 and elementary principals are unable to provide more than 6 hours annually than middle and high school principals. This may be a product of school staffing or other responsibilities that limit principal ability to provide this support.

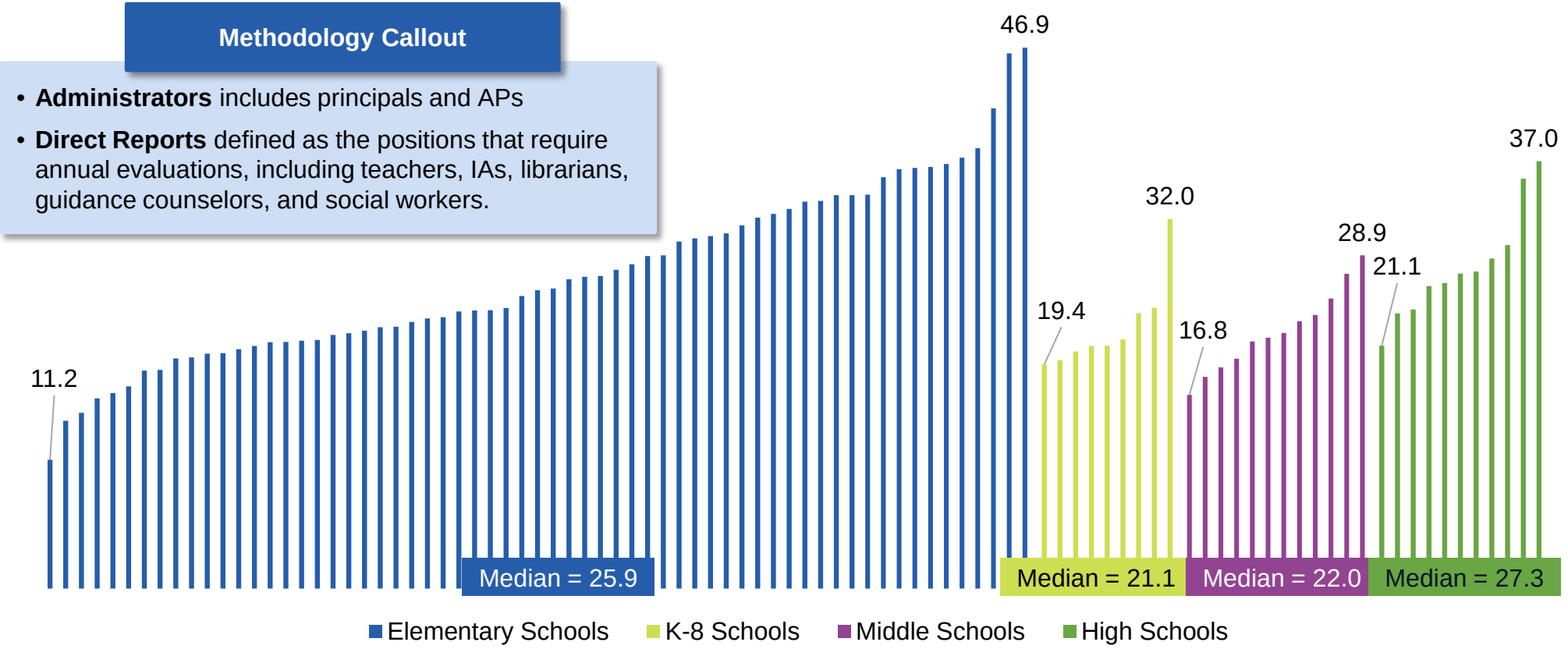
Staffing levels at elementary schools leads to administrators having more staff to evaluate per administrator

Administrator to Direct Reports Ratio by School Level

SY24-25

Methodology Callout

- **Administrators** includes principals and APs
- **Direct Reports** defined as the positions that require annual evaluations, including teachers, IAs, librarians, guidance counselors, and social workers.



Source: SPS SY24-25 Budget Data, ERS Analyses

Context

Spans of control for principals are important to consider to ensure principals have sustainable workloads and have the ability to provide support to their staff. accordingly.

Explore

In this chart, each bar represents the ratio of direct reports administrators (both Principals and APs) at an individual school. Notice that there is significant variation in this ratio at the elementary level. The median elementary school administrator has a span of control of 25:1. At some schools, this ratio is as high as 46.9:1.

Higher ratios are often driven by a higher percentage of schools not having AP support for staff observations and evaluations

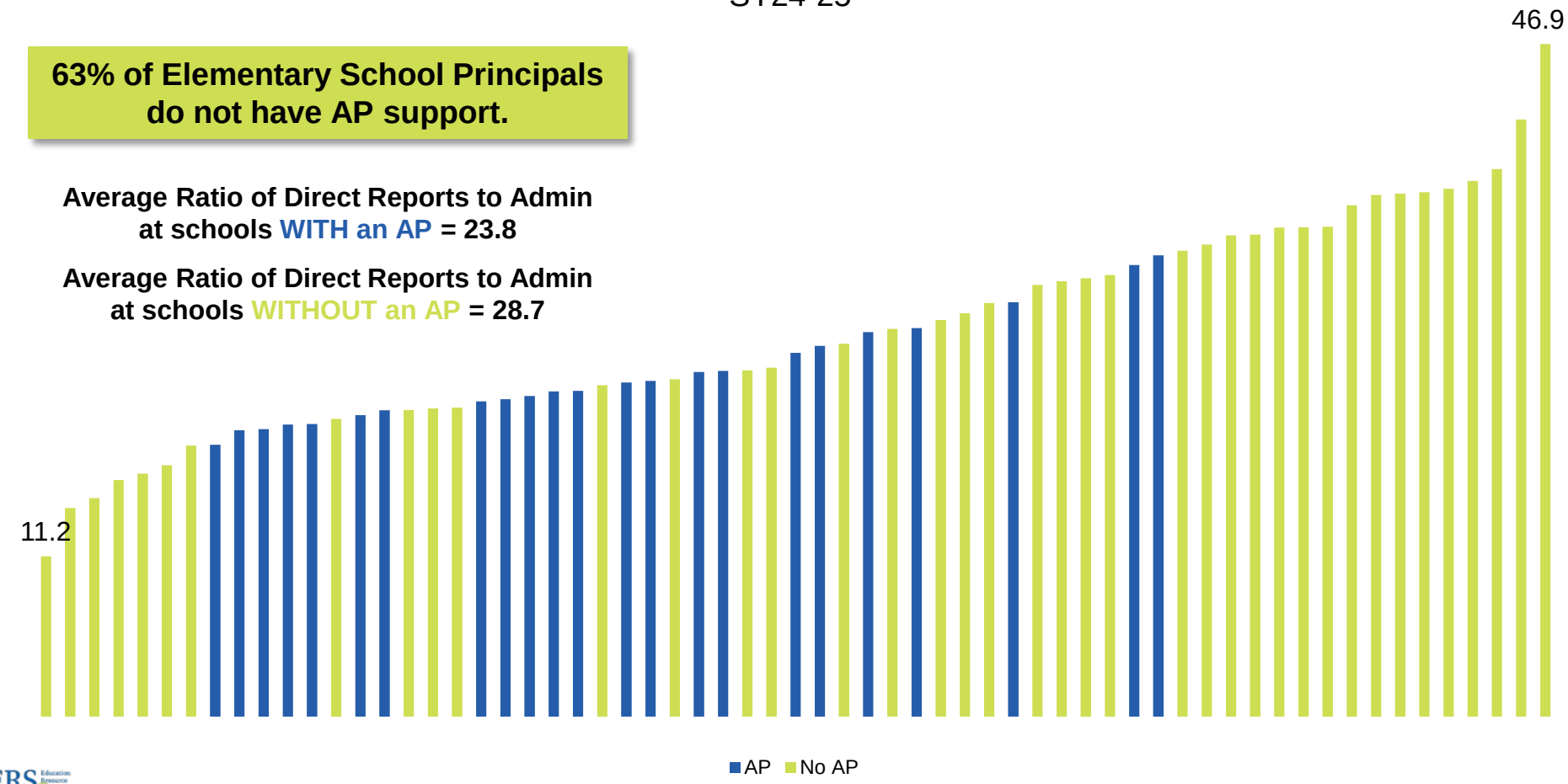
Elementary School Ratio of Administrators to Direct Reports

SY24-25

63% of Elementary School Principals do not have AP support.

Average Ratio of Direct Reports to Admin at schools WITH an AP = 23.8

Average Ratio of Direct Reports to Admin at schools WITHOUT an AP = 28.7



Source: SPS SY24-25 Budget Data, ERS Analyses

Context

Assistant Principals (APs) play a central role in the school instructional leadership team – particularly through sharing the load on observations and evaluations with principals. The presence (or absence) of APs shapes how feasible it is to manage and support large numbers of staff effectively.

Explore

In Seattle elementary schools, many principals are navigating instructional leadership responsibilities without support: 63% do not have access to an AP.

Consider

How might the number of direct reports impact a principal's ability to lead instructionally?

Where are the biggest differences in staff-to-admin ratio? How do they align with student need or school complexity?

School Leadership: Closing

Go Back to Table of Contents

Insight Summary

- Nearly all principals meet or exceeded standards as described on the principal evaluation tool, though with some variation by school level
- The concentration of “distinguished” principals in elementary schools is greatest at both extremes of poverty, appearing most often in schools with the lowest and highest poverty rates.
- Principals mostly (but not always) feel that Central Office supports them adequately
- The school supervisor ratio for supporting district principals (i.e. span of control) in Seattle is larger than most urban school districts
- Staffing structures in elementary schools often result in administrators carrying a heavier staff evaluation load than those in middle or high schools, especially in schools without an assistant principal.
- Principals noted difficulty providing instructional leadership beyond formal observations and feedback

Potential Action Implications

- Seattle would likely benefit from strengthening Central Office supports for principals. This could include reducing the number of principals who directly report to each school supervisor and establishing direct liaisons for principals within key Central Office departments.
- Consider adjusting principals’ workloads so they can devote more time to instructional leadership. Specifically, the number of staff members that principals are responsible for evaluating should be reduced, thereby decreasing their span of control. One strategy to accomplish this would be to assign assistant principals to schools with larger staffs.
- Finally, alongside increased support, Seattle should revisit the topic of school autonomy to clarify expectations at the school level so they can exercise leadership in ways that best meet the needs of their school communities.

Analytic Insights

Central Office

Central Office: At a Glance

Why it Matters	• The Central Office plays an important roles to help set up students and staff for success, including: o Supporting schools in providing high-quality experiences to students o Setting an overarching vision for student programming o Managing district funding and distributes resources to schools based on student need o Providing professional learning supports to school staff • Given the breadth of responsibilities that fall under Central Office, ensuring smooth and cost-effective operations is crucial for overall district success.
How it's Assessed	• Central Office spend, overall and by functions • Principal and district staff perceptions of Central Office coherence, coordination, and alignment • Central Office support staff for professional learning
Report Insights	• Seattle's total spend for Central Office (percent of total district budget) is similar to national and state peers • While total Central Office spend is in line with peers, Seattle's Central Office spends more on socioemotional supports, physical health services, special population supports, and data processing and information. • Principals and district staff did not consistently agree that Central Office operates with coherence, coordination, and alignment, which suggests these areas might be opportunities for improvement • Professional learning supports are spread across multiple departments, which requires careful collaboration for effective delivery

Leadership & Management captures a broader scope of central services than OSPI's Central Administration

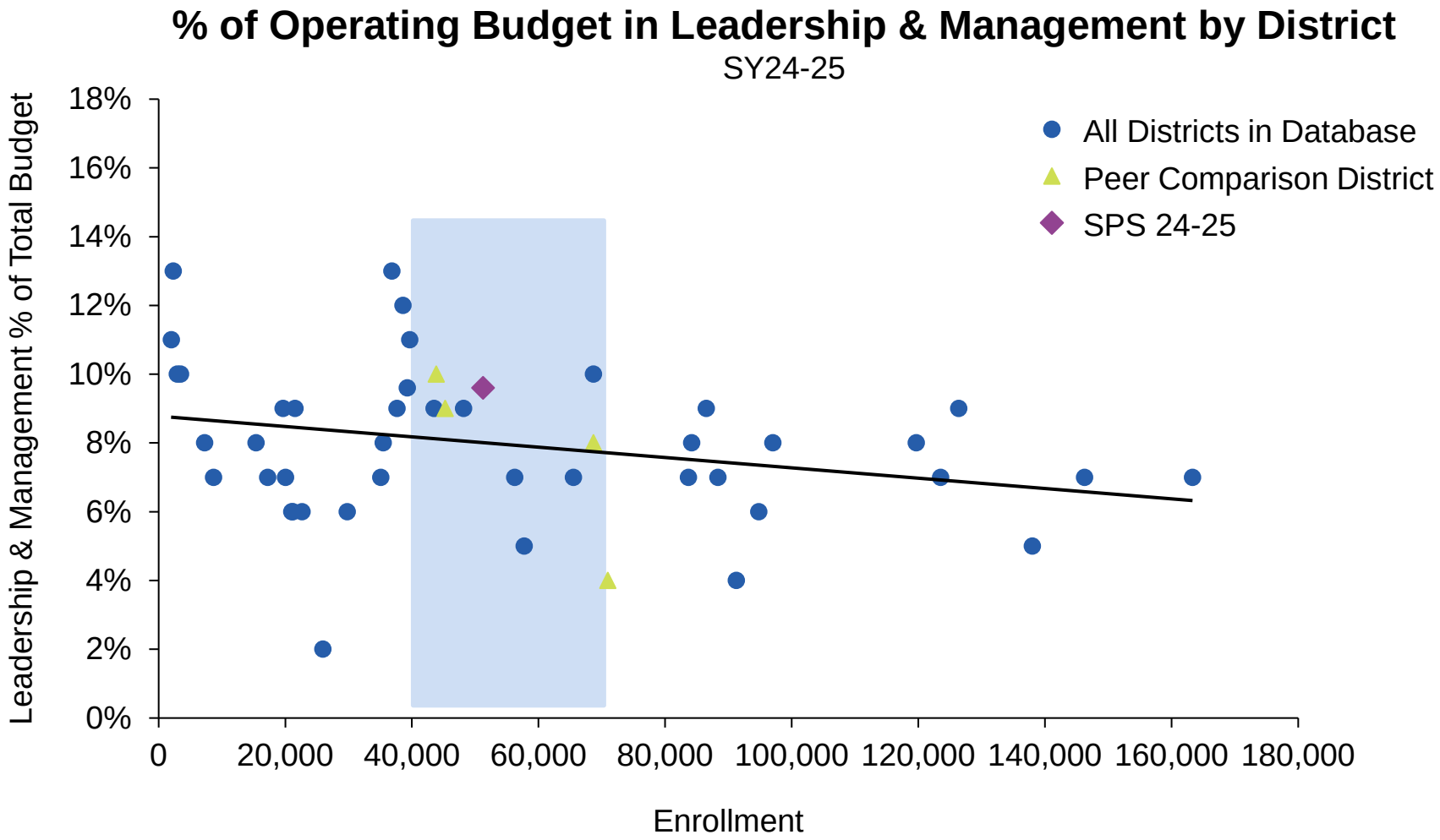
	Central Administration per OSPI	Leadership & Management per ERS
Purpose	Tracks district-level functions for state reporting and financial oversight	Identifies governance & management overhead to assess strategic use of central resources to enable cross district comparisons
What's Included	District-level roles not tied to individual schools	District governance **and** central office management of shared services
Methodology	Based on **activity codes** grouped analytically; Excludes school-based roles	Based on **function, role type, and reporting structure**
% of Budget	5.5% (5.7% of PreK-12 Operating Budget)	9.6% of PreK-12 Operating Budget

Context

There is a key distinction between which resources are included in OSPI's Central Administration Category and ERS's Leadership and Management. ERS' Leadership and Management methodology reports a higher figure because it includes central office management of departments that wouldn't be considered central admin like business systems, technology and support, risk management and insurance, as well as other managers and coordinators in various departments. The two measures differ in exactly what they count as administration, but directionally they look at similar spending.

Source: Accounting Manual for Public School Districts in the State of Washington 2024-25

SPS's spending on Leadership & Management is in line with districts of similar size



Source: SPS FY25 Budgeted Expenditures; ERS Comparative Database

Context

In this section we focus on the role of central office functions. This analysis shifts from spending by function to total central office spending—comparing Seattle's Central Office spending to that of other large urban districts.

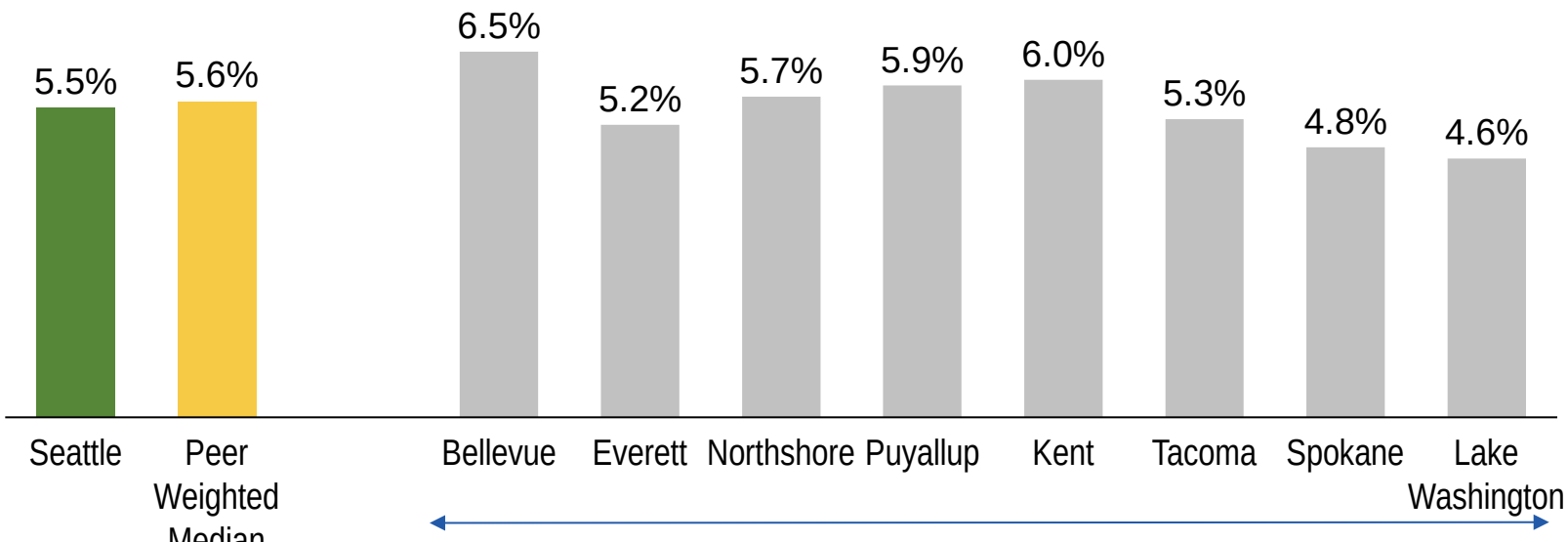
Explore

Seattle spends about 10% of its budget on Leadership & Management—an amount similar to districts with around 50,000 students. While larger districts may spend slightly less due to economies of scale, Seattle's spending is appropriate for its current size.

5.5% of SPS' budgeted spending is on central administration, slightly below the peer median for state districts

Percent Spend on Central Administration by Washington State Peer Districts

SY23-24



-0.1%	---	+0.9%	-0.4%	+0.1%	+0.3%	+0.4%	-0.3%	-0.8%	-1.0%	% Diff From Median

Source: OSPI 2023-24 School District Financial Reporting Summary 2023-24; Accounting Manual for Public School Districts in the State of Washington 2024-25

Context

The previous slide evaluated Seattle's spend on district management against other large urban districts, and this slide compares Seattle to its most similar peers in Washington state using a similar metric – central administration.

Explore

Seattle spends practically the same on central administration as other Washington districts, roughly at 5.5% of total budget. Washington districts range from 4.5% to 6.5%.

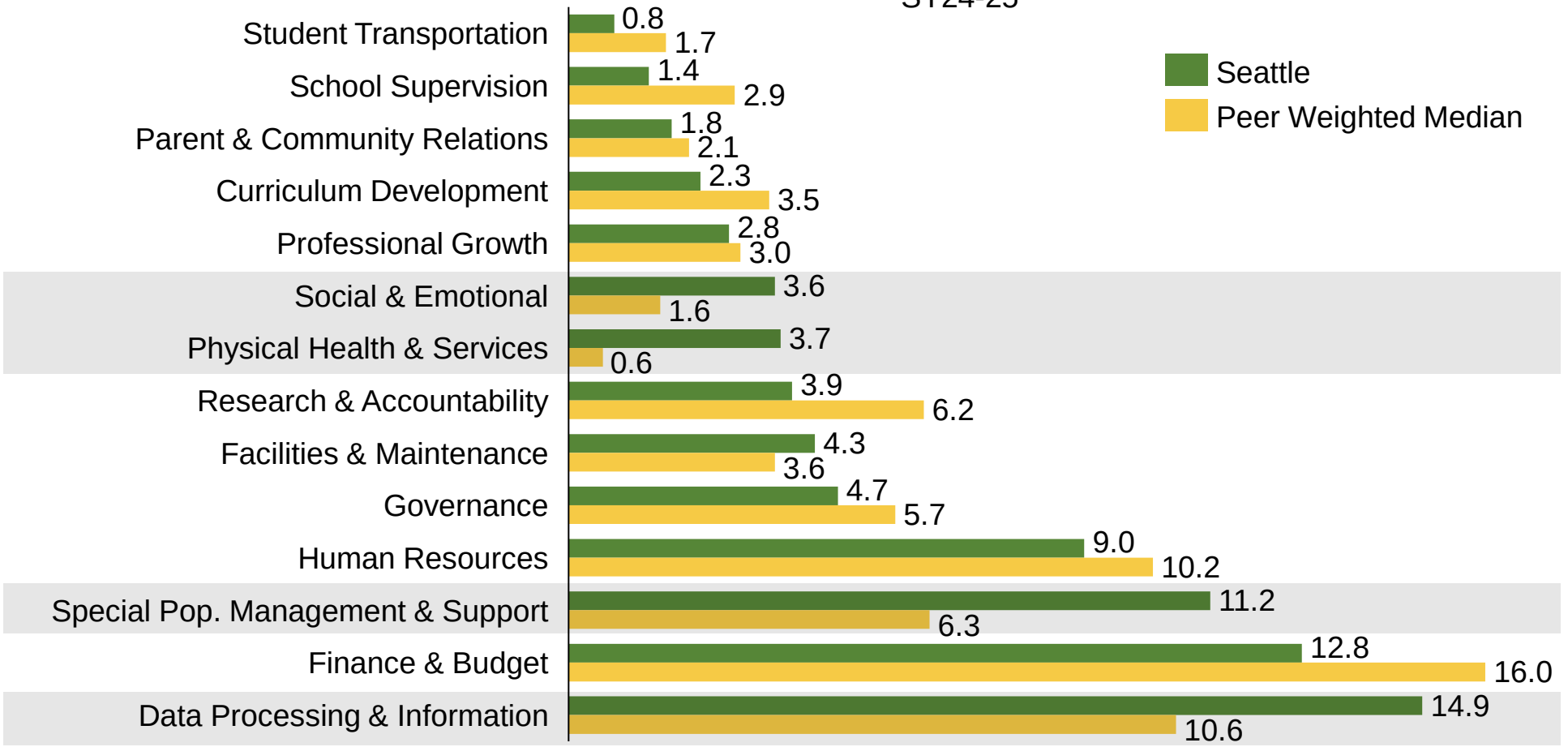
Consider

Even if spending patterns are similar to state peer districts, there may still be an opportunity to identify resourcing efficiencies. Nationally, some districts have identified opportunities to leverage third party providers, increase managerial spans of review, consolidate duplicative contracts or licenses, or discontinue low impact initiatives or contracts.

Comparative staffing data allows us to identify *potential* areas for further inquiry within Central Office function

Percent of Total Budget Spent on Central Office Functions

SY24-25



Note: Only captures 77.1 FTE of SPS' total L&M FTE/10K (97.1). See additional information in the appendix section
Source: SPS FY25 Expenditures; ERS Comparative Database

Context

Seattle spends similar to Washington peers and national comparisons for Central Office, but there might still be pockets of opportunity for streamlining in specific district functions. This slide examines Seattle's Central Office spend on all its functions to identify areas of unusually high spend.

Explore

Seattle is lower than national comparison districts in several Central Office functions, but places of higher spend include socioemotional supports, physical health services, special population supports, and data processing and information.

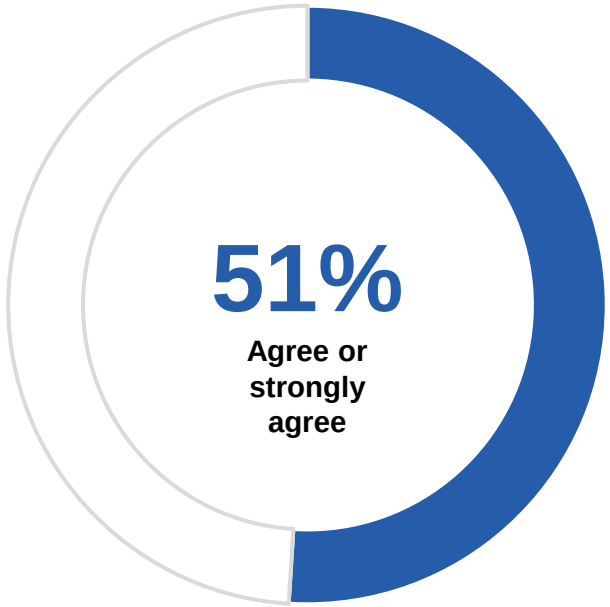
Consider

Please note that higher spending isn't inherently negative—it may reflect efforts to meet specific student or operational needs. In the areas where Seattle is spending more, what needs might the district be addressing? Are there any areas that seem like opportunities to better redistribute resources?

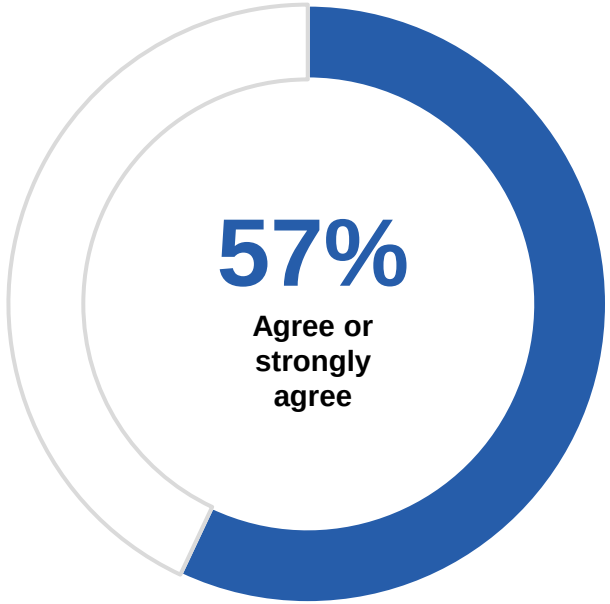
Stakeholders named coordination, coherence and alignment in the central office as challenges

Principal Survey Results

Central office departments coordinate effectively to provide integrated support to my school.



Central Office departments are aligned on a shared vision for the student and teacher experience



Source: SPS Focus Groups with Principals, Central Office departments, and Educators

Context

Effective coordination across Central Office departments is essential to fully support schools and district staff. Without it, critical functions may be duplicated—or missed entirely. Similarly, a lack of shared vision across departments can lead to fragmented efforts that fail to reinforce one another.

This slide includes data explicitly from the survey of principals in SPS and is paired with additional themes from focus groups in the explore section below.

Explore

Feedback from principals and staff suggests that, in Seattle, coordination and coherence across departments is currently inconsistent. For example, only 51% of principals in Seattle agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that central office departments coordinate effectively to support their school, and only 57% of school leaders agreed or strongly agreed that central office departments are aligned on a shared vision for the student and teacher experience. These themes were tested directly in focus groups with central staff and other educators who affirmed these key challenges.

Deep Dive: Multiple departments and staff in SPS have core professional development responsibilities

Department	Positions & Roles with Professional Learning Responsibility	Total FTE
Human Resources	Consulting Teacher Program (1.0 FTE Manager, 17.0 FTE Teachers) Professional Development & Instructional Services Specialists (2.0 FTE) Teacher Leadership Cadre (2.0 FTE Coordinators) Peer Assistance and Review Program (1.0 FTE Coordinator) Principal Leadership Coaches (5.0 FTE) Racial Equity & Advancement Office (1.0 FTE Directors, 4.0 FTE Specialists)	**33.0 FTE**
Academics	Content Area Curriculum Specialists (10.0 FTE) Academic Program Managers (6.0 FTE) Digital Learning Manager (1.0 FTE) Curriculum, Assessment, & Instruction Specialist (1.0 FTE)	**18.0 FTE**
Student & School Support	Student Support Services Consulting Teachers (13.0 FTE) Bilingual Instructional Services School Coaches (6.0 FTE) Advanced Learning Program Specialists (3.0 FTE) Special Education Program Specialists (10.0 FTE) Regional Executive Directors of Schools (5.0 FTE) AAMA Director (1.0 FTE) Restorative Practices Program (1.0 FTE Manager, 3.0 FTE Coaches)	**42.0 FTE**

Note: The positions listed here are those that have professional development responsibilities (including mentoring, instructional coaching, leadership development, curriculum implementation, leadership development, etc.), so this list is not a comprehensive representation of the department staff
Source: SPS FY25 Budgeted Expenditures; ERS Comparative Database

Context

Distributing professional learning support across many departments in Central Office isn't necessarily an issue – as long as the departments coordinate with each other smoothly to avoid ambiguous role division and duplicative content. If departments prepare district-wide professional developments in silos, the district runs the risk of misaligned staff support.

Explore

In this example, we see that multiple central office departments have significant numbers of staff with responsibilities around professional learning. Note that this table is not intended to be an exhaustive list of staff with these responsibilities. Instead, we include it to highlight inherent coherence and coordination risks which data on the previous slide suggests may be a challenge.

Central Office: Closing

Go Back to Table of Contents

Insight Summary

- Seattle's total spend for Central Office (percent of total district budget) is similar to national and state peers when using the respective metrics (L&M and Central Administration)
- While total Central Office spend is in line with peers, Seattle's Central Office spends more on socioemotional supports, physical health services, special population supports, and data processing and information
- Principals and district staff expressed differing views on whether the Central Office operates with coherence, coordination, and alignment, suggesting opportunities for improvement in these areas. For example, professional learning supports are dispersed across multiple departments, requiring strong collaboration to ensure effective delivery.

Potential Action Implications

- Seattle's total Central Office spend is on par with state and national peers. Seattle may consider opportunities to redesign departments and functions to drive efficiency and effectiveness.
- Professional learning supports, which are currently dispersed across multiple departments, represent an opportunity for Central Office redesign to enhance both their impact and the effectiveness of service delivery.
- Coherence, coordination, and alignment within the Central Office emerged as challenges in discussions with both school and district leaders. To address this, Seattle's Central Office could develop a stronger internal vision and establish more effective collaborative and coordinated structures and services to ensure departments work in a unified direction.

Analytic Insights

School Resourcing

School Resourcing: At a Glance

Why it Matters	• **How much** matters to schools and students. Research consistently shows that additional funding is required to support students who have more intensive learning needs, including students in poverty, students without English proficiency, and students with disabilities. • **How well** money is distributed across schools, and what that money is used for, is also fundamental to leading to student outcomes. Equitable school funding can enable students to access many needed resources (access to supplemental staff, lower student to staff ratios, among others) and can lead to accelerated learning – but only when those dollars are used well.
How it's Assessed	The analysis in this school resourcing section focus more on "how much," including the how much SPS budgets at different schools, and includes data on: • Differentiation in funding by student populations and levels of school need • Types of resources achieved through supplemental funding
Report Insights	• Seattle principals across all school levels do *not* feel that funds are allocated fairly based on school needs. • In Seattle, a school's rate of students in poverty is highly predictive of the school's proficiency rate. • The elementaries and secondaries with highest rates of poverty in Seattle receive about 40% more funds than the elementaries and secondaries with lowest rates of poverty, though this additional funding lowers to around 20% after accounting for funds related to special education and bilingual services. • A school's poverty rates drive the vast majority of supplemental resources in general education settings.

The SPS Board of Directors set a guardrail that directly connects to how schools are resourced in the district

0025 Guardrails for the District

District Guardrails

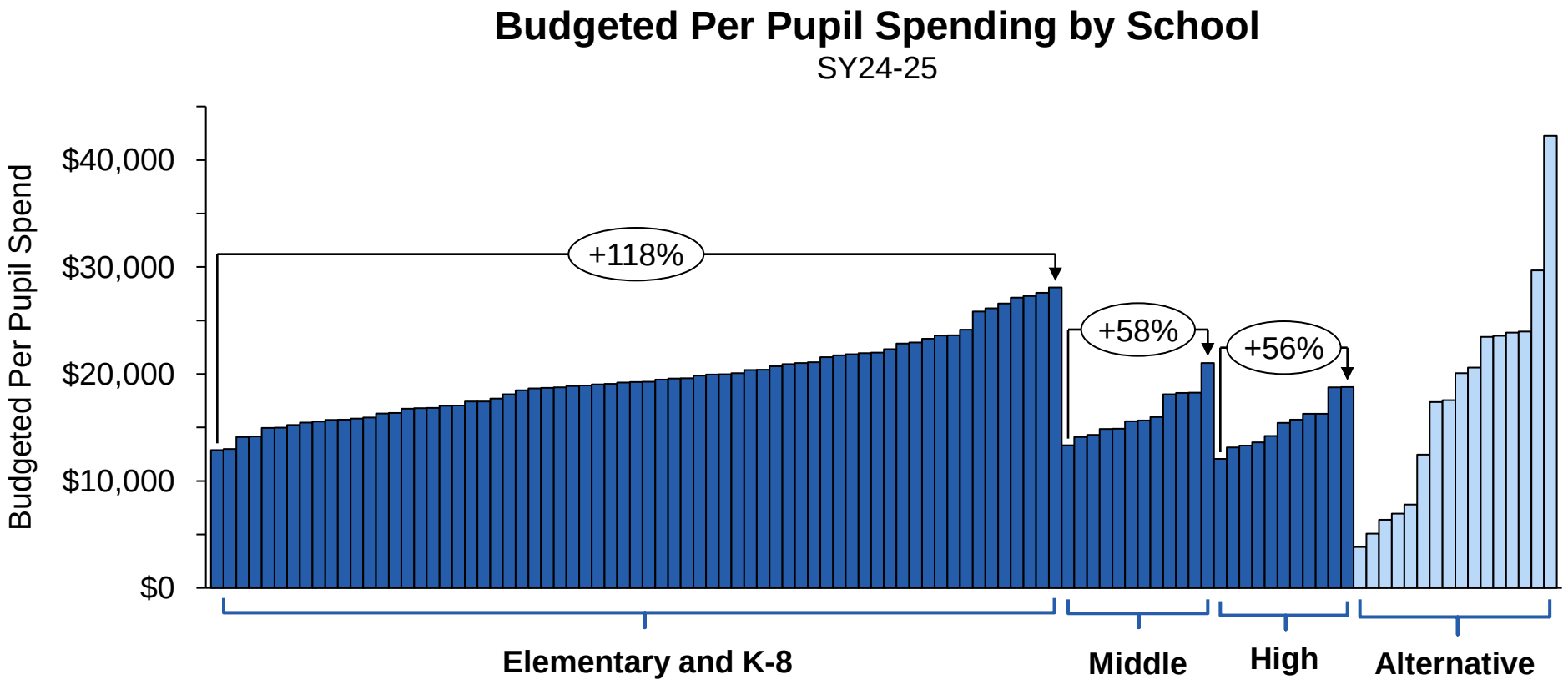
The Board adopts these District Guardrails consistent with Board Policy No. 1010, Oversight and Progress Monitoring:

1. The Superintendent will not allow a student's school assignment, family income, race or ethnicity, need, or identity to determine access to high standards, rigorous programming, high-quality teaching, and supports.
2. The Superintendent will not allow the existence of any learning environments that do not promote physical and emotional safety.
3. The Superintendent will not allow adult behaviors in school buildings and classrooms that are misaligned with the anti-racist values of Seattle Public Schools, including the use of curricula, materials, and practices that are inconsistent with those values.
4. The Superintendent will not make major decisions or bring major recommendations to the Board without first implementing an engagement strategy that includes students, parents, teachers, and community members.
5. The Superintendent will not allow people, time, money, and other resources to be allocated in a manner inconsistent with student need.

> The Superintendent will not allow people, time, money, and other resources to be allocated in a manner inconsistent with student need.

Source: Seattle Public Schools

Per pupil budgeted spending varies across SPS schools, with some elementaries spending twice as much per pupil as others



Note: This per pupil figure contains only resources that are directly on school budgets as well as centrally funded items that play out at schools on a regular and predictable basis such as security, custodial, etc.; Alternative schools include the following, from lowest to highest $pp: Interagency Re-Engagement, Interagency at KC Youth, TOPS K-8, BRIDGES Transition, Cascade Parent Partnership, Interagency Academy, The Center School, Salmon Bay K-8, Orca K-8, Nova High School, Seattle World School, Pathfinder K-8, Thornton Creek Elementary, Middle College High School, Licton Springs K-8, Sugiyama High School
Source: SPS FY25 Budgeted Expenditures; School File (SY24-25)

Context

Variation in spending across schools happens at all districts – the question is *how large* this variation is and whether it aligns with *student need* and *district strategy*. In the coming slides we will explore what contributes to the variation in spending.

Explore

The data to the left shows the budgeted dollar per pupil spending at each school in SPS for SY24-25.

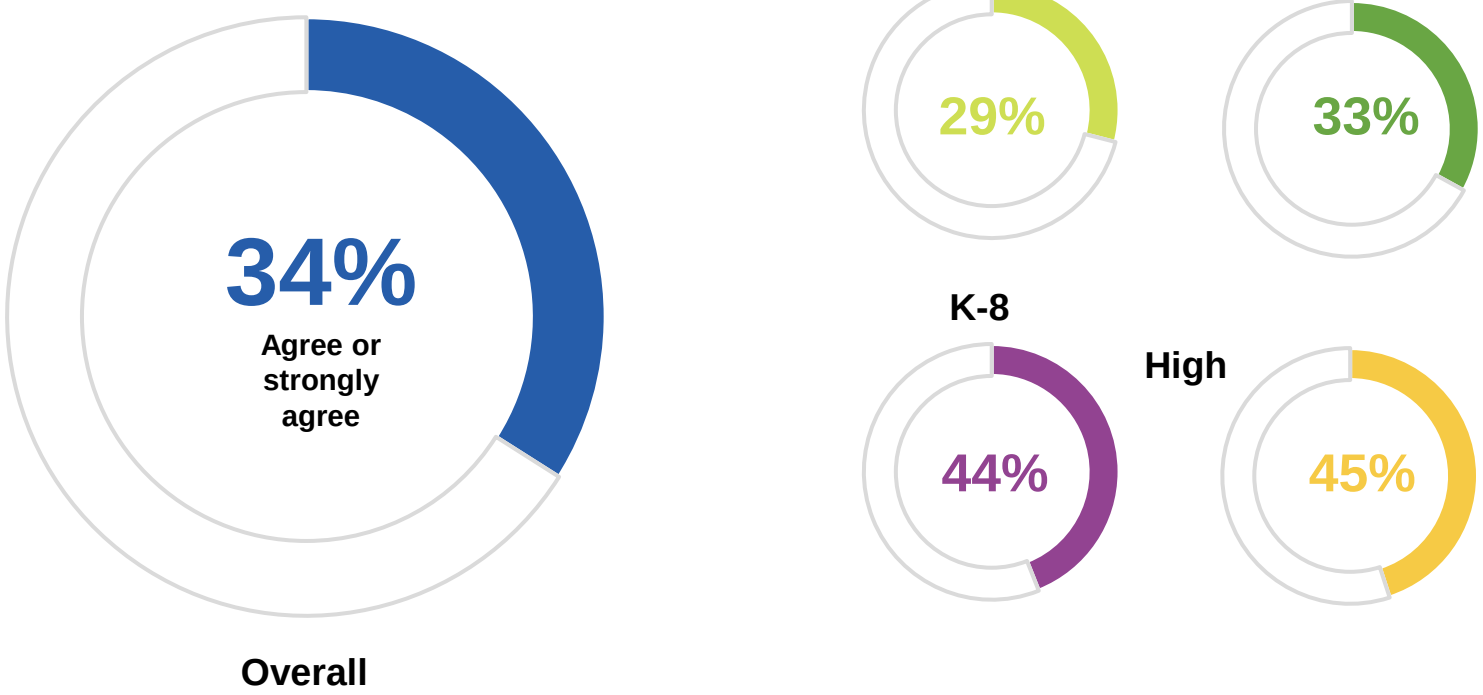
Elementaries and K-8s range in per pupil spend from $12,900 to $28,100 – meaning that some elementaries and K-8s are budgeted to spend over twice as much per pupil as others. For middle schools and high schools, the range is more limited and the schools with higher per pupil cost spend 58% and 56% more than the schools with lowest per pupil cost, respectively.

While budgeted per pupil spending at Alternative schools is included in this chart, this analysis did not explicitly look at drivers of spending variation for these types of schools.

Principals in SPS highlighted questions around overall resourcing, measures of need, and the types of positions they receive through the school funding formula

Principal Survey Results

Positions and dollars are allocated fairly based on my school's needs



Source: SPS Principal Survey; February 2025, Principal Focus Groups March/April 2025

Context

Before assessing funding equity and fairness of resource allocations based on the data, this chart includes data from principals in SPS about how they perceive the fairness of allocations within the school resourcing model in SPS.

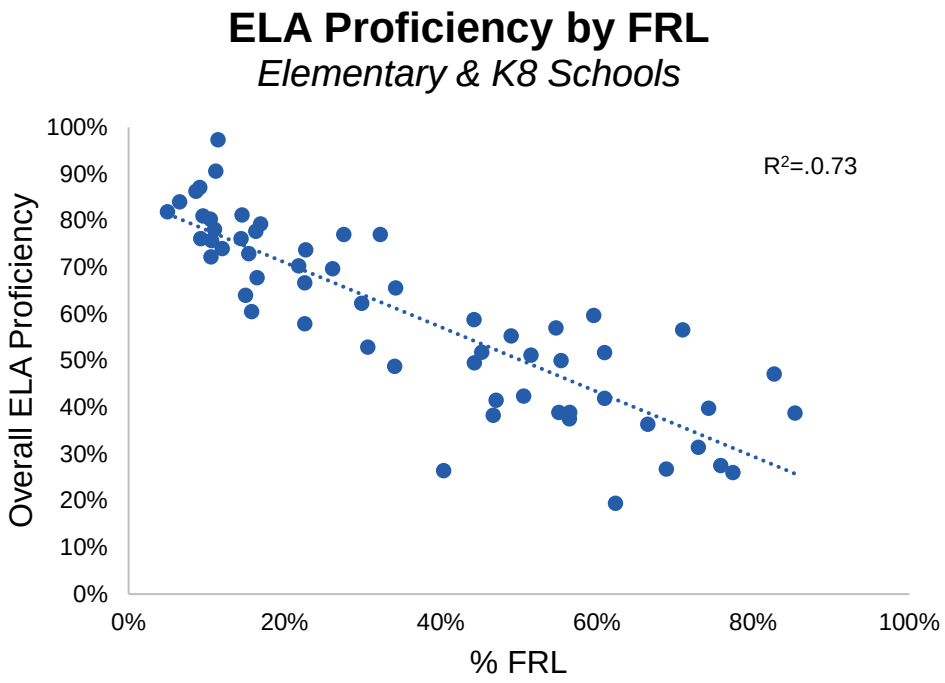
Explore

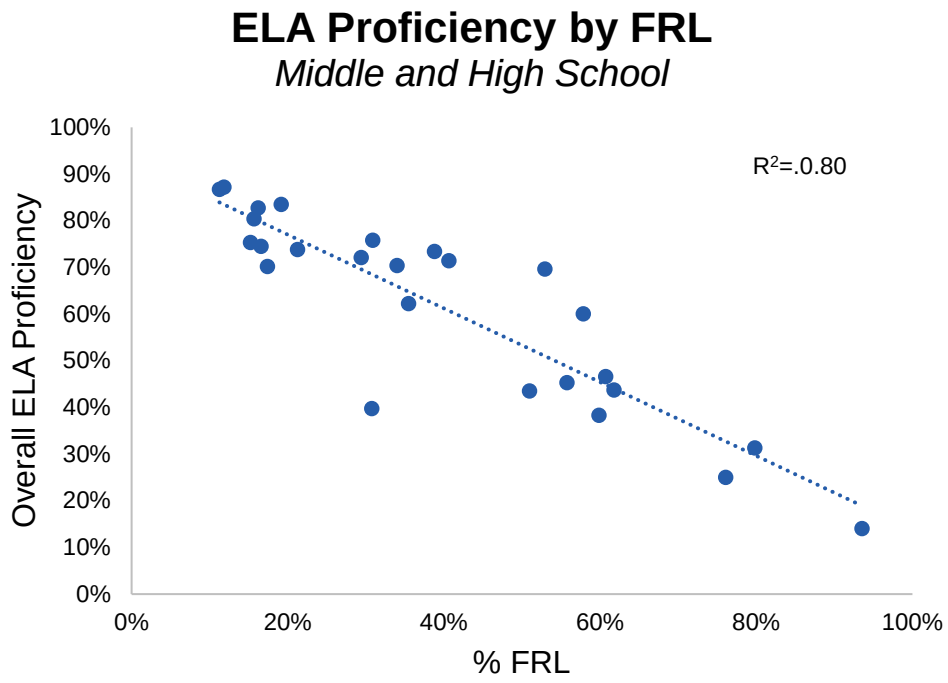
Across all school levels, most Seattle principals reported not feeling that positions and dollars are allocated fairly based on school needs. Ratings were especially low for elementary and middle school principals.

Hear Directly

Seattle principals commented on their lack of capacity to fund intensive intervention or meet the full suite of student needs with their current school funding. They also wondered whether the current funding formula has measures that reflect current student needs post-pandemic.

In SPS, as with districts nationwide, there is a strong relationship between poverty and outcomes





Source: SY23-24 School Enrollment; SY23-24 SBA Results

Context

The SPS Guardrails outline the importance of aligning resources to need, and this chart is looking at the relationship between one measure of need – Free and Reduced-Price Lunch (FRL) – and proficiency.

Explore

In Seattle, schools with high rates of students in poverty have lower proficiency rates across both elementary and secondary. The graphs shown here use ELA proficiency and results are similar using Math proficiency. In the next slide we will begin to examine student need alongside school funding levels to help answer questions around to what extent resources are aligned to need.

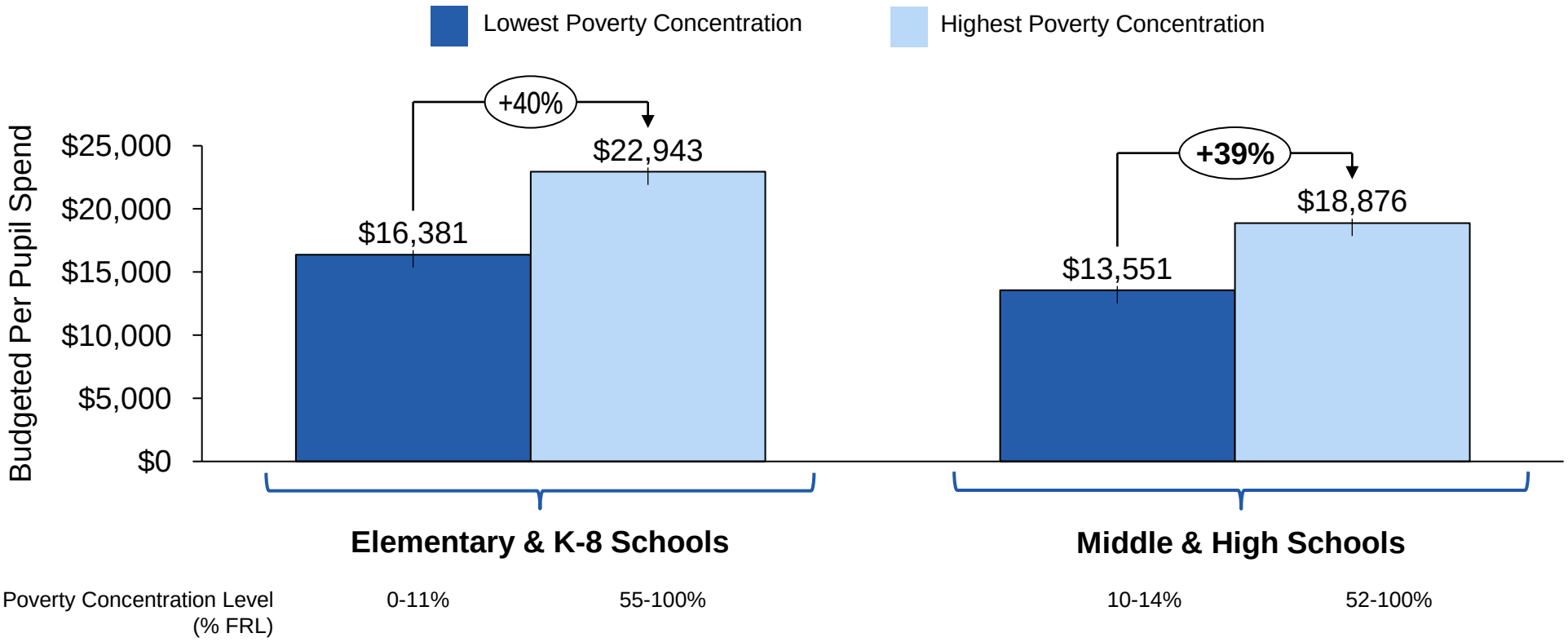
Consider

Free and Reduced-Price Lunch (FRL) is just *one* measure of potential need. Given the noted relationship between FRL and student outcomes, this analysis uses this metric in the subsequent slides. However, it will be critical for SPS to review its school funding formula to understand how other needs should be resourced as well.

Schools with higher concentrations of poverty receive additional funding… but what contributes to that?

Per Pupil Budgeted Spend by School Poverty Level

SY24-25



Source: SPS FY25 Budgeted Expenditures; School File (SY24-25)

Context

Students in poverty face a range of challenges – and increased school funding is critical to ensuring that the increased needs of these students can be addressed. Do high-poverty schools in Seattle receive enough additional funding to meet these needs?

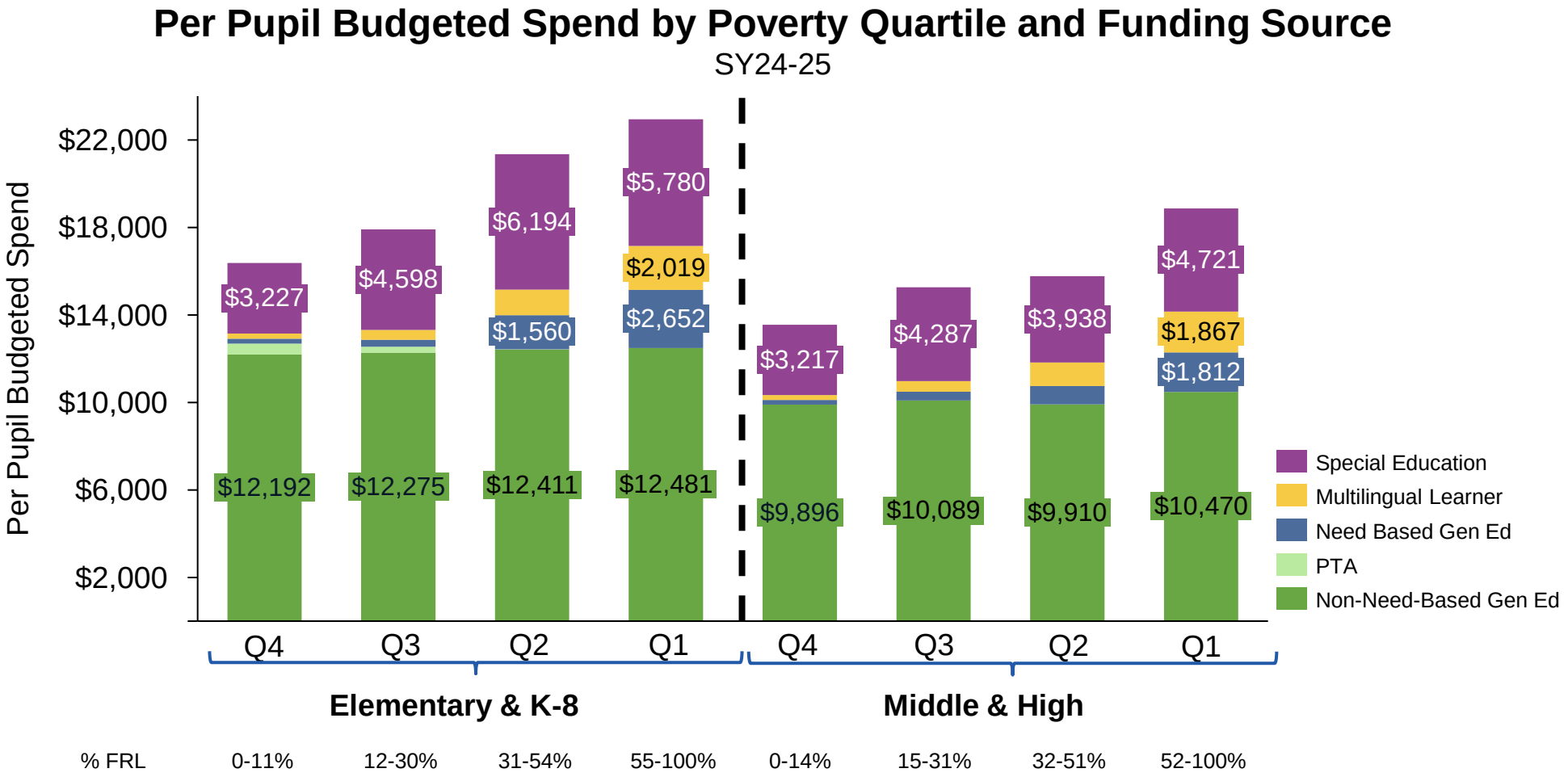
Explore

To understand how resources vary by student need, we compared schools with the highest poverty concentrations to those with the lowest. On average, elementary schools serving the highest-poverty students are budgeted to spend 40% more per pupil than elementary schools with the lowest poverty levels, with secondary schools showing a similar 39% difference.

Consider

Where does the remaining 40% of funding go? The upcoming slides will break down the spending details on how the resources are used.

Overall, special education and bilingual specific resources are the primary source of variation across poverty quartiles



Note: Need Based Gen Ed includes priority school resources, poverty dollars, and differential staffing
Sources: SPS FY25 Budgeted Expenditures; School File (SY24-25)

Explore

The last slide showed that the Seattle schools with highest rates of students in poverty receive about 40% more funds.

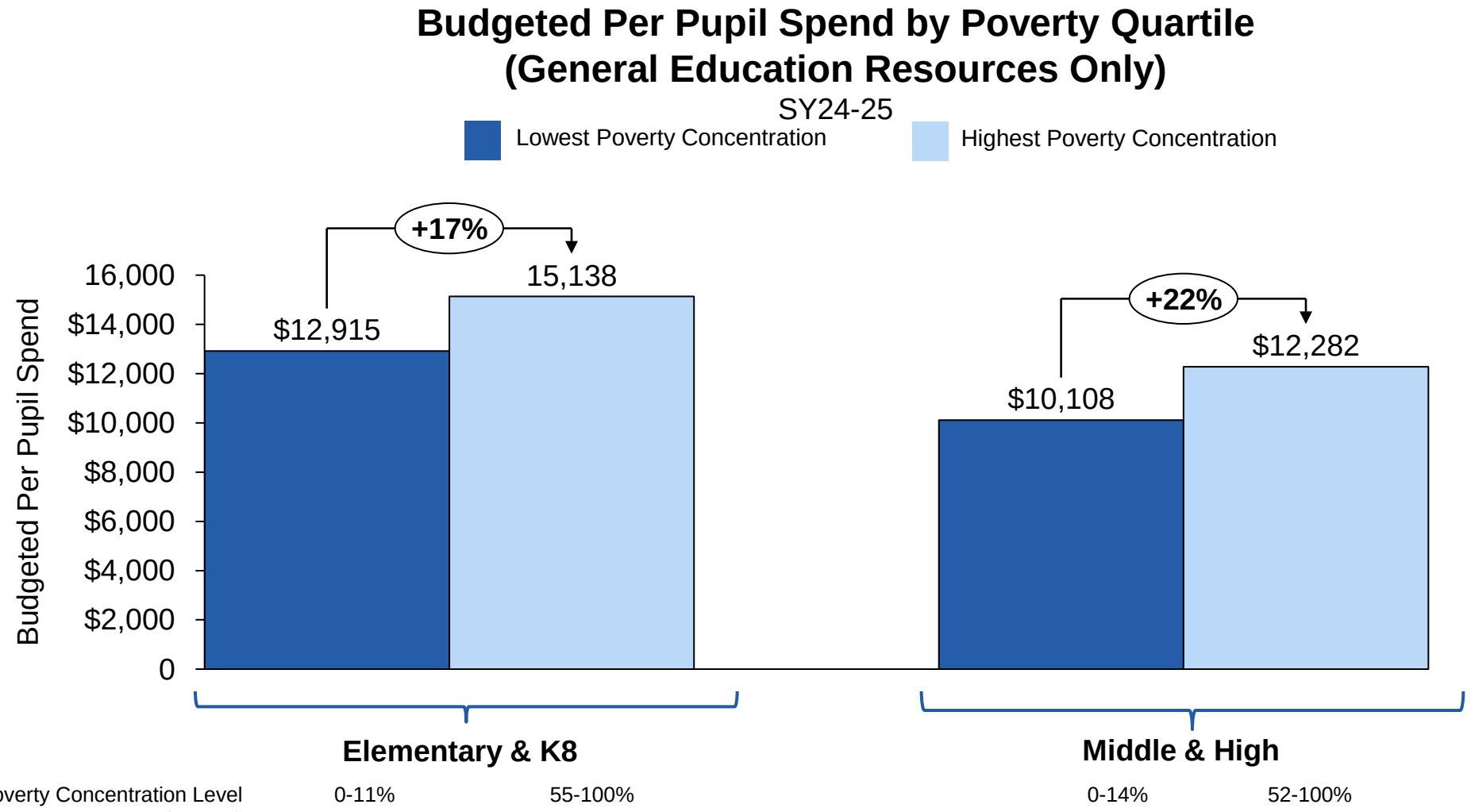
In order to make meaning of the additional resourcing, this chart begins to unpack different types of spending by student groups or source.

For example, the current graph looks at the sources of funding: special education, English learner funds, higher need groups in general education (such as students in poverty), general education funds for all student groups, and PTA.

Schools in all quartiles receive similar non-need based general education funding, but schools with higher poverty do receive more funds across all dimensions of need – poverty, English learners, and special education. PTA funds are larger in schools with lower poverty levels but comprise a small amount of overall school resourcing.

What's notable is that most of the additional funding for higher poverty schools is the product of special education and MLL resourcing.

Funding differences between schools with higher and lower poverty decrease when excluding special education and bilingual resources



Source: SPS FY25 Budgeted Expenditures; School File (SY24-25)

Explore

This slide looks at differences in school funding across quartiles again, but now excludes resources related to special education or English learner support. The intent is to understand the magnitude of differentiation that occurs in general education funding.

As can be seen in the graph, when removing these sources of additional spending, the levels of differentiation decrease – from its original 40% in elementary and 39% in secondary earlier in this report to 17% and 22% respectively.

This result tells us that, after accounting for the increased special education and English learner needs and funds at schools with high poverty, the supplemental funding at these schools is not as high as it initially seems.

The magnitude of this additional funding is in the low to mid-range, when compared to national peer districts.

A school's poverty rates drive the majority of supplemental resources in general education settings

Resource	Description	Need Factor	Applicable Levels				Financial Impact	
			ES	K8	MS	HS	Incremental Investment	% of All School Based Resources
Title I / LAP and Equity Dollars	Schools receive more *total* funding based on the number of students in poverty they serve.	FRL	X	X	X	X	$24.5M	3.5%
Classroom Teachers	High-poverty elementary schools receive *more* teaching positions based on their poverty tier.	FRL	X	X			$6.2M	0.9%
Priority School	Priority ES/K8 and MS receive tutors and coordinators for Team Read, as well as school coaches for early literacy/math	AAM	X	X	X		$2.7M	0.4%
Social Workers	Higher need equity tier schools receive additional social workers	Equity Tier	X	X			$1.0M	0.1%
Counselor	Higher need equity tier schools receive additional social workers	Equity Tier		X	X	X	$0.2M	<0.1%

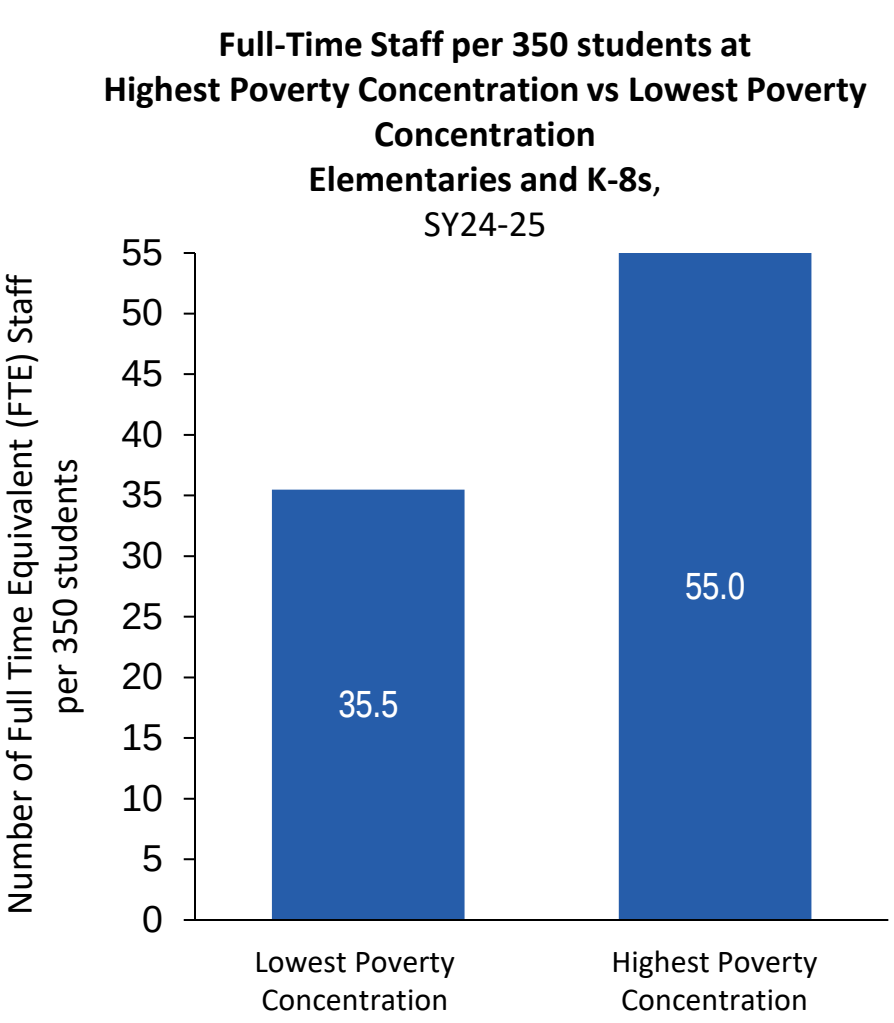
Note: for personnel spend, employee costs include salaries, retirement benefits, and non-retirement benefits. AAM stands for African American Male.
Source: SPS FY25 Budgeted Expenditures; School File (SY24-25)

Explore

Last slide we saw that, after accounting for special education and English learner funds, the schools with highest poverty rates get roughly 20% more than the schools with lowest poverty rates. This slide shows all supplemental fund streams that Seattle delivers to schools beyond their base staffing - what we earlier called need-based general education funds. This chart reflects that the majority of these supplemental funds are given to schools based on their poverty level – specifically Title I funds, LAP funds (learning assistance), equity dollars, and supplemental classroom teachers.

Overall, the ~20% additional funding for students in general education settings is driven by FRL. And, most of the differentiation is driven by the Title I funding formula and not differences in Seattle's underlying school funding formula, which is called its Weighted Staffing Standards formula, or WSS.

Deep Dive: Staffing Levels at Elementary & K8



	Position	Foundational Staff at Lowest Poverty Concentration		Additional Staff at Highest Poverty Concentration
GEN ED	Teachers	18.0 FTE		0.5 FTE
	IAs	1.5 FTE		1.0 FTE
	Building Admin / Front Office	2.0 FTE		0.5 FTE
	Interventionist	1.0 FTE		1.5 FTE
	Social Worker & Counselor	0.5 FTE		0.5 FTE
	Coach	0.0 FTE		0.5 FTE
	Other	3.5 FTE		1.5 FTE
MULTILINGUAL	Teacher	0.5 FTE		2.0 FTE
	IAs	0.5 FTE		2.5 FTE
SPECIAL EDUCATION	Teachers	2.5 FTE		2.0 FTE
	IAs	4.0 FTE		6.0 FTE
	OT/PT/ST/Psych	1.5 FTE		1.0 FTE
	Total Staff	**35.5 FTE**		**19.5 FTE**

Note: Numbers may not fully align due to underlying rounding; figures rounded to nearest 0.5 FTE
Source: SPS FY25 Budgeted Expenditures; School File (SY24-25)

Context

The previous slides showed how per-pupil funding varies between low- and high-FRL schools. This chart illustrates how those funding levels translate into staffing.

Explore

Consistent with earlier slides, most of the differentiated resourcing comes in the form of additional special education and MLL staffing. Higher FRL schools do receive additional staffing in the form of positions like interventionists, coaches, social workers and counselors as well as other positions.

Consider

Our goal in sharing this data is to prompt two important questions:
(1) Does the staffing in lower-need schools reflect the types of student and staff experiences that SPS aspires to create systemwide?
(2) And, are schools serving higher-need populations receiving differentiated resourcing in ways that are sufficient to create the types of experiences students and staff need in those schools to be successful?

School Resourcing: Closing

Go Back to Table of Contents

Insight Summary

- Seattle principals across all school levels do *not* feel that funds are allocated fairly based on their school's needs.
- In Seattle, a school's rate of students in poverty is highly predictive of the school's proficiency rate.
- The elementaries and secondaries with highest rates of poverty in Seattle receive about 40% more funds than the elementaries and secondaries with lowest rates of poverty, though this additional funding lowers to around 20% after accounting for funds related to special education and bilingual services.
- A school's poverty rates drive the vast majority of supplemental resources in general education settings.

Potential Action Implications

- Core to understanding *how much* to resource schools is clearly articulating the desired student and staff experience for all schools and how that experience should be differentiated for SPS' highest needs schools.
- Then, SPS can review and realign resource allocation practices to ensure funding is distributed more transparently and equitably across schools, particularly those serving higher-need students, and positions/resources are allocated in ways that create the desired student and staff experiences.
- Lastly, measures of poverty are one of the primary means to allocate additional funding to schools. While there is a strong relationship between school-level poverty and school-level outcomes, that measure alone may not fully address student need. Given this, SPS should also explore additional need measures to include in its school funding formulas.

Analytic Insights

Elementary Portfolio

Elementary Portfolio: At a Glance

Why it Matters	• Schools need to be configured to provide services to students consistent with their needs and district strategy. • As school enrollment levels change over time, districts should adapt their portfolio of schools to ensure schools are capable of providing the intended student experience at a sustainable financial cost. • It's therefore critical for districts to have transparency on the ways in which their portfolio of schools enables or interferes with their ability to serve their students effectively.
How it's Assessed	• Number of schools under and above recommended enrollment thresholds (i.e. small and large) • Differences in student and staff experience between small and large schools
Report Insights	• Seattle has a high rate of small elementaries compared to national peers • Seattle experienced enrollment decline in the last eight years, but its portfolio has stayed largely unchanged during that same period • Small elementaries in Seattle do not spend much more per pupil, but this relative efficiency has come at the cost of the student and staff experience in the form of limited Specials, smaller teacher teams, multigrade classrooms, and lower quality buildings. • Higher need groups have a slightly higher concentration in small elementaries

Note: in Fall 2025, the Seattle community deeply explored the possibility of elementary and K-8 school closures and/or consolidations. The purpose of this report is not to reopen this decision, but rather to provide our assessment of how the current portfolio impacts resource allocation and student experiences – and outline actions available to address unmet needs.

This section also connects to the fifth District Guardrail

0025 Guardrails for the District

District Guardrails

The Board adopts these District Guardrails consistent with Board Policy No. 1010, Oversight and Progress Monitoring:

1. The Superintendent will not allow a student's school assignment, family income, race or ethnicity, need, or identity to determine access to high standards, rigorous programming, high-quality teaching, and supports.
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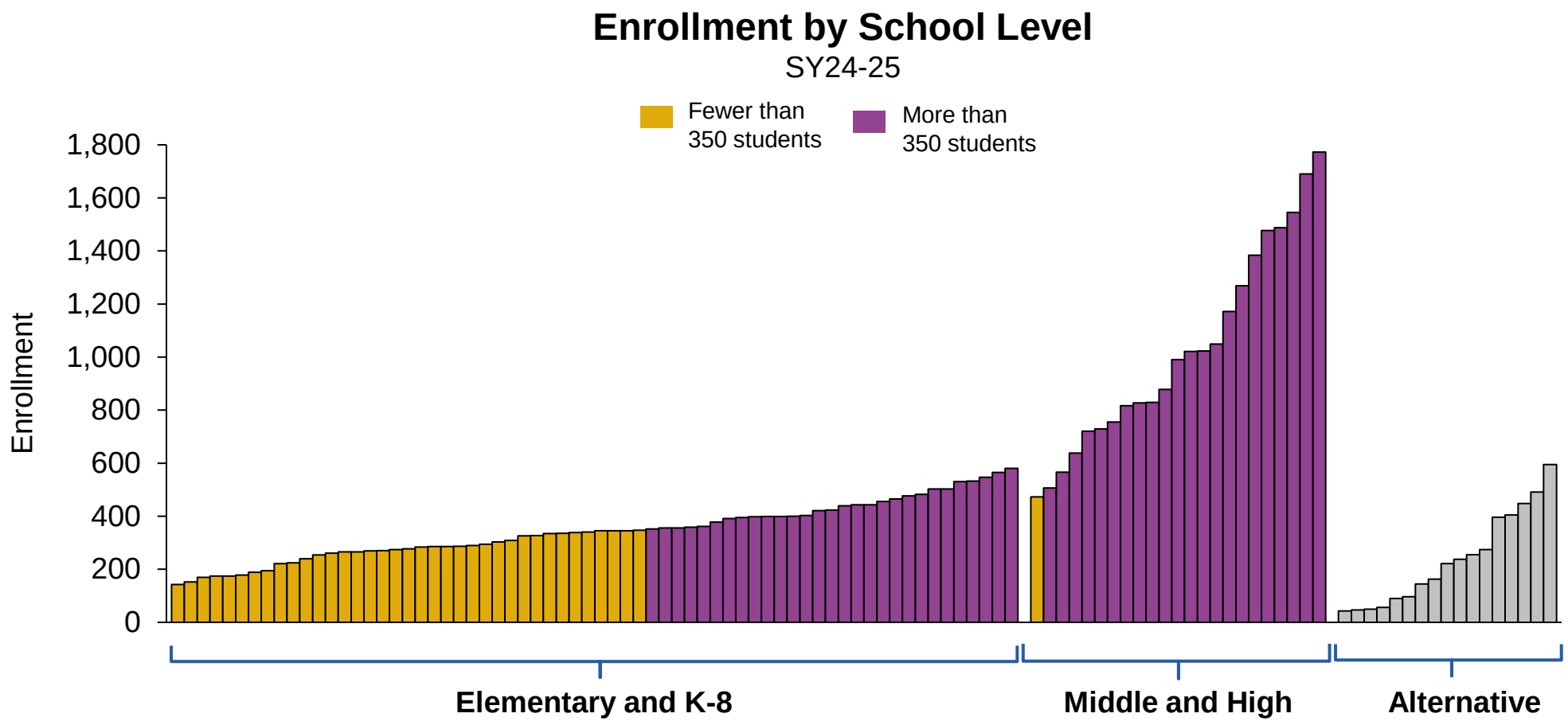
> The Superintendent will not allow people, time, money, and other resources to be allocated in a manner inconsistent with student need.

Source: Seattle Public Schools

The challenges around scale are most predominant at the elementary and K-8 level



Note: elementaries with less than 350 students are considered small, secondaries with less than 500 students are considered small; alternative schools encompass Interagency Re-Engagement, Interagency at KC Youth, TOPS, BRIDGES Transition, Cascade Parent Partnership, Interagency Academy, The Center School, Salmon Bay, Orca, Nova High School, Seattle World School, Pathfinder, Thornton Creek, Middle College, Licton Springs, Sugiyama High
Source: School and Student Files (SY24-25)

Context

We define elementary schools (K–5 or K–8) with fewer than 350 students and secondary schools with fewer than 500 students as 'small.' These thresholds are based on two factors: (1) our nationwide analysis shows that per-pupil costs rise significantly below these enrollment levels, and (2) schools of this size often struggle to form strong, collaborative teacher teams by grade or subject, which are essential for effective instruction.

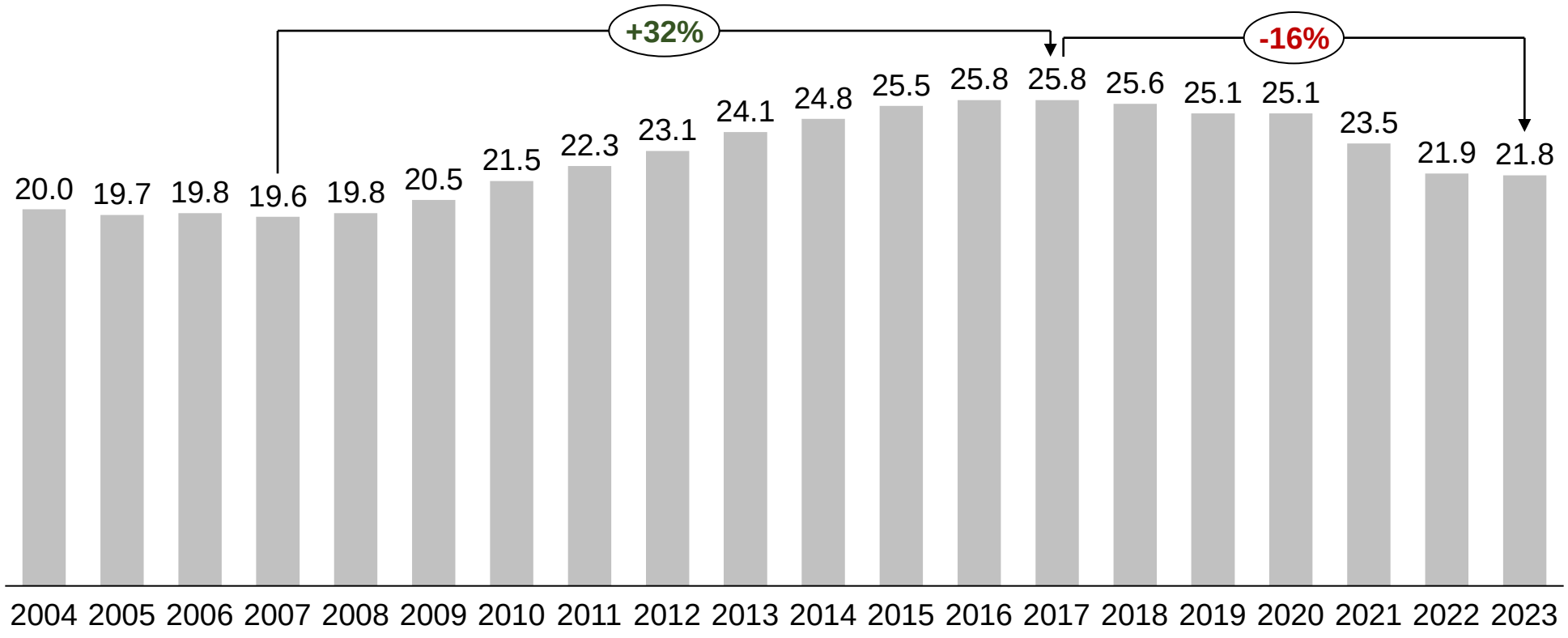
Explore

Nearly half of Seattle's elementary schools enroll fewer than 350 students, while almost all middle and high schools have enrollments above 500. This makes scale-related challenges primarily an elementary school issue in Seattle.

From 2007 to 2017 Seattle steadily gained elementary enrollment, but enrollment since then has dropped – especially post pandemic

SPS Enrollment in Elementary Grades (K through 5) by Year – In Thousands

SY03-04 through SY22-23



Source: NCES Enrollment Data (SY2003-04 to SY2022-23)

Context

The National Center of Education Statistics (NCES) has historical enrollment data for districts across multiple decades, and this data helps paint a picture of portfolio evolutions across the years. We will be using this data in the coming slides to shed light on how Seattle's current elementary portfolio fits with recent trends in student enrollment and school openings and closures.

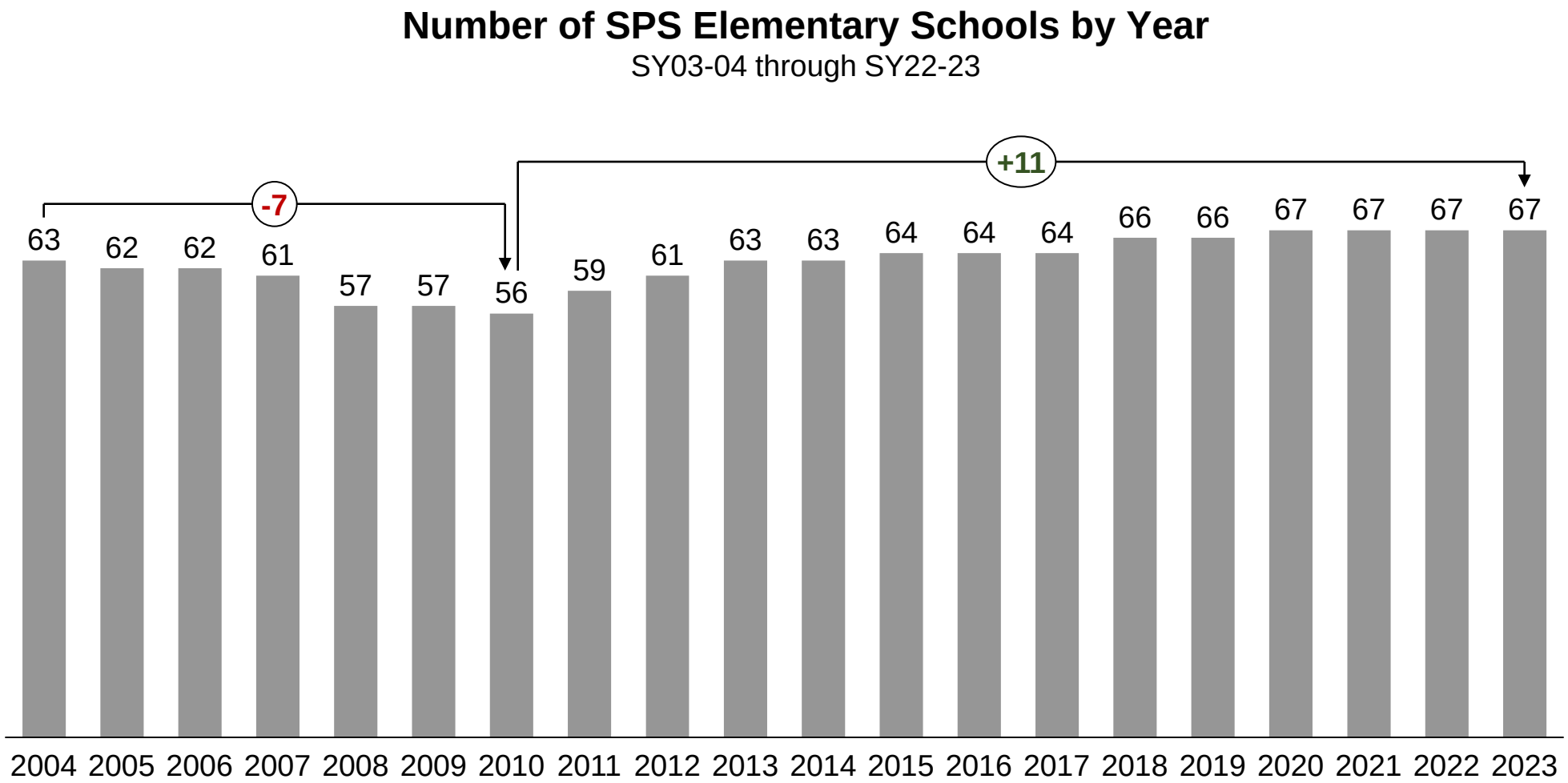
Explore

As the graph shows, Seattle enrollment in grades K-5 increased from 19,600 in 2007 up to 25,800 in 2017 (32% increase). From 2017 to 2023 enrollment declined by around 3,000 students. As such, enrollment in grades K-5 is similar to what it was nearly 20 years ago.

Consider

SPS has studied contributing factors to its enrollment decline. Some contributing factors have included shrinking kindergarten classes, which may be a product of the decline in the number of households with children in Seattle.

Seattle closed several elementaries in 2007 but reopened all of them in the next few years in response to enrollment gain



Source: NCES Enrollment Data (SY2003-04 to SY2022-23)

Context

Nationally, we often see that school closures occur much more slowly than school openings. While this trend seeks to minimize the impacts that school closures can have on communities, it also means that districts have a much easier time aligning their portfolio to enrollment during periods of enrollment gain than during periods of enrollment loss.

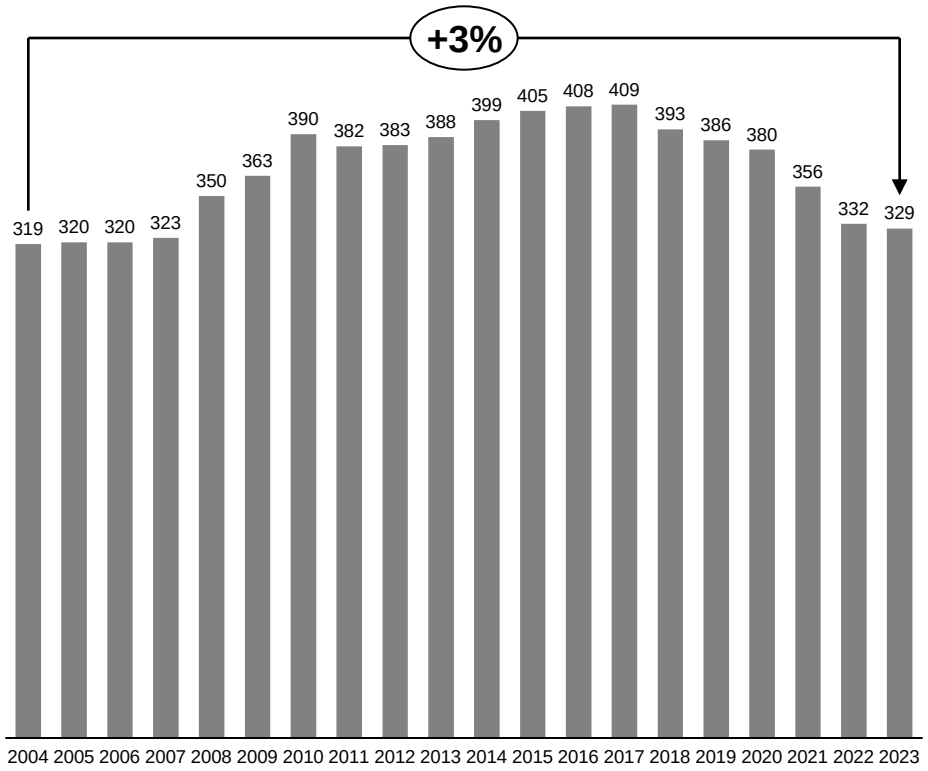
Explore

Seattle closed seven elementary schools from 2004 to 2009. Since then, it has reopened all seven schools and added an additional. The period of enrollment decline shown in the previous slide (2017-2023) did not translate to any reductions in the number of elementary schools.

Due to enrollment and portfolio trends, Seattle is where it was 20 years ago for avg. elementary size and rate of small elementaries

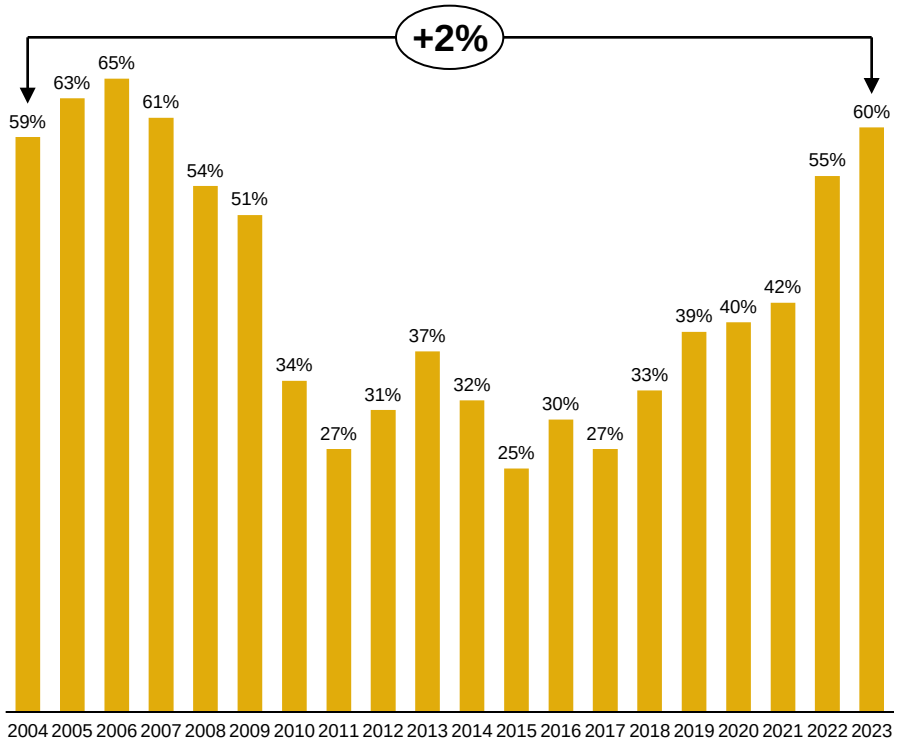
Average SPS Elementary School Enrollment

SY03-04 through SY22-23



% SPS Elementaries with less than 350 Students

SY03-04 through SY22-23



Note: elementaries with less than 350 students are considered small
Source: NCES Enrollment Data (SY2003-04 to SY2022-23)

Context

In the last two slides we showed changes in total elementary enrollment and changes in the number of elementaries schools. Adding these two pieces together, here we look at the changes in average elementary school size and the percent of elementaries schools we would consider as “small” (fewer than 350 students).

Explore

As of 2023, elementary enrollment averaged 329 for Seattle and 60% of elementaries served fewer than 350 students. Even though enrollment increased and the rate of small elementaries decreased in the early 2010s, Seattle’s elementary portfolio outlook is almost equivalent to what it was 20 years ago.

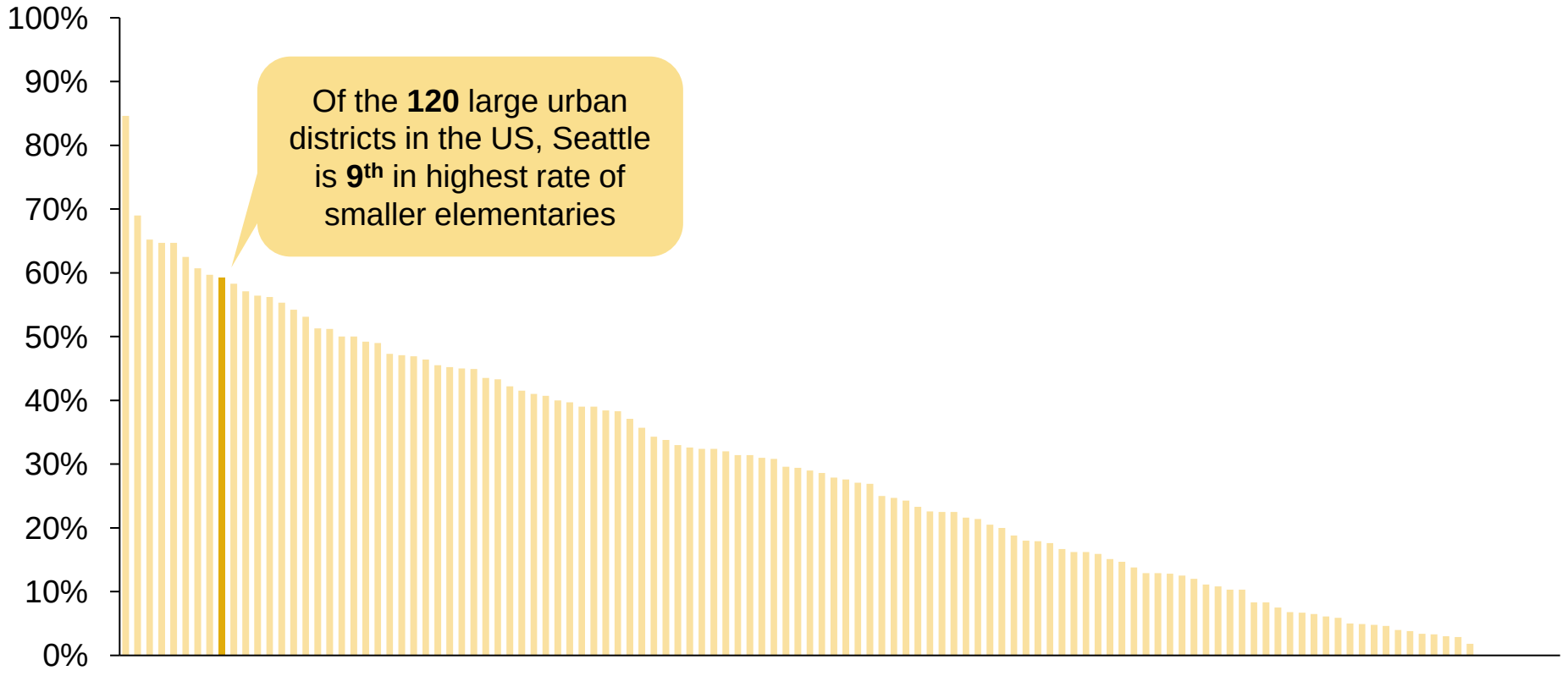
Consider

Given current enrollment patterns, how should the district plan and modify the school portfolio given demographic changes?

SPS has among the highest rates of elementary schools under 350 students for large urban districts nationally

Rate of Smaller Elementaries at SPS vs. All Other Large Urban Districts in the U.S.

SY2022-23



Note: elementaries with less than 350 students are considered small; districts included are in urban settings and each have at least 40 traditional schools
Source: NCES Enrollment Data (SY22-23)

Context

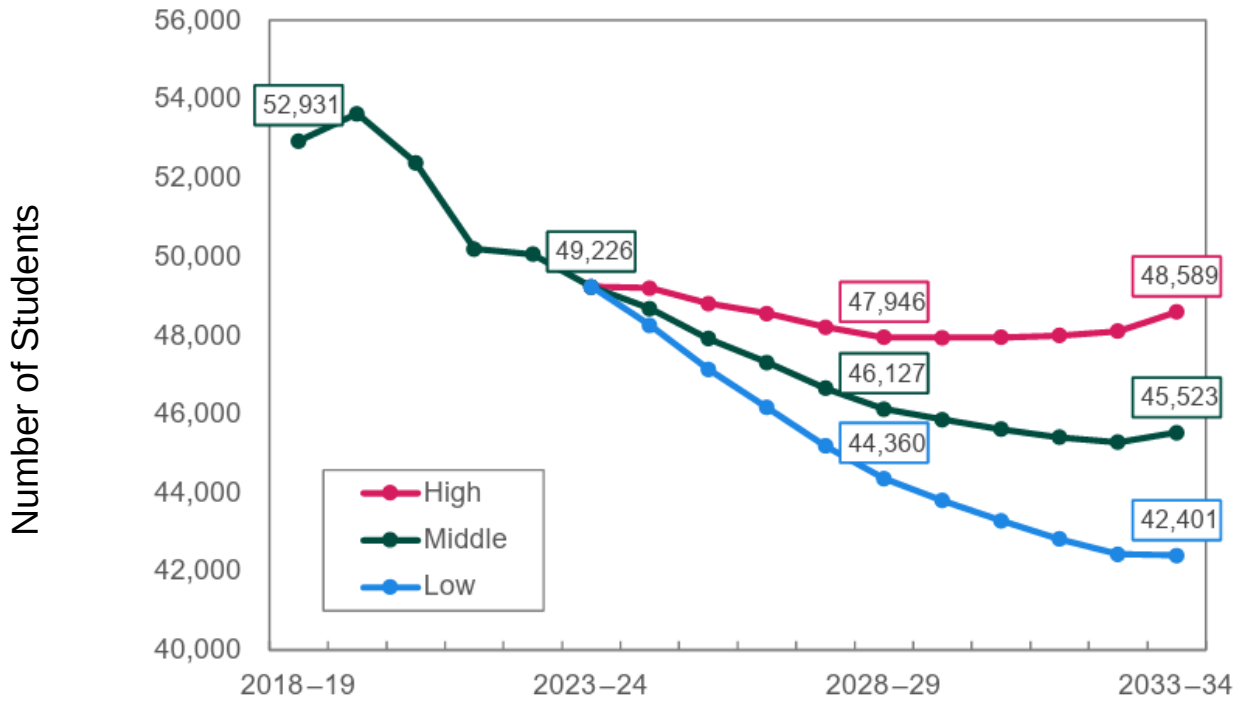
In addition to understanding historical developments in enrollment and school portfolio, one other helpful piece of context from the NCES data is how Seattle compares to other large urban districts (defined as having at least 40 traditional schools and serving urban settings).

Explore

Of the 120 large urban districts in the United States, Seattle has the 9th highest rate of small elementaries at around 60%. Other districts with high rates of smaller elementaries include Jackson, MS (69%) and Pittsburgh, PA (65%).

Recent enrollment projections suggest that total enrollment in SPS is likely to decrease anywhere from 1% to 14% in the next 8 years

SPS Enrollment from SY2018-19 to SY2033-34 (Forecasted)



Source: SPS Enrollment File (SY18-19 to SY23-24); FLO Analytics SY24–25 to SY33–34 enrollment forecasts

Context

No one can perfectly predict the future - but in Seattle and nationally, projections are foundational for evaluating current and future portfolio needs. Therefore, enrollment projections are a common tool for districts planning their portfolio needs in the near-, medium-, and long-term future.

Explore

Seattle's overall enrollment was around 49K students in school year 2023-24. This enrollment is *projected* to drop to 44K-47K by school year 2028-29 and, from that point on, will move to somewhere in the range 42-49K by school year 2033-34. Though these ranges are large, they suggest that enrollment may continue to decline in SPS.

Small schools are not inherently bad and many in the field of education advocate for small schools by design

"Benefits of the small schools are wide ranging and include **authentic relationships, social inclusion, outstanding learning opportunities, excellent college placement rates, community identity/engagement,** as well as **increased safety and comfort** for students, faculty and community."

– Small School Coalition

"Small high schools – which typically enroll fewer than 600 students – promote **academic rigor and personal relationships** between students and faculty. These close-knit relationships help enrich student-teacher interaction and assist teachers in assessing student need."

– New Visions for Public Schools

When small schools are formed by default rather than by design, common challenges may arise

Student and Teacher Experience

Challenge #1: Students have reduced access to a full breadth of courses (such as Specials)

Challenge #2: Teachers lack meaningful collaboration and face an increased workload

Challenge #3: Highly variable staffing ratios, inconsistent access to staff, and staff shared across schools

Financial & Operational

Challenge #4: Unintentionally larger financial investment

Challenge #5: Common disinvestment in facilities improvements

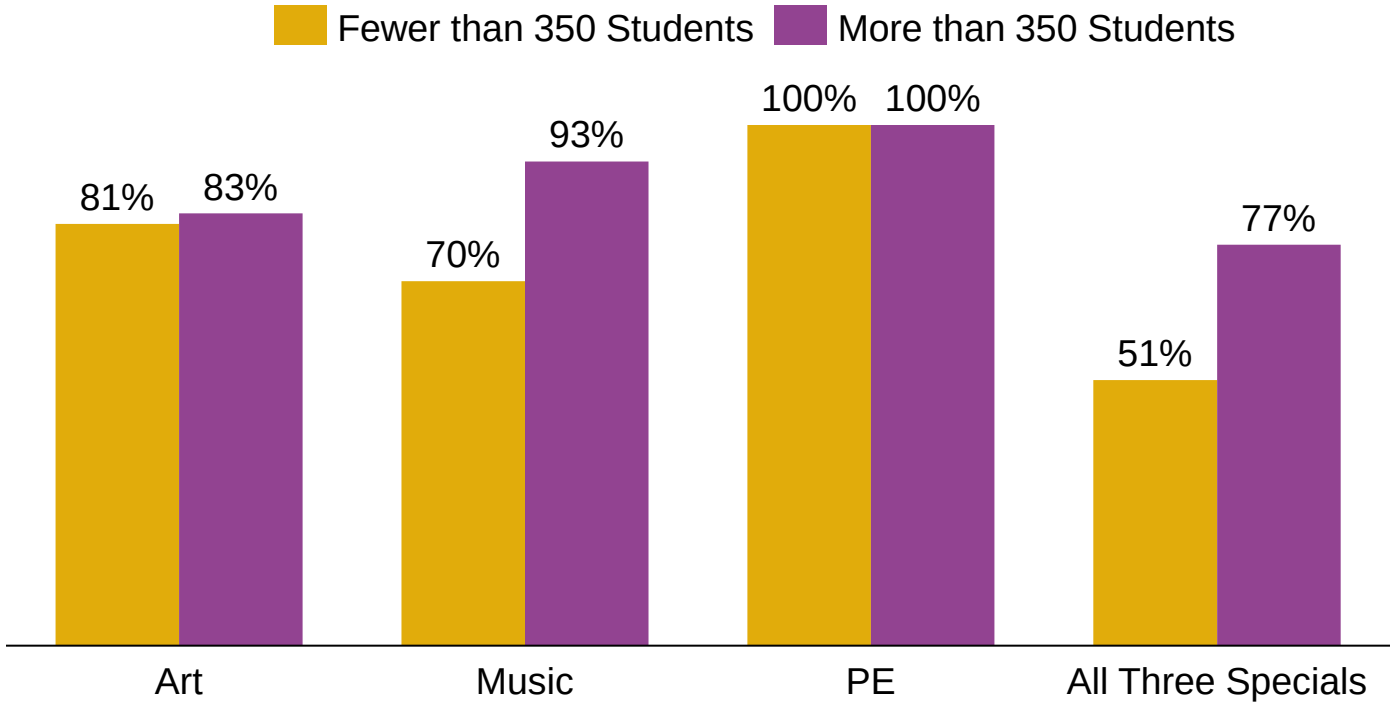
Experience Across Student Groups

Challenge #6: Specific student groups are disproportionately likely to attend small schools

Challenge #1: Smaller elementaries offer all three Specials less often, with Music commonly deprioritized

Percent of Elementaries Offering Each Special to All Grades by School Size

SY23-24



Getting all elementaries from their current Specials staffing to at least 3 FTE per school would cost Seattle an additional **$7M**

Note: elementaries with less than 350 students are considered small; alternative schools excluded
Source: SPS Enrollment File and Course Files (SY23-24)

Context

Access to Specials (Art, Music, PE) is a core part of the elementary school experience. These courses expand the types of content that students engage with, ensuring a well-rounded learning environment. Furthermore, having three Specials (Art, Music, and PE) creates additional coverage that can enable full-teams of teachers to collaborate with each other, which is a research-based practice for improving instructional quality.

Explore

Students in small elementaries are less likely to access all three Specials in a school year. 51% of small elementaries offer Art, Music, and PE to every grade. 77% of large elementaries offer Art, Music, and PE to every grade. Music is the course that is less likely to be offered at elementary schools with fewer than 350 students.

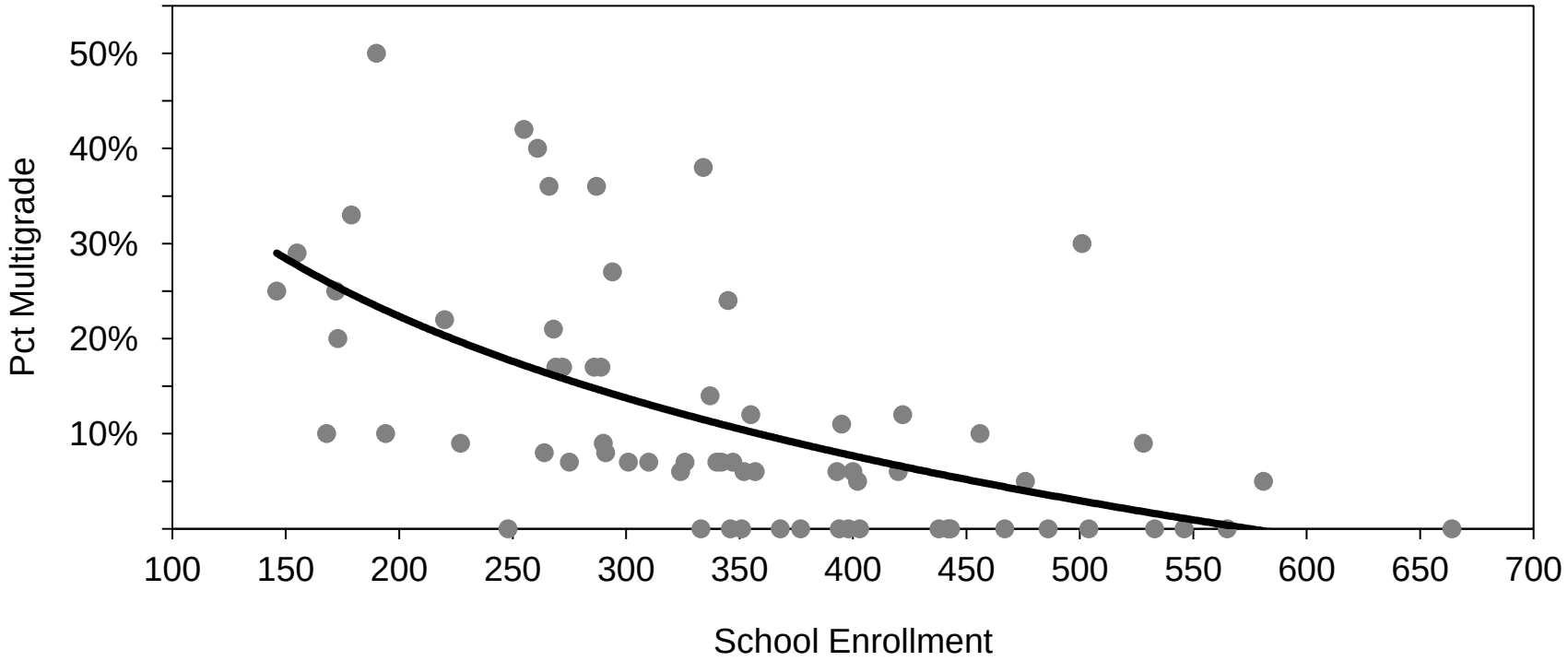
Consider

What type of Specials should be provided at each elementary school? What is the vision for the student experience?

Challenge #2: Small elementaries in SPS rely often on multigrade classrooms, which can be challenging for students and teachers

Percent of Multigrade Classrooms in each Elementary/K8 by Total School Enrollment

SY23-24



Eliminating multi-grade classrooms by adding more homeroom teachers could cost SPS upwards of an additional $**15M** annually.

Source: SPS Enrollment File and Course Files (SY23-24); alternative schools excluded

Context

Multigrade classrooms are classrooms that span several grade levels. For example, a classroom with ten 2nd grade students and fifteen 3rd grade students would be considered multigrade. Though these classes *can* be effectively organized, they create challenges for teachers, and they need to effectively cover a wider range of student needs and two distinct grade levels of curricular content.

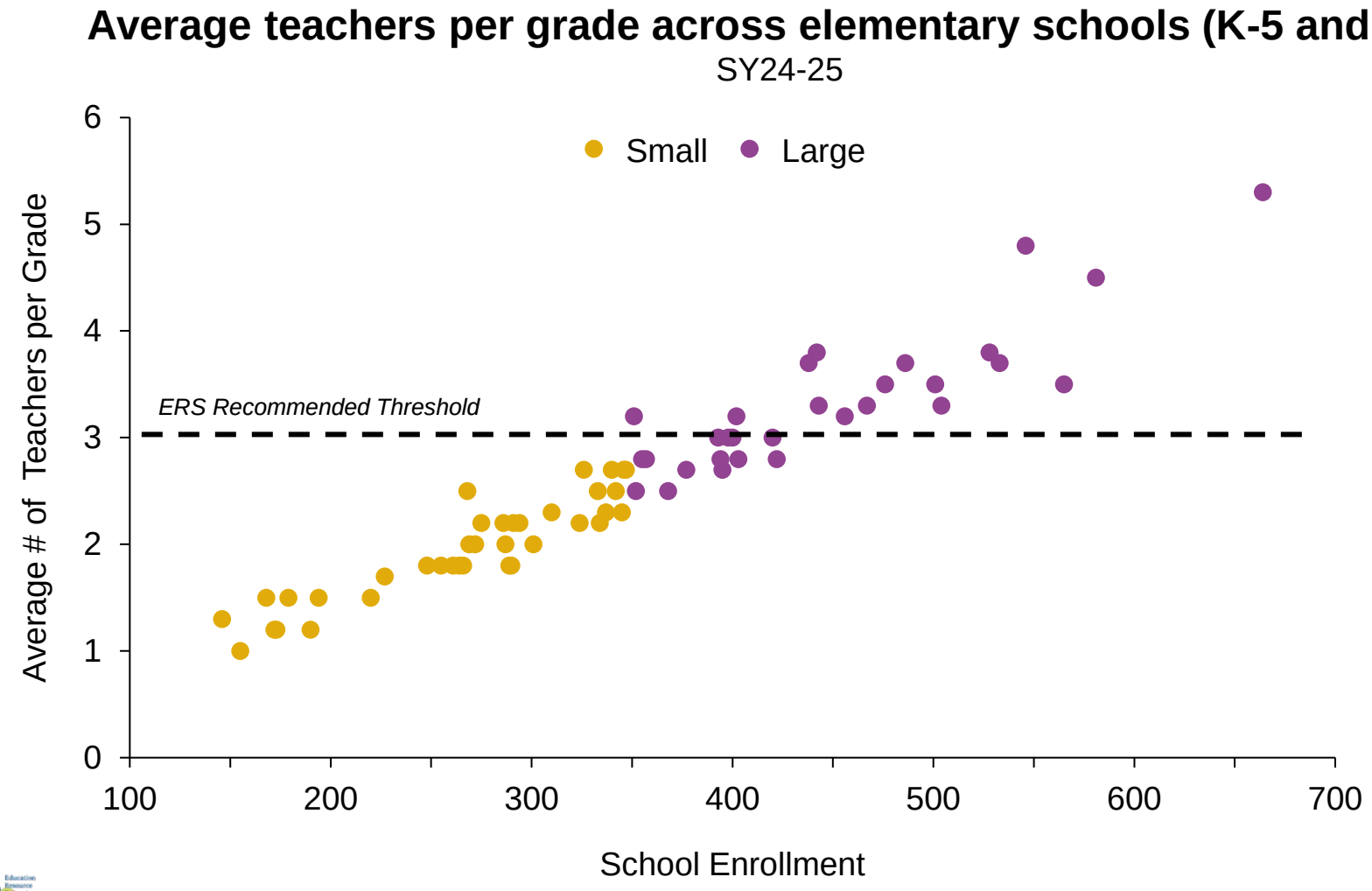
Explore

Smaller Seattle elementaries – and especially those with 150 to 250 students – rely on multigrade classrooms relatively often. Though rates vary from school to school, small campuses commonly have 20% or more of their classrooms as multigrade. Rates are much lower for large elementaries, which rarely have more than 10% of classrooms as multigrade.

Consider

Are multi-grade classrooms an intentional strategy or a byproduct of constrained resourcing?

Challenge #2: Teachers at small schools have fewer peers to collaborate with, making teams logistically challenging to create



Source: SPS Enrollment File and Staffing Files (SY23-24); alternative schools excluded

Context

Research shows that elementary teacher teams of three or more educators are best positioned for meaningful collaboration. A key indicator of an effective elementary school structure is its ability to consistently staff at least three teachers per grade, enabling educators to focus on a single grade's content (e.g., dedicated 3rd- and 4th-grade teams rather than combined classes).

Explore

In Seattle, elementary schools generally need an enrollment of about 350 students to reliably staff three teachers per grade. Schools below this size do not reach that level of staffing, while the majority of schools above 350—especially those with 400 or more students—do

Consider

How might the experience of teachers be affected by not having grade peers with which to collaborate?

Challenge #2: Let's look at a couple schools to see how multigrade classrooms and teacher teams show up in SPS

SPS Elementary School A

Total Enrollment: 234

K	20	23		
1	22	25		
2	16	16		
3	9	9	9	10
4			17	16
5	21	21		

SPS Elementary School B

Total Enrollment: 421

K	22	23	25
1	20	20	19
2	24	25	23
3	24	25	24
4	31	31	
5	28	28	29

Context

The previous two slides showed how often schools use multigrade classrooms and achieve teacher teams of three or more per grade. This slide looks at two Seattle schools as examples and examines how enrollment looks across their grades and classrooms.

Explore

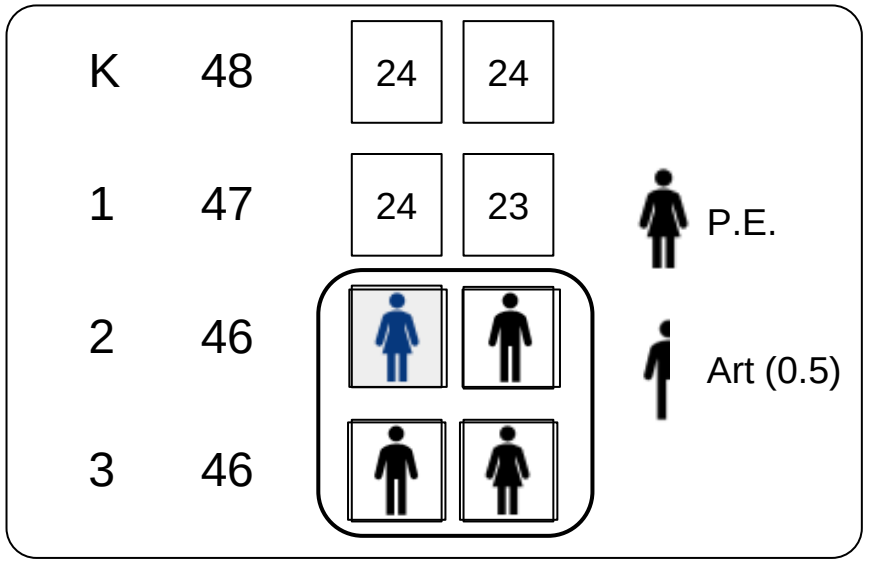
School A has four multigrade classrooms, two classes combining students in 2nd and 3rd grade and two combining students in 3rd and 4th grade. This means that 40% of their classrooms are multigrade. None of the grades or combined classrooms have enough teachers for a 3-person team for collaboration.

School B has no multigrade classrooms. Almost all grades can build a 3-person team for collaboration.

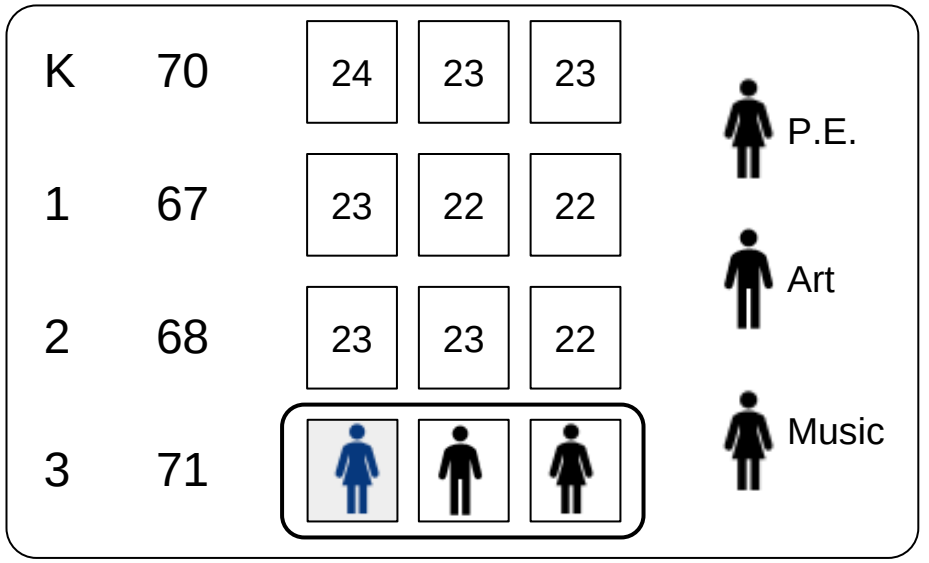
Source: SPS Class Size File (SY24-25)

Why is having fewer than three teachers per grade challenging for effective professional learning?

Sample Small School



Sample Large School



Limits Teacher Teaming: Teacher teams led by teacher leaders (in blue) are a key part of an effective professional learning strategy. The small school will have to combine teachers across grades to get teams, which splits their focus.

Limits Time to Meet: Teams typically meet when their classes have specials (i.e. P.E, Art, and Music). The small school doesn't have enough specialists to give all four of the 2nd and 3rd grade teachers a prep at the same time so that they can meet.

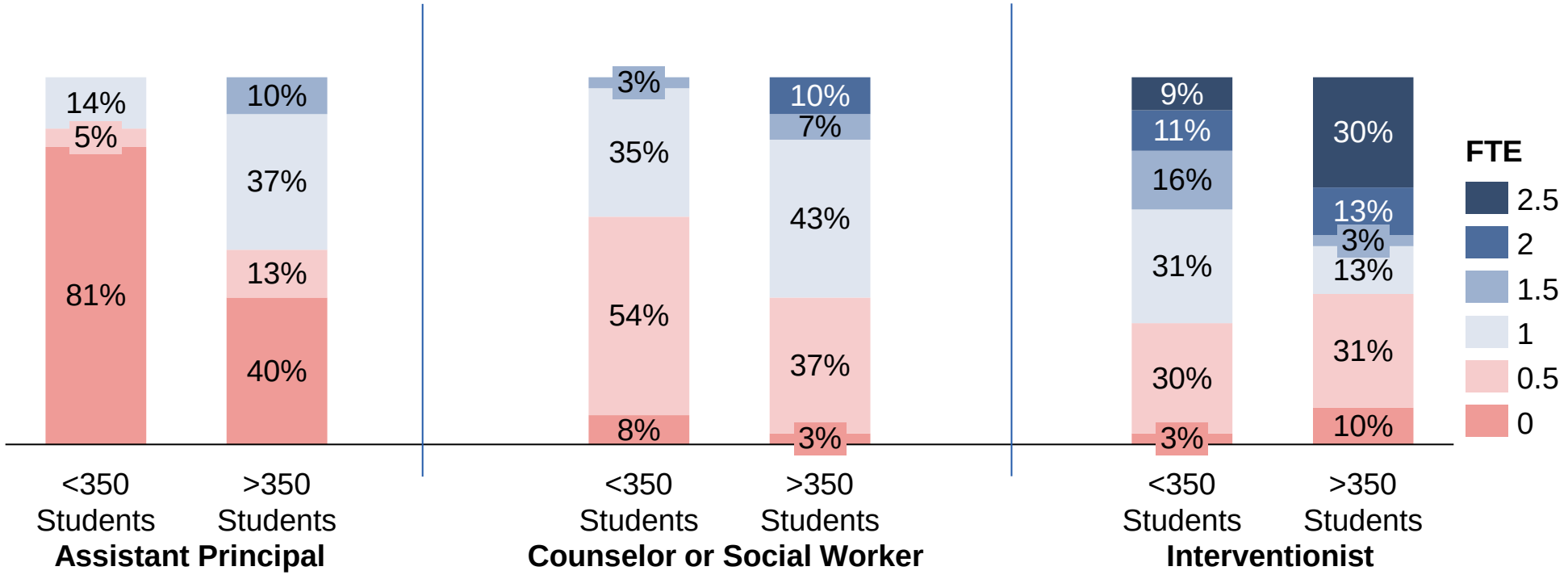
Limits Effective Feedback: Teacher leaders at the small school will be observing and giving feedback to teachers outside the grade they teach, where they might not have the same content expertise.

Source: Igniting the Learning Engine

Challenge #3: Due to low scale, supplemental staff are harder to provide to small schools – especially at scale

Staffing for Supplemental Positions across Elementaries by School Size

SY24-25



Ensuring that all elementary schools have at least 1 FTE for each of these three positions would cost Seattle an additional **$18M**

Note: elementaries with less than 350 students are considered small; FTE rounded to nearest 0.5; alternative schools excluded
Source: SPS Staffing File SY24-25

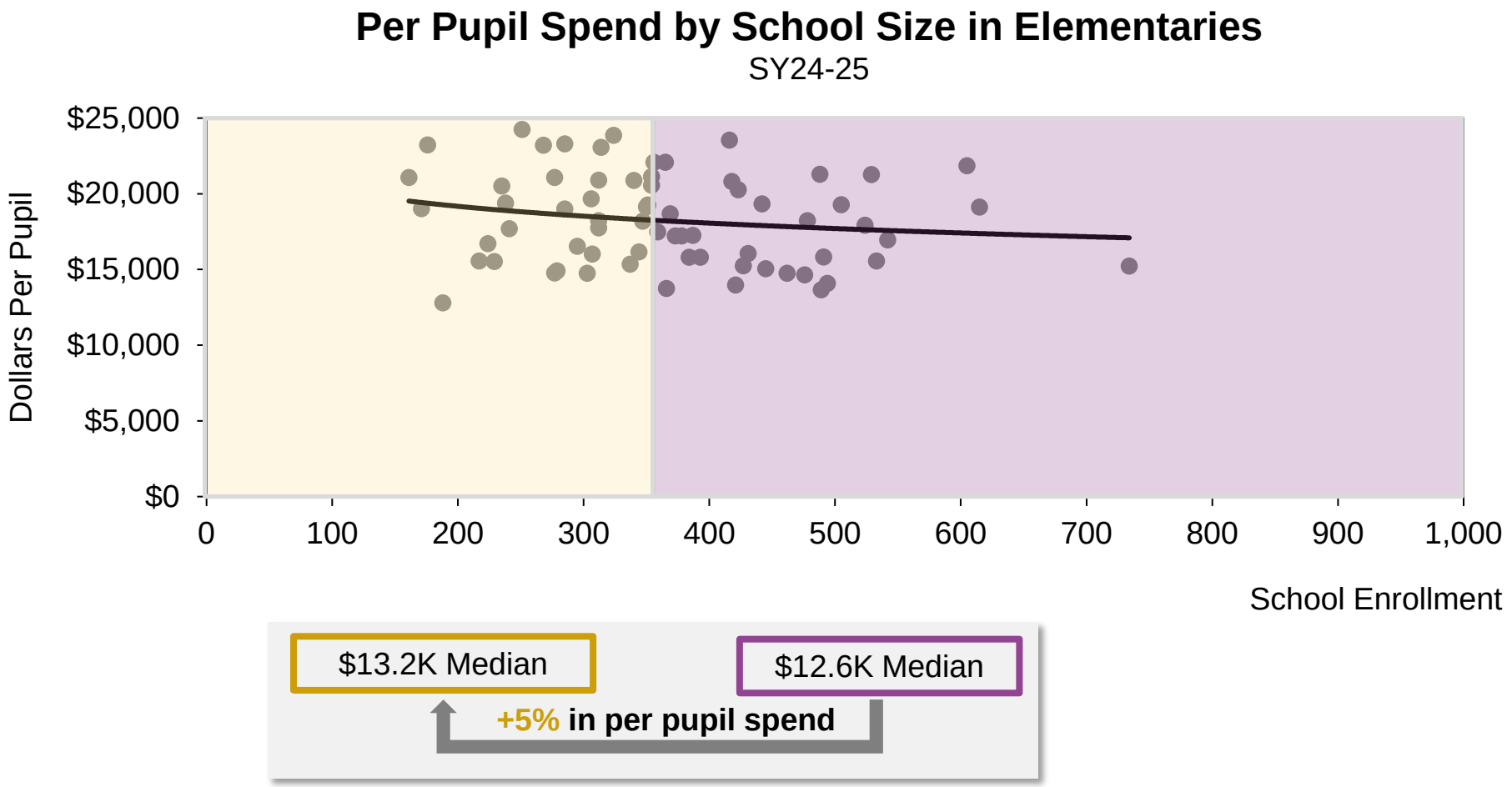
Context

Beyond teachers and principals, other positions are also important to student success. For this slide, we analyzed how staffing differs for other roles like assistant principals, counselors, social workers, interventionists based on school size. These staff members allow schools to offer student support beyond traditional classroom instruction, including socioemotional needs and academic interventions. Smaller schools often lack the scale to have these positions – or if they do, they're often part-time staff or split with other schools.

Explore

81% of small elementaries do not have a full-time assistant principal, whereas 40% of large elementaries face that challenge. Counselors and social workers have a similar trend, with 62% of small schools having 0.5 FTE or fewer (as opposed to 40% for large). Lastly, interventionists are available at almost all elementaries, but larger schools have larger interventionist teams – which allows staff to specialize in specific grades or subjects.

Challenge #4: Small elementaries spend 5% more than large elementaries without clear benefits to students or staff



Note: This per pupil figure contains only resources that are directly on school budgets as well as centrally funded items that play out at schools on a regular and predictable basis such as security, custodial, etc.; Items that are not budgeted at schools directly (e.g. utilities) or occur on an as-needed basis are not in this figure.
Source: SPS School, Student, and Financial Files (SY24-25); alternative schools excluded

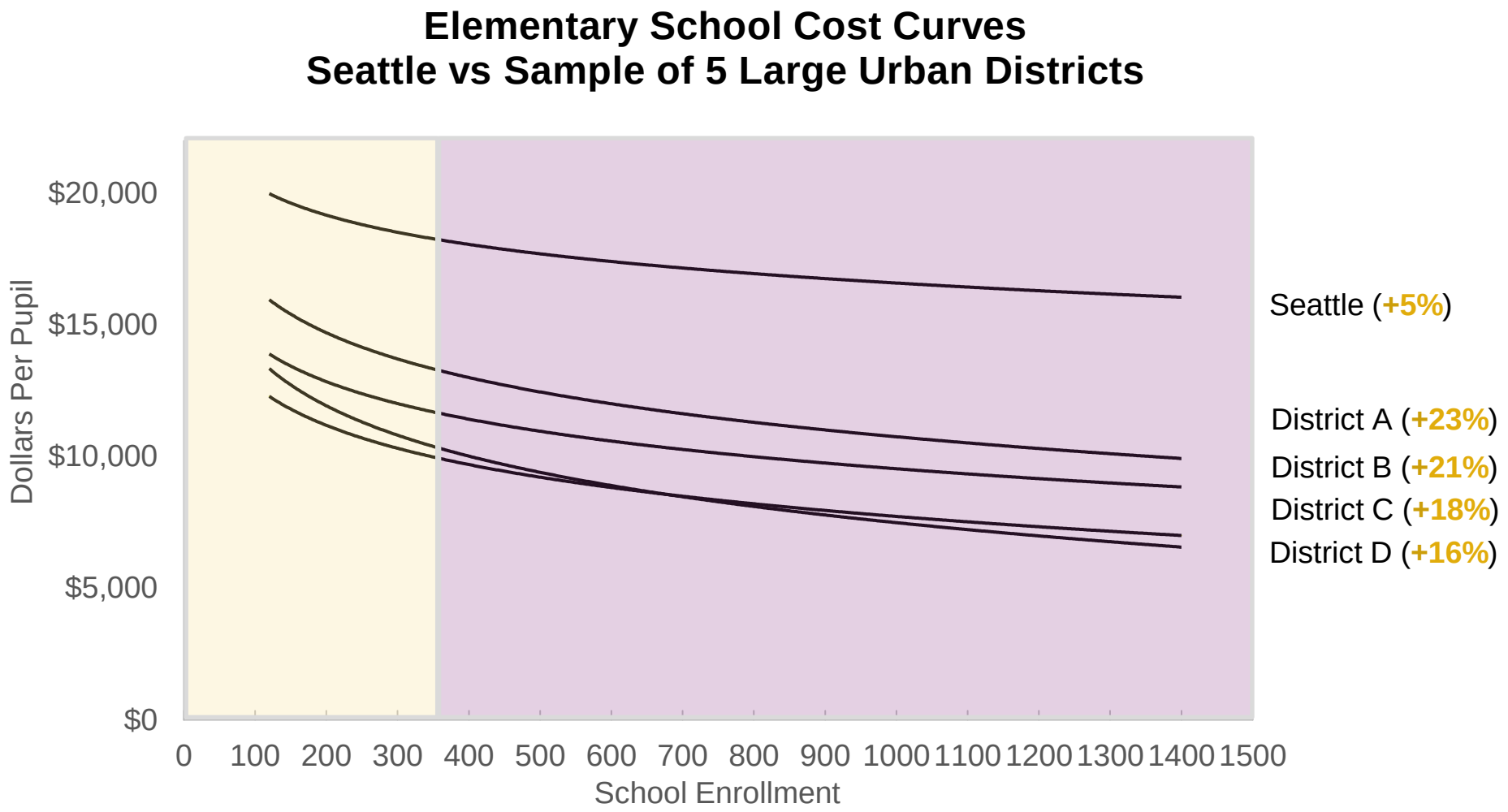
Context

In most districts, schools with lower enrollment spend more per pupil than larger schools. This happens for two reasons: (1) There are certain fixed costs of running a school, regardless of size – e.g., typically all schools need a principal or a secretary. (2) There are increased instructional costs that come from having fewer students per grade level. Smaller schools (with smaller grade level sizes) are more likely to trigger the need for additional staff to meet class size or staffing ratios, simply because they have fewer options for "smoothing out" class sizes across their school. Just because smaller schools spend more, doesn't mean that districts should not have small schools. Instead, it means that districts need to acknowledge and consider the additional financial investment required to run small schools when thinking about school funding across their portfolio.

Explore

Small elementaries in SPS spend on average $13.2K per student, whereas for large elementaries the figure is $12.6K. Small elementaries (less than 350 students) therefore spend about 5% more per pupil on average.

Challenge #4: SPS has a lower "small school premium" than peer districts, likely due to tradeoffs in student and staff experiences



Source: ERS Comparative Database; SPS School, Student, and Financial Files (SY24-25)

Explore

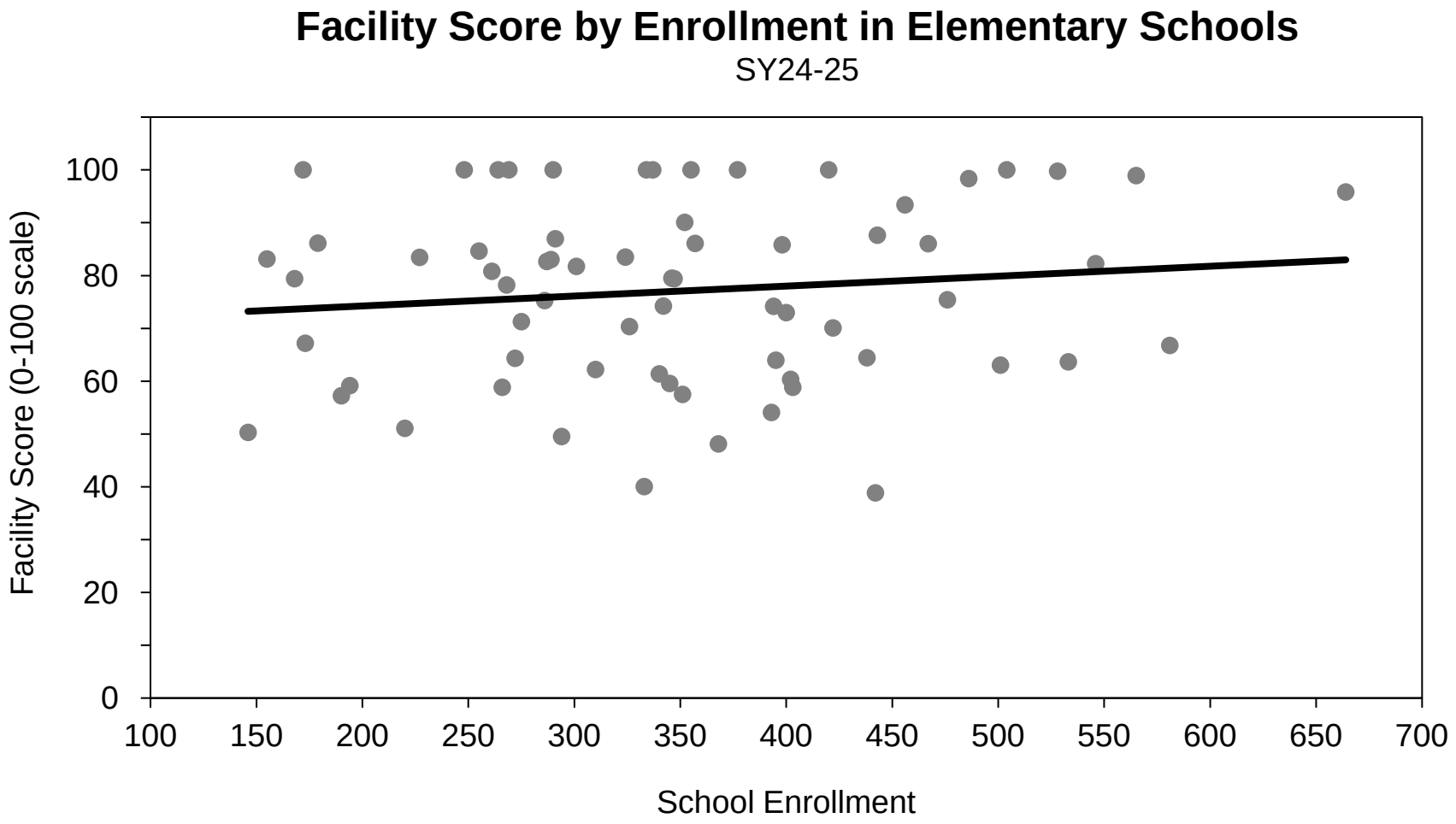
As shared on the previous slide, most districts spend more per pupil on smaller schools than larger schools. The chart here compares Seattle's "small school premium" (the extra spend seen per pupil in a small elementary vs. a large elementary) to other national districts.

In Seattle, this "premium" is 5%, which is much lower than the 15-25% rate seen across other urban districts.

Consider

Seattle's small elementaries seem to minimally impact financial cost, but they seem to affect student and staff experiences. How, if at all, does this change your understanding of the "cost" of small schools?

Challenge #5: On average, smaller elementary schools in SPS have slightly lower facility ratings than larger elementaries



Note: facility scores were last calculated in SY20-21 but reflect updated scores for any building that has undergone major renovations (e.g. reconstruction)
Source: ERS Comparative Database; SPS School, Student, and Facility Files (SY24-25)

Context

One other operational challenge of small schools is in how they affect facility repairs. Facility teams in large urban districts often have a long list of potential building improvements, but not enough funds to cover all repairs in the immediate future. In these situations, they'll often have to prioritize the most pressing repairs or the repairs that will impact the largest set of students and staff.

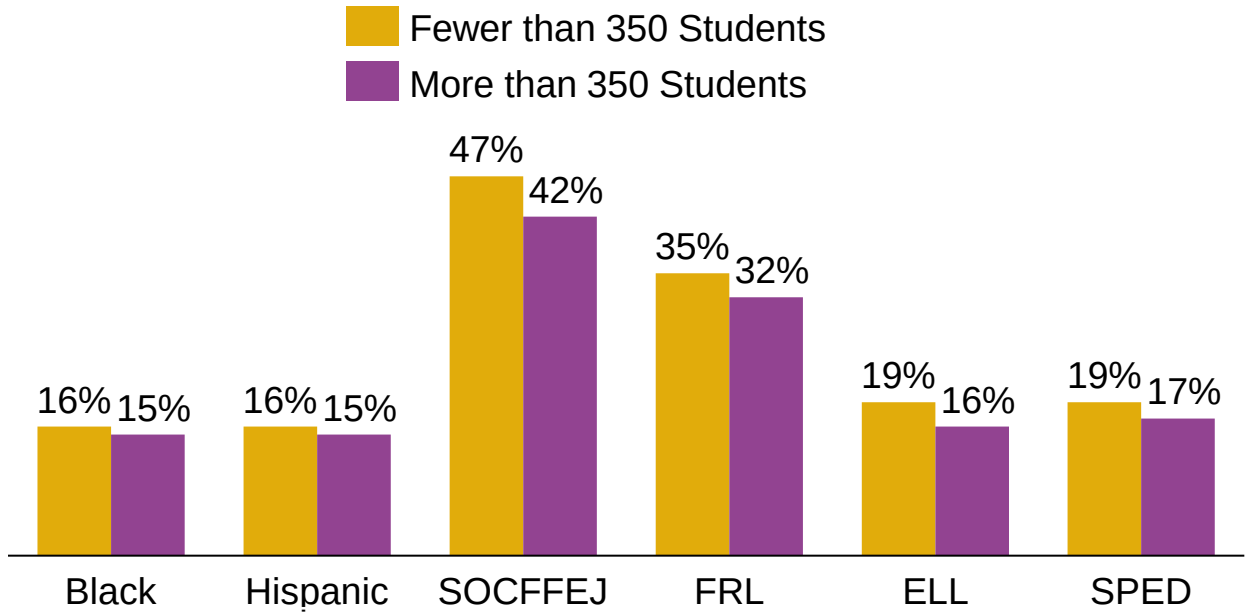
Explore

Though the effect is somewhat small, elementaries with lower enrollment in Seattle do generally have slightly lower facility scores – indicating that they have more repairs pending and/or that the building is less suited for ideal learning conditions in its current state.

Challenge #6: Certain student groups attend small schools more often, so impacts of small schools affect student groups unevenly

Student Group Enrollment as % of Total School Enrollment by School Size

SY24-25



	Black	Hispanic	SOCFFEJ	FRL	ELL	SPED
Increased likelihood of attending small schools if a student is in that demographic	**+6%**	**+6%**	**+11%**	**+11%**	**+17%**	**+6%**

Note: elementaries with less than 350 students are considered small; alternative schools excluded
Source: SPS School and Student Files (SY24-25)

Context

Given the range of challenges shown so far, it is important to see which students are served most often in small schools. These groups would likely be the ones most often experiencing multigrade classrooms, having teachers without access to grade teams, missing out on supplemental staff, and being in buildings with lower quality.

Explore

In this graph, we focus on demographic groups that most often attend small schools (based on our work with other districts). All groups examined – Black, Hispanic, students of color furthest from educational justice, students qualifying for free and reduced lunch, English learners, and Special Education – have a slightly higher concentration in small schools. For example, small elementaries have 19% of their student body qualify as English learners, while large elementaries only have 16%. While a 3-percentage point difference might not seem like much, it means that English learners, for example, are about 17% more likely than peers to attend a small school.

How can Seattle pursue great experiences for all students and staff while balancing efficiencies?

	You could…	Which could look like…	And could help…
Programmatic Changes	Expand high-demand programs	Adding STEM and dual language programs at more schools	Revitalize community interest in SPS and regain part of the COVID enrollment loss
	Departmentalize upper grades	Have teachers that deliver content for Math/Science or ELA/Social Studies across all sections of their grade	Decrease the unique preps per teacher
	Implement programs that serve multi-grade classrooms well	Add intentional programming to support multi-grade classrooms (e.g. Montessori, “Modern Classroom”) coupled with a redesign of enrollment policies and teacher support	Lessen the potential negative effects of multi-grade classrooms
	Rotate staff across schools by semester	Assign Art or Music teachers to two schools as needed, being full-time on each school for one semester	Allow all students to have access to Art, Music, and PE while containing costs
Portfolio Changes	Redraw Attendance Zones	Expand the zones of schools with few total kids available in their current boundaries	“Even out” enrollment across schools
	Reconfigure Grade Bands	Shift elementaries from K-5 to K-2 / 3-5	Increase grade-level enrollment, which would increase the number of sections per grade to enables grade-specific teacher teams and enrollment levels to support additional staffing
	Consolidate Schools	Combine enrollment from two or more schools into a single campus and repurpose the other buildings	Increase the average number of students per elementary school

Elementary Portfolio: Closing

Go Back to Table of Contents

Insight Summary

- Seattle has a high rate of small elementaries compared to national peers
- Seattle experienced enrollment decline in the last eight years, but its portfolio has stayed largely unchanged during that same period
- Small elementaries in Seattle do not spend significantly more per pupil*, but this relative efficiency impacts the student and staff experience at smaller elementary schools. For example, smaller elementaries, on average, have more limited specials (i.e. Art, Music, PE), smaller teacher teams, multigrade classrooms, and lower quality buildings.
- Higher need student groups are more likely to attend smaller elementary schools.

Potential Action Implications

- Seattle should continue to investigate the factors that have driven enrollment loss recently and evaluate whether changes in school programming could attract back lost enrollment and mitigate further loss.
- This report has outlined a variety of challenges in the student and teacher experience that arise as a direct product of SPS' portfolio decisions. SPS should explore potential levers with its community and stakeholders that can improve experiences and outcomes while balancing cost. This could include options like adding intentional programming to support multi-grade classrooms or broader portfolio changes for the district and community to consider like redrawing attendance zones, reconfigure grade bands across schools (e.g. K-2 and 3-5), or school consolidation.

Note: This per pupil figure contains only resources that are directly on school budgets as well as centrally funded items that play out at schools on a regular and predictable basis such as security, custodial, etc.;

Analytic Insights

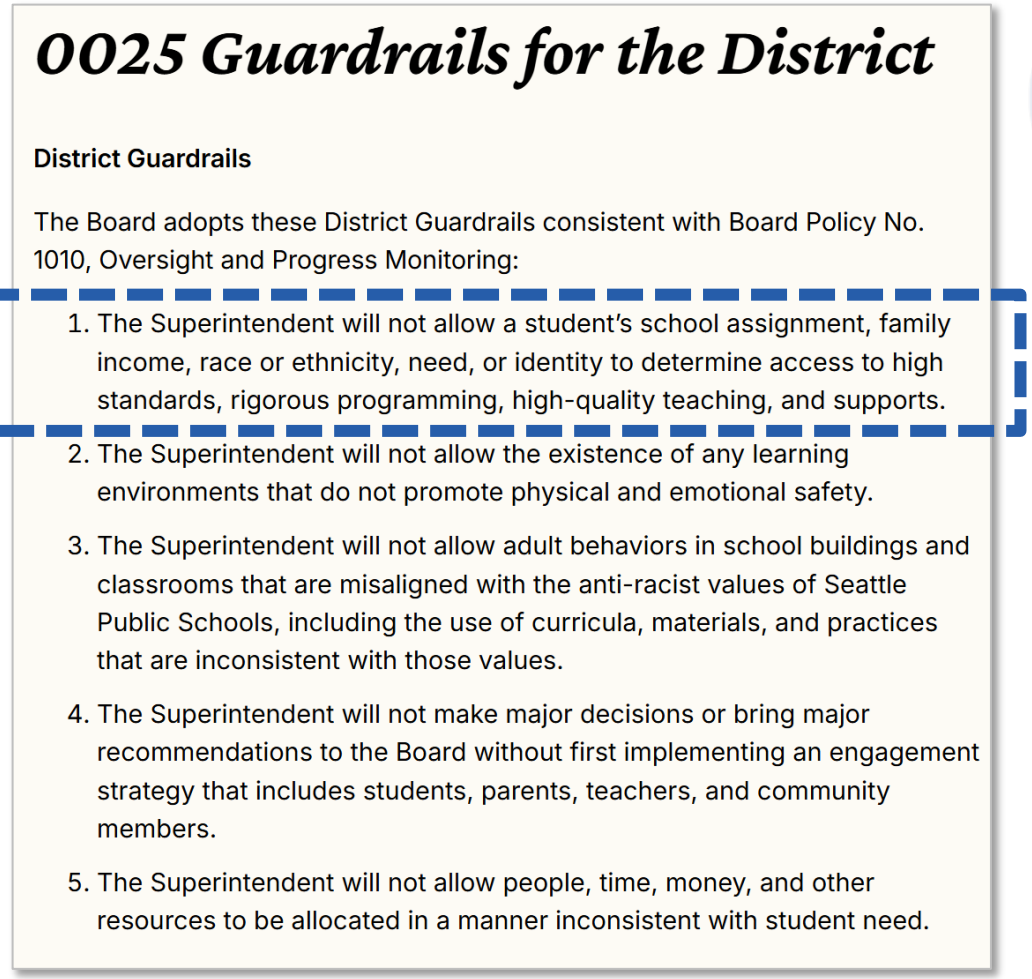
Special Education

ERS

Special Education: At a Glance

Why it Matters	• Students with disabilities have unique needs that, to be met effectively, require both appropriate funding levels and effective program design. • Providing services in the least restrictive learning environment and ensuring students do not get overidentified for disabilities are two important practices to keep students as integrated with their peers as possible – while also helping districts provide accommodations in a cost-effective manner.
How it's Assessed	• Level of spend on special education, both as dollar per pupil and as percent of total district budget • How frequently students get identified for a particular disability • How frequently students are served in the least restrictive environment (LRE) • Types of special education resources provided to students
Report Insights	• Seattle spends more than Washington peers on special education, both per pupil and as percent of budget • This higher spending is a product of total spending on instructional aides. SPS compensates each instructional assistants more than national peers and has more instructional assistants on a per student basis than national comparison districts. • Seattle has a slightly higher rate of special education students than Washington peers, but the distribution of students across disability types suggests the higher identification rate is accurately capturing need • In Seattle, students with disabilities consistently get serviced in their least restrictive environment • Seattle's staffing efficiency for special education pathways is in line with recommended thresholds

Analysis in this section connects to the first District Guardrail



0025 Guardrails for the District

District Guardrails

The Board adopts these District Guardrails consistent with Board Policy No. 1010, Oversight and Progress Monitoring:

1. The Superintendent will not allow a student's school assignment, family income, race or ethnicity, need, or identity to determine access to high standards, rigorous programming, high-quality teaching, and supports.
2. The Superintendent will not allow the existence of any learning environments that do not promote physical and emotional safety.
3. The Superintendent will not allow adult behaviors in school buildings and classrooms that are misaligned with the anti-racist values of Seattle Public Schools, including the use of curricula, materials, and practices that are inconsistent with those values.
4. The Superintendent will not make major decisions or bring major recommendations to the Board without first implementing an engagement strategy that includes students, parents, teachers, and community members.
5. The Superintendent will not allow people, time, money, and other resources to be allocated in a manner inconsistent with student need.

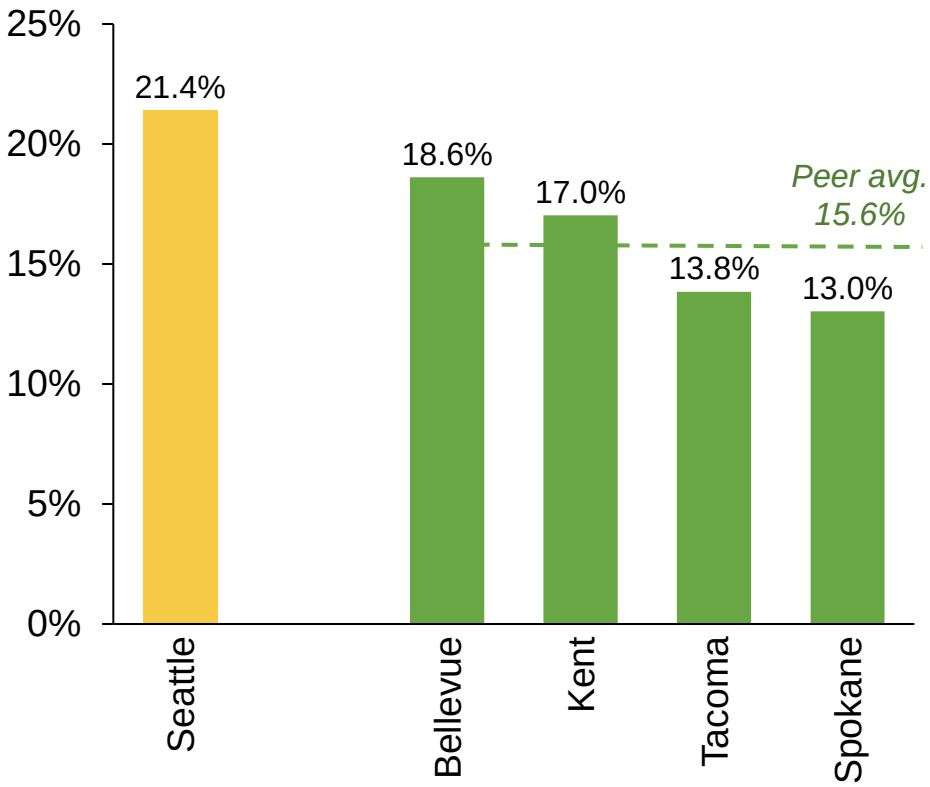
The Superintendent will not allow a student's school assignment, family income, race, need, or identity to determine access to high standards, rigorous programming, **high-quality teaching, and supports**.

Source: Seattle Public Schools

Compared to WA peers, Seattle spent more on special education in SY23-24, both as a % of total expenditures and per pupil

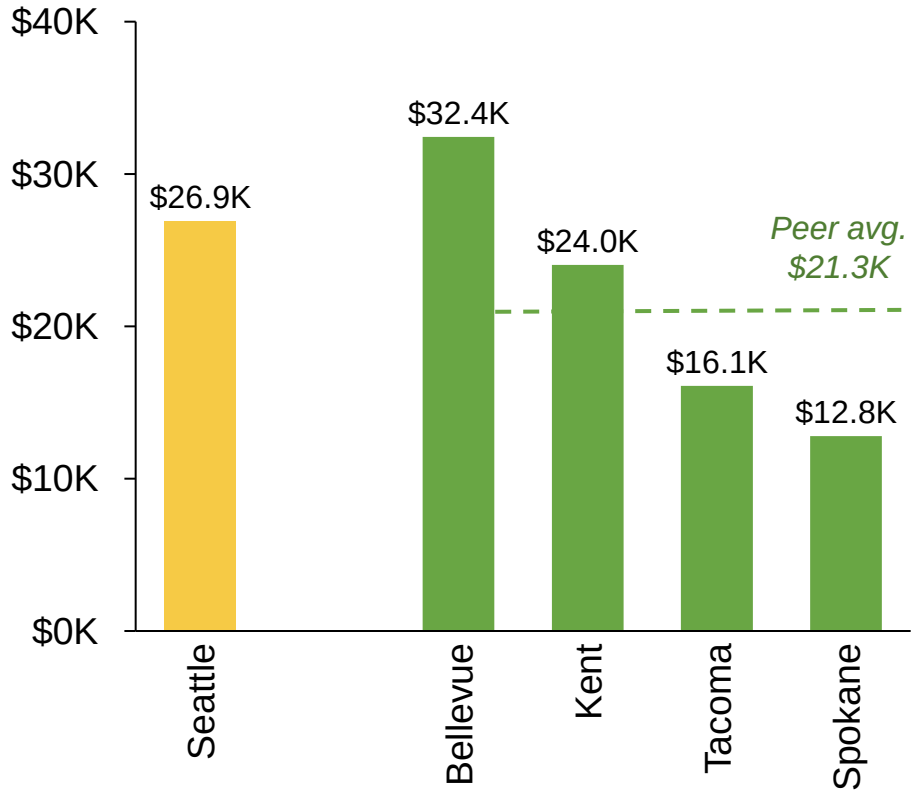
Percent of Total Expenditures on Special Education

SY23-24



Special Education Spending Per SWD Pupil

SY23-24



Note: Expenditures on SPED and SPED spending are not inclusive of transportation costs.
Source: Puget Sound ESD 121 Dashboard

Context

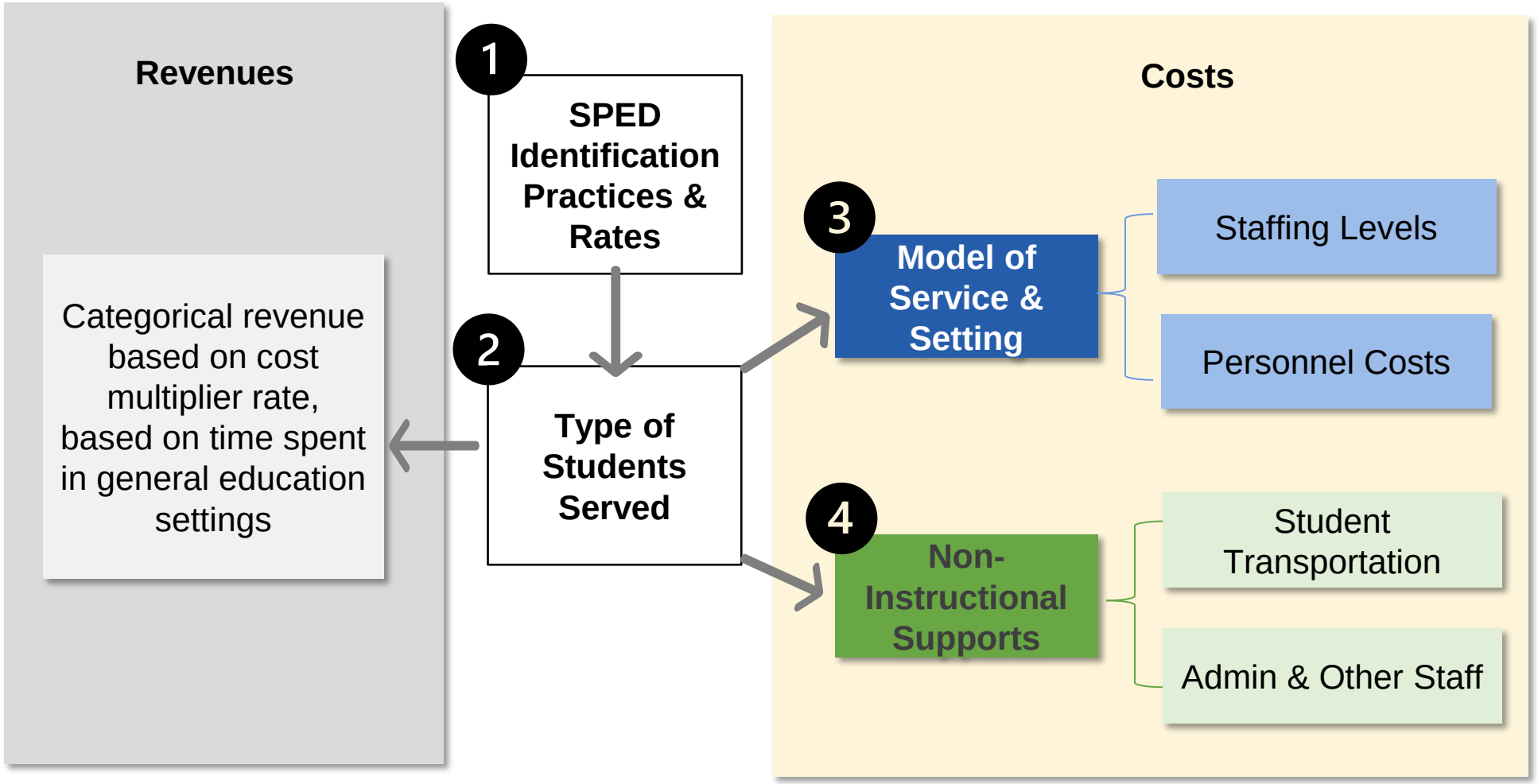
This slide shows how much of SPS' overall budget is spent on serving students with disabilities and how much is spent per pupil for students with disabilities.

Two questions that are critical to keep in mind in this section are:
1) Are these investments deliberate and strategic?
2) Are they providing students and staff with the resources they need to be successful?

Explore

To analyze special education spending, we compare SPS to peer districts within Washington. These two column charts compare the percent of total budget spent on special education and the dollars per pupil spent on students with disabilities. SPS is spending slightly higher than the peer average in both areas. The following slides will highlight factors contributing to Seattle's spending compared to state peers.

What factors influence the revenue and expenses for special education?



Source: Education Resource Strategies

Context

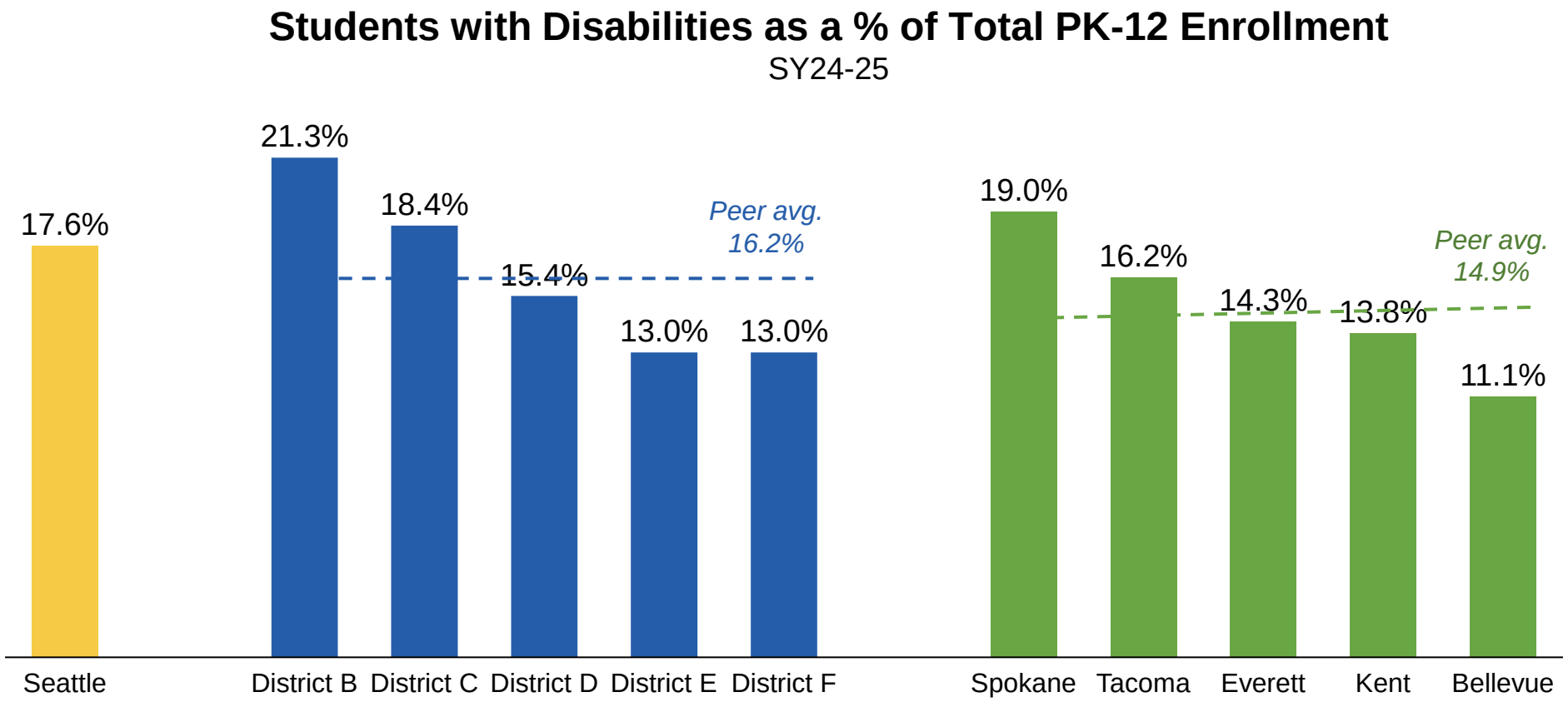
This slide shows the different factors that influence revenue and expenses for special education.

From an enrollment perspective, the overall number of students that are identified to receive special services a well as the types of students being served (e.g., disability types) influence both revenue and costs.

Detailing costs further, how districts choose to serve students with disabilities (i.e., their setting) influences costs because different settings have different staffing levels. For example, Seattle has six different non-PreK special education settings, which are called “pathways” in the district. Each pathway has different staffing levels, which are described in more detail in subsequent slides. Personnel costs (i.e., the total compensation levels of staff) also influence costs.

In addition, there are also non-instructional support costs like transportation or other types of non-instructional staff that also support students with disabilities.

On average, SPS has a slightly higher % of students with disabilities than its peers



Note: Data for Seattle and WA peer districts is for SY24-25. Data for national peers is for the year in which we conducted a financial analysis for each district, ranging from SY19-20 to SY22-23.
Source: SPED Assignments file; OSPI Report Card Enrollment SY24-25; ERS Comparison Database

Context

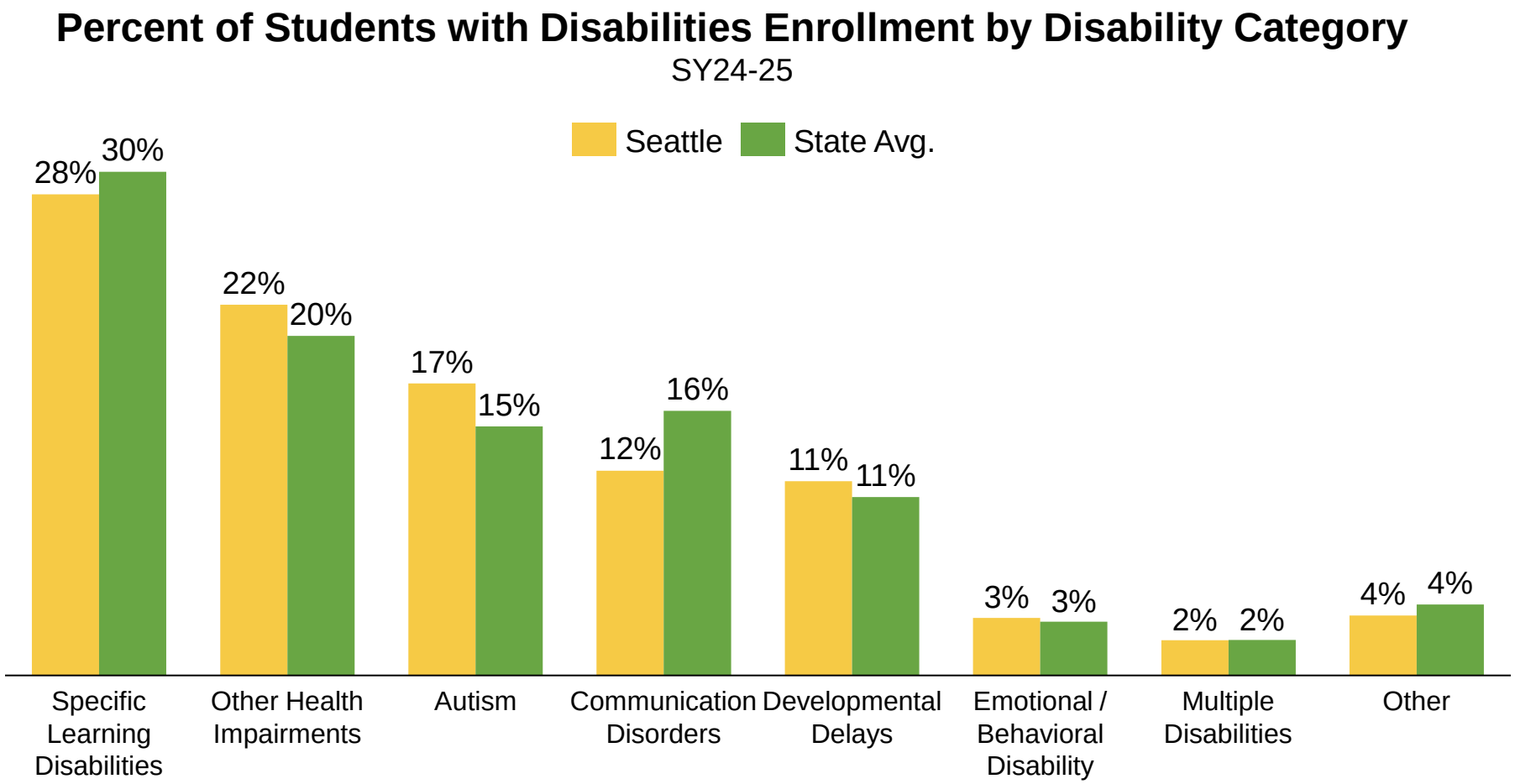
One factor that contributes to overall spending on students with disabilities is the percentage of students that are identified and receive special services. Because students with disabilities often receive additional supports, identifying *more* students as needing special services may lead to higher expenses.

Explore

Compared to both the national peer average and the state peer average, SPS is identifying a larger percentage of students with disabilities.

To be clear, students that require additional supports should receive them. This data point provides *some* contextual information about whether SPS is identifying more students for special education services than peers but must also be coupled with a more comprehensive review.

Seattle's students with disabilities enrollment by disability category largely mirrors that of the state



Note: The "Other" category includes Intellectual Disability, Hearing Impairment, Traumatic Brain Injury, Visual Impairment, Deafness, Orthopedic Impairment, and Deaf-Blindness.
Source: OSPI Data Special Education 2425 State CCLRE

Context

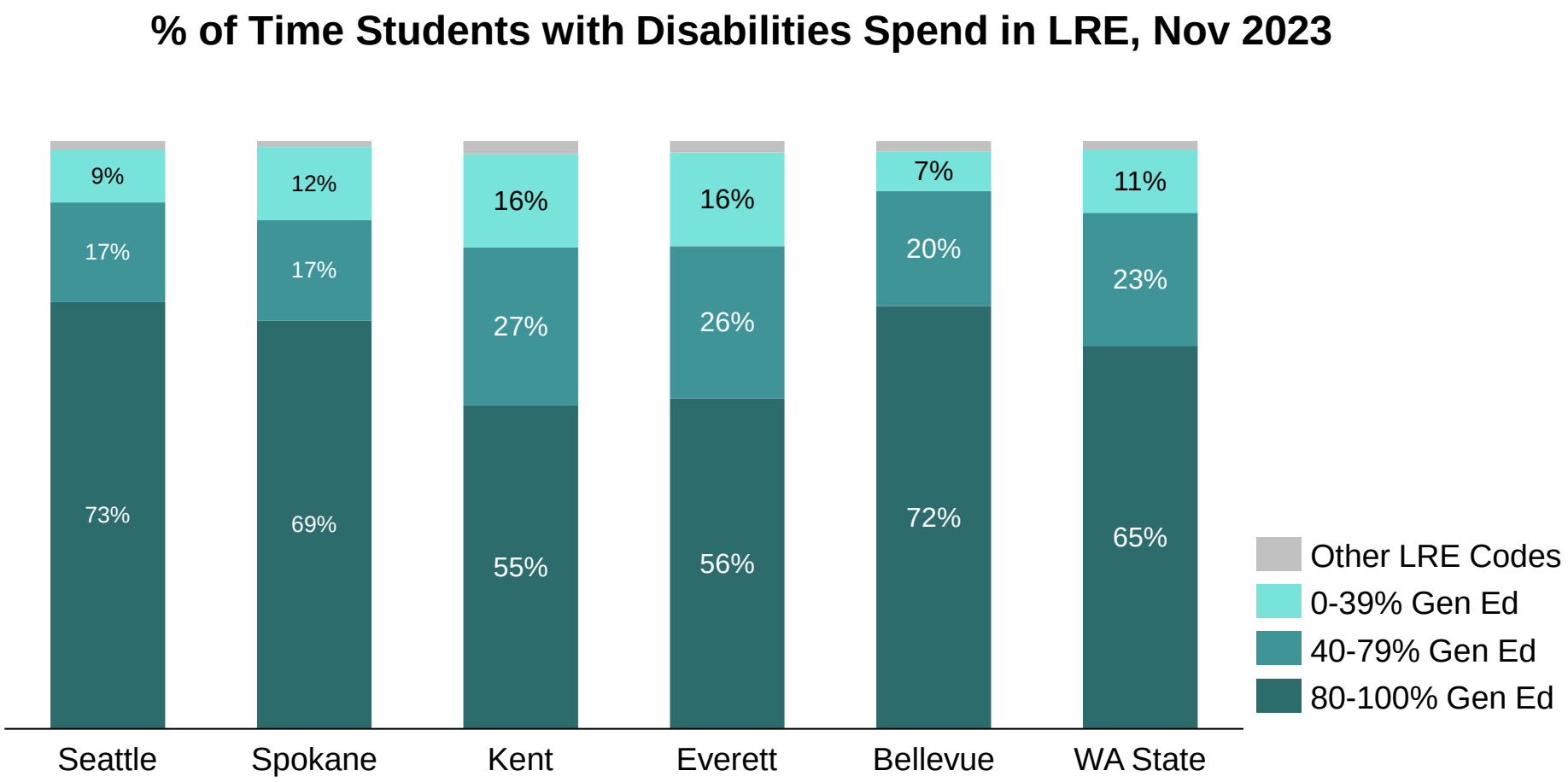
The Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) defines different types of disability categories.

On this slide, we compare Seattle's identification rates by disability category to see whether there are any inherent differences in the types of students that are being identified and served in the district, as this could have implications for overall spending patterns.

Explore

Overall, the identification pattern by disability category in SPS generally aligns with that of the state peer average. SPS serves more students with autism as well as other health impairments than peer districts but serves fewer students with specific learning disabilities and communication disorders.

Seattle serves a higher % of students who spend >80% of their time in a Gen Ed classroom than WA peers



Source: WA LRE Trend Data by LEA - 2023 Update

Context

A student's learning environment is determined through their IEP based on their unique learning needs. Research has consistently found that students learn best when in the least restrictive environment as possible.

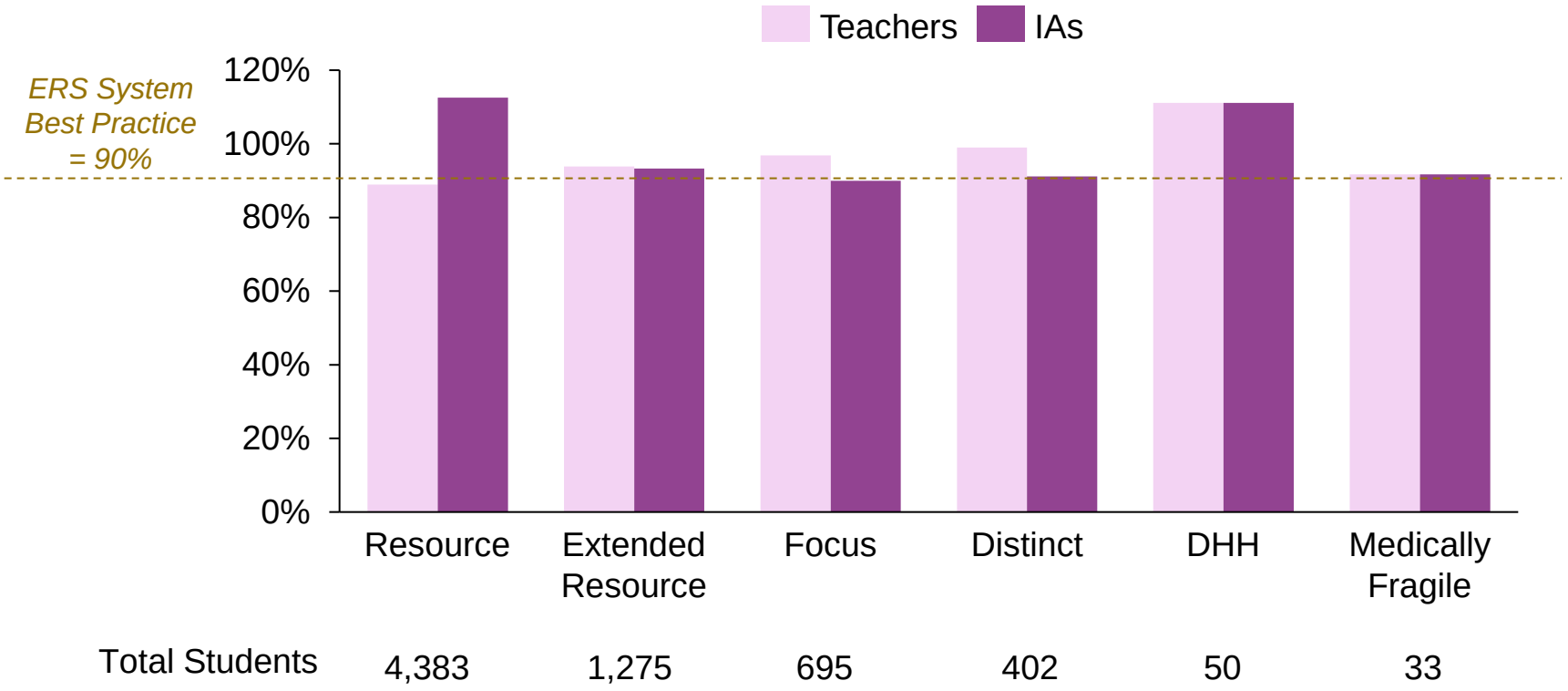
This chart shows where students with disabilities are being served. Specifically, it shows the percent of time students with disabilities spend in general education settings.

Explore

Compared to other districts in the state, SPS has a larger percent of students who spend time in the least restrictive environment (80-100% in General Education Setting).

Most special education pathways operate efficiently, with target staffing ratio efficiency at or above 90%

Target Staffing Ratio Efficiency by Position and Pathway, SY24-25



	Resource	Extended Resource	Focus	Distinct	DHH	Medically Fragile
Total Students	4,383	1,275	695	402	50	33

Note: Excludes students who receive related services only (speech, OT, PT). Target staffing ratio efficiency represents the expected # of positions (based on enrollment and staffing ratios) divided by the actual # of positions.
Source: SPS FY25 Budgeted Expenditures; SPS SY24-25 Schools File; SPS SY24-25 Purple Book

Context

Target staffing ratio efficiency reflects how closely actual staffing matches expected staffing levels (expected positions divided by actual positions). A value of 100% means caseloads are maximized - each teacher is staffed exactly to the target. Based on our national benchmarking, 90% is considered best practice.

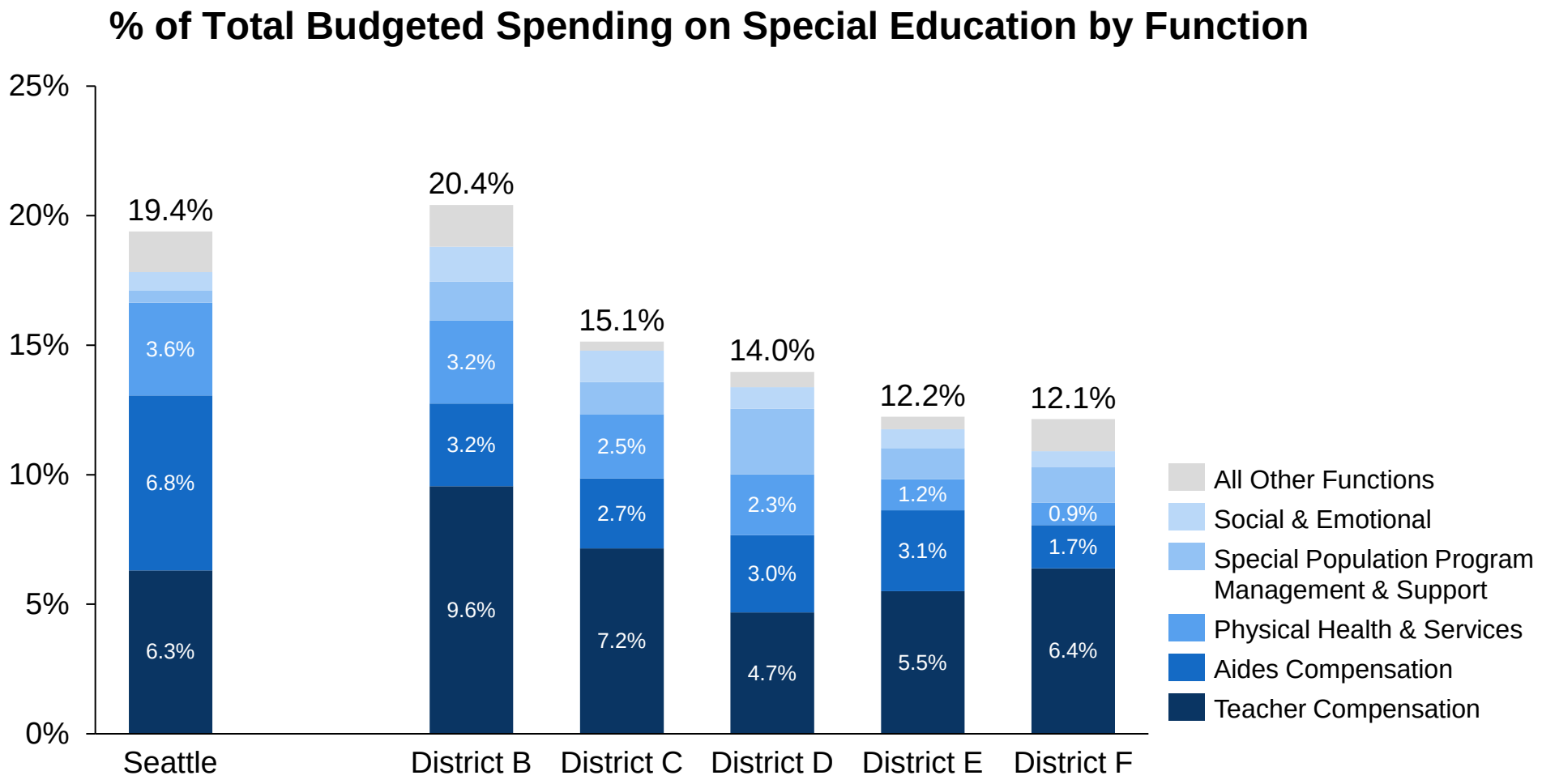
Explore

This graph explores the target staffing ratio efficiency for Teachers and Instructional Aides (IAs) across special education pathways. Most pathways in SPS operate efficiently for both teachers and IAs. Some pathways have efficiency greater than 100%, which means that the average staff member has a larger caseload than the target.

Consider

This staffing efficiency is a direct product of SPS' decision to have pathways clustered in specific schools vs. providing all pathways in all schools. This, however, likely contributes to higher transportation costs.

Seattle spends a higher percentage of their budget on special education aides compensation compared to national peers



Note: Transportation costs are excluded from special education spending.
Source: ERS Analysis; Merged Financial File; ERS Comp Database

Context

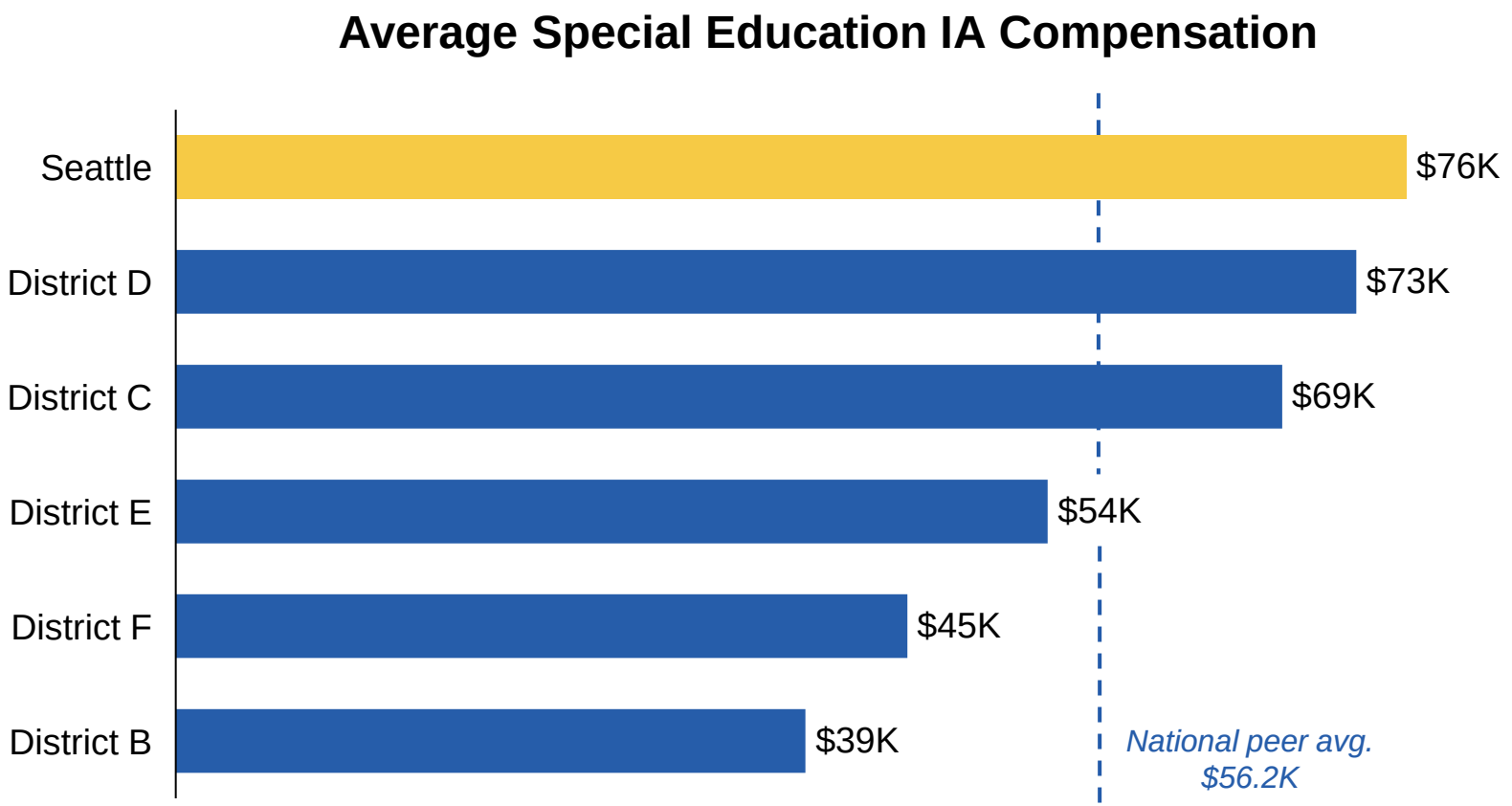
ERS applies a standard coding structure to catalogue district spending to compare districts to each other. Each major type of funding is categorized to determine the percent of spending by function. Previous slides indicate that SPS spends a greater proportion of its budget on serving students with disabilities and more per pupil. This slide shows *where* those spending differences may lie.

Explore

The table on the left breaks down special education funding by function. A larger portion of Seattle's special education dollars are spent on aides compensation than any other national peer examined. Compensation here includes salary and benefits (but does not include retirement funds).

Variation in aides compensation is driven by two factors: how much they earn, and how many aides are in SPS. The following slides explore these two factors more deeply.

Higher spend on Special Education IAs is a result of both the number and average compensation of Special Education IAs



Note: Avg. teacher compensation figures for peer districts have been adjusted for both geography and inflation
Source: SPS FY25 Budgeted Expenditures; ERS Comparison Database

Context

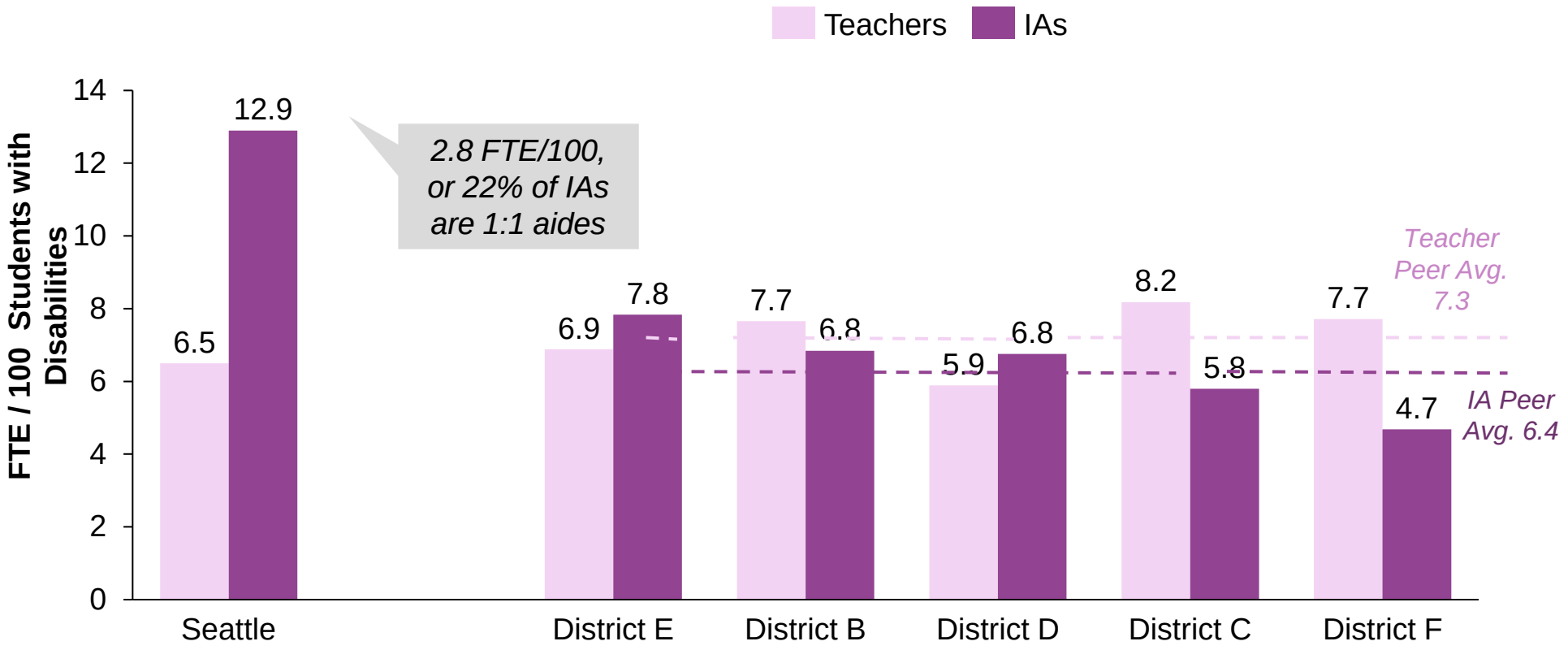
When comparing compensation across national peer districts, the analysis is adjusted so that all dollars account for geography and cost of living differences

Explore

This chart compares the average special education instructional aide compensation at SPS to peer districts. Even after controlling for cost-of-living differences, SPS pays special education IAs approximately $20 thousand more than the national peer districts on average.

Higher spend on Special Education IAs is a result of both the number and average compensation of Special Education IAs

Budgeted Special Education Teachers and IAs per 100 Students with Disabilities



Source: Updated Special Education Budget; ERS Comparison Database

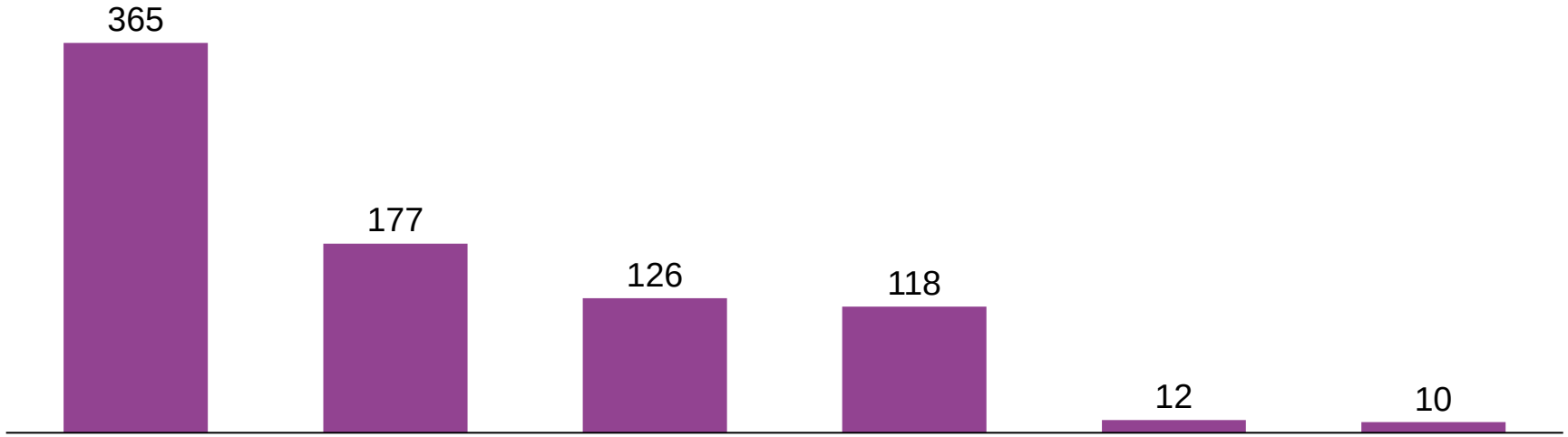
Explore

This graph compares the number of teachers and IAs per 100 students with disabilities at SPS and national peer districts. While teacher staffing levels are in line with peers, instructional aide staffing is significantly higher. It is important to note that instructional aide staffing is driven by student IEP requirements and the SPS service model staffing ratios.

Just over 20% of instructional aides in Seattle serve individual students. However, data is not available to see how this percentage compares to peer districts.

IAs in the Extended Resource pathway account for 45% of all IAs but serve only 19% of students in special education pathways

Count of Special Education IAs By Pathway, SY24-25



	Extended Resource	Resource	Distinct	Focus	Medically Fragile	DHH
Total Students	1,275	4,383	402	695	33	50
Student: Teacher: IA Ratio	Elementary: 10:1:3 Secondary: 13:1:3	22:1:1	7:1:2	Elementary: 10:1:2 Secondary: 9:1:1	6:1:2	9:1:2

Note: Excludes PreK pathways (SPP, SPP+, PreK Med/Frag). Count of Special Education IAs does not include 1:1 aides.
Source: SPS FY25 Budgeted Expenditures; SPS 24-25 Purple Book

Context

The previous slides identified that the primary contributing factor to spending differences on serving students with disabilities in SPS instructional aide compensation – both how much SPS spends on each instructional aides and the total number.

This chart explores instructional aide staffing based on pathway in SPS.

Explore

The data shows that the Extended Resource pathway has the largest number of instructional aides. This pathway accounts for 45% of all special education instructional aides but only serves 19% of special education students in special education pathways. It's important to note that this pathway services some of the students with disabilities with the greatest needs.

Consider

Are the staffing levels of the Extended Resource pathway aligned with the needs of students? And are they delivering the intended results?

Special Education: Closing

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Insight Summary

- Seattle spends more than Washington peers on special education, both per pupil and as percent of budget
- This higher spending is a product of total spending on instructional aides. SPS compensates each instructional aide more than national peers and have more overall. The Extended Resource pathway that has the most instructional aides.
- Seattle has a slightly higher rate of special education students than Washington peers, but the distribution of students across disability types suggests the higher identification rate is accurately capturing need
- In Seattle, students with disabilities consistently get serviced in their least restrictive environment
- Seattle's staffing efficiency for special education pathways is in line with recommended thresholds

Potential Action Implications

- Seattle's spend on Special Education seems to be highly streamlined already, especially around using special education instructional aides more often than other districts to lower the dependence on Special Education teachers.
- That said, the Extended Resource pathway has a notably high staffing level for instructional aides and might be the one area within Special Education that the district should examine more closely. Specifically, the district should confirm if the higher staffing in this pathway is fully aligned with the needs of these students.

Getting to Action

The diagnostic analysis led to several key insights that SPS needs to address

To ensure that SPS can provide all students and staff an excellent foundational experience across all schools and meet the District's Goals and Guardrails, SPS needs to address the challenges across these key insights

Key Insight 1

Potential misalignment of school funding levels, need, and the desired student and staff experiences

Key Insight 2

Unsustainable district operations given current fiscal deficit conditions

Key Insight 3

Variation in student access to advanced coursework

Key Insight 4

Inequitable student access to experienced educators

Key Insight 5

Inconsistent and/or inadequate support for school leaders given variation in leader experience and ambiguity around school autonomy

Key Insight 6

Challenges with strategy implementation driven by a lack organizational alignment & clarity of ownership

Source: Education Resource Strategies

Key Insight 1	**Potential misalignment of school funding levels, need, and the desired student and staff experiences**
Related Goals & Guardrails	*All Goals, Guardrail 5*

Data Insight 1

Diagnostic Insight: In Seattle, like other school districts nationwide, there is a strong correlation between concentrations of poverty in a school and school performance. But poverty levels don't fully explain school outcomes.

Data Insight 2

Diagnostic Insight: Per pupil spending at schools with higher concentrations of poverty is about 40% higher than schools with lower concentrations of poverty. The majority of that differentiation is a product additional special education and multi-lingual learner focused allocations.

Data Insight 3

School Leader Survey: Only 34% of principals agree that positions and dollars are allocated fairly based on school needs.

Potential Strategies

Review **relationship between other need characteristics and outcomes** to identify other potential need measures (in addition to poverty) to incorporate into the school funding formula.

Articulate **the student and staff experiences** that SPS desires for all schools and how they should be differentiated for its highest needs schools.

Review and realign resource allocation practices to ensure **funding is distributed more transparently and equitably across schools**, particularly those **serving higher-need students** based on the experiences SPS desires to create for its students and staff.

Key Insight 2	Unsustainable district operations given current fiscal deficit conditions
Related Goals & Guardrails	*AI Goals, Guardrail 5*

Data Insight 1

Diagnostic Insight: The portfolio, configuration and size of elementary schools creates challenges in providing robust school & teacher supports and ensuring student access to high quality instruction.

Data Insight 2

District Context: SPS faces a $94 million dollar budget deficit, which will require strategic decision-making in the coming fiscal years to ensure financial sustainability.

Diagnostic Analysis: SPS needs more “students' worth” of revenue than comparison districts to cover the costs of a single teacher relative to national peer districts, even though staffing costs are comparable to local peers.

Potential Strategies

Assess district portfolio and school configurations to **balance efficiency with student and staff experience**, addressing challenges like limited access to Specials, small teacher teams, and under-resourced facilities.

Develop a **multi-year fiscal strategy** that **aligns resources with student priorities**, accounts for enrollment decline, pursues additional revenue, and positions SPS to navigate its budget deficit while **protecting equity and instructional quality**

Advocate for additional revenue and explore **cost reduction opportunities in higher spending areas (e.g., special education and transportation)** by reviewing district policy / practices

Key Insight 3

Variation in student access to advanced coursework

Related Goals & Guardrails: *Goal 3; Guardrail 1*

Data Insight 1

Diagnostic Insight: In HS, Black and Hispanic students enroll less often in advanced coursework. This is primarily driven by disparate outcomes and enrollment in earlier courses that prepare students for advanced coursework.

Data Insight 2

Diagnostic Insight and School Leader Survey: SPS spends less per pupil on instructional materials and supplies than peer districts. Only 50% of HS and 67% of MS principals agreed that SPS provides their school with high quality materials, while 81% of Elementary did.

Data Insight 3

School Leader Survey and Central Office Interviews: Variation in the vision, expectations and supports for implementing academic practices – such as MTSS – has led to inefficiencies and inconsistency in school implementation.

Potential Strategies

Expand and align pathways into advanced coursework by strengthening middle-grade readiness, **ensuring equitable course offerings across schools**, improving advising systems that guide Black and Hispanic students into preparatory and other post-secondary classes

Improve quality and equity of instructional resources by **assessing per-pupil spending on curriculum and materials**, addressing gaps identified by secondary principals, and ensuring **access to high-quality tools across grade levels**

Increase coherence in academic practices by **clarifying expectations for MTSS and related frameworks**, and ensuring schools receive the supports needed for **consistent and effective implementation**

Key Insight 4

Inequitable student access to experienced educators

Related Goals & Guardrails

Goals 1 & 2, Guardrail 5

Data Insight 1

School Leader Survey: Principals largely agree they have enough effective teachers at their school to achieve student performance goals, and that they can consistently retain these teachers. However, K-8 and HS principals struggle to assign highly effective teachers to classrooms with the highest concentrations of high need students.

Data Insight 2

Diagnostic Insight: Teachers with fewer than three year of experience (17% of the workforce) are concentrated in high needs campuses.

Distinguished teachers (37% of the workforce) are less prevalent in high needs campuses.

Data Insight 3

Diagnostic Insight: Instructional coaches are staffed at an average ratio of 1 coach per 41 teachers – much higher than best practice (1:16-22). Outside of formal coaching positions, several positions across multiple departments provide instructional support but alignment and collaboration across these positions can prove challenging.

Potential Strategies

Focus retention and assignment strategies on **directing effective teachers to classrooms where they can most impact student performance**

Strengthen attraction and retention strategies through **targeted supports for teachers with fewer than three years of experience** and approaches to **keep effective educators in the hardest-to-staff schools**

Support teacher development by **improving access to coaching**, **coordinating instructional support roles**, and **reassessing spending on instructional materials** compared to peers

Key Insight 5

Inconsistent and/or inadequate support for school leaders given variation in leader experience and ambiguity around school autonomy

Related Goals & Guardrails

All Goals, Guardrails 1 and 5

Data Insight 1

Diagnostic Insight: 42% of Principals have 0-2 years of experience – requiring support to utilize autonomy strategically

Data Insight 2

Diagnostic Insight: School supervisors in SPS have high caseloads that are not differentiated by need. Best practice ratios are **12:1.** SPS's are **21:1**

Data Insight 3

School Leader Survey: Only half of school leaders agree that (1) central office departments coordinate effectively to provide support, and (2) share that they can easily find the correct support person.

Potential Strategies

Differentiate support for principals based on experience and school need by **ensuring novice principals and those in higher-need schools receive more tailored guidance and development opportunities.**

Strengthen school supervision structures **by moving toward lower supervisor-to-principal ratios** and ensuring supervisors can provide **more strategic instructional leadership support.**

Improve coherence and accessibility of Central Office support by **clarifying roles, improving coordination across departments,** and **making it easier for principals to access the right expertise.**

Key Insight 6	**Challenges with strategy implementation driven by organizational incoherence & lack of clarity of ownership**
Related Goals & Guardrails	*All Goals, Guardrails 4 & 5*

Data Insight 1

School Leader Survey: Many principals reported difficulty navigating central office, with only one-third of middle school and 39% of Title I elementary principals agreeing they can easily find the right person for support. Data indicates service fragmentation across central office.

Data Insight 2

School Leader Survey and Central Office Interviews: Less than half of school leaders feel central office departments coordinate effectively, and leaders themselves acknowledge fragmented ownership of key initiatives like MTSS, UDL, and professional development.

Data Insight 3

School Leader Survey: While HR and Early Literacy teams received positive feedback for their clarity and direct support, principals highlighted that other central office roles and structures (e.g., consulting teachers, PD coordination) lacked coherence, clear vision, and measurable impact.

Potential Strategies

Clarify ownership and accountability across departments so that supports such as professional learning, MTSS, and UDL are **delivered with coherence and aligned to districtwide priorities**

Streamline central office support structures by **reducing duplication, coordinating services across departments**, and ensuring principals can easily access the right staff for timely and effective support

Build on bright spots to strengthen consistency by scaling models like HR and Early Literacy that principals identified as **clear, coherent, and impactful**, while addressing gaps in other support teams

There are strategies SPS can explore to act on these insights

Key Insight	Related Goals & Guardrails	Potential Strategies
Potential misalignment of school funding levels, need, and the desired student and staff experiences	*All Goals* *Guardrail 5*	➢ Review relationship between other need characteristics and outcomes to identify other potential need measures ➢ Articulate the student and staff experiences that SPS desires for all schools ➢ Review and realign resource allocation practices to ensure funding is distributed more transparently and equitably across schools
Unsustainable district operations given current fiscal deficit conditions	*All Goals* *Guardrail 5*	➢ Assess district portfolio and school configurations to balance efficiency with student and staff experience ➢ Develop a multi-year fiscal strategy that aligns resources with student priorities ➢ Explore cost reduction opportunities in higher spending areas (e.g., special; education and transportation)
Variation in student access advanced coursework	*Goal 3* *Guardrail 1*	➢ Expand and align pathways into advanced coursework by strengthening middle-grade readiness ➢ Improve quality and equity of instructional resources ➢ Increase coherence in academic practices by clarifying expectations for MTSS and related frameworks
Inequitable student access to experienced educators	*Goals 1 & 2* *Guardrail 5*	➢ Focus retention and assignment strategies on directing effective teachers to classrooms where they can most impact student performance ➢ Strengthen attraction and retention strategies through targeted supports for teachers with fewer than three years of experience ➢ Support teacher development by improving access to coaching, coordinating instructional support roles, and reassessing spending on instructional materials
Inconsistent and/or inadequate support for school leaders given variation in leader experience and ambiguity around school autonomy	*All Goals* *Guardrails 1 and 5*	➢ Differentiate support for principals based on experience and school need ➢ Strengthen school supervision structures by moving toward lower supervisor-to-principal ratios ➢ Improve coherence and accessibility of Central Office support by clarifying roles, improving coordination across departments, and making it easier for principals to access the right expertise.
Challenges with strategy implementation driven by organizational incoherence & lack of clarity of ownership	*All Goals* *Guardrails 4 and 5*	➢ Clarify ownership and accountability across departments ➢ Streamline central office support structures by reducing duplication, coordinating services across departments ➢ Build on bright spots to strengthen consistency by scaling models like HR and Early Literacy

Next Steps for Moving the Work Forward

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- **Engage Stakeholders** – Ground decisions in open dialogue with families, educators, and the community
- **Prioritize Focus Areas** – Identify a small set of high-leverage priorities for greatest impact
- **Align Resources** – Direct time, people, and money to support equity and district priorities
- **Support Leadership Across All Levels** – Build support, capacity, communication and collaboration structures for school leaders
- **Integrate into Strategic Plan** – Use the diagnostic to anchor strategies for budget, equity, and student success

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Appendix

Methodology

ERS uses a strategic system framework to evaluate resource alignment with need and best practice

Strategic System Area and Description	
Standards and Instructional Resources	All students can access rigorous curricula and assessments aligned with college- and career ready standards.
Teaching	Teachers have the time and support for team collaboration and learning, they are strategically hired and assigned, and their career paths and compensation enable growth and reward contribution.
School Design	School roles, teams, and schedules are structured to enable personalized time and attention, teacher collaboration, and professional learning.
Leadership	Leadership roles have clear goals, accountability, and career paths, with flexibility and support to achieve results.
School Support & Accountability	The central office is a service and strategy partner in sharing best practices and ensuring all schools reach learning goals.
Funding & Portfolio	School funding is equitable, flexible, and transparent; and the portfolio of schools reflects student and community need, equity of access, and cost.
Community Engagement	Partnerships with families, community institutions, youth service organizations, and online instructors effectively serve students' needs.

Source: Education Resource Strategies

ERS applies a standard coding structure to identify the nature of district spending and compare to our national district database

Use

Functions

Instruction

- Teacher Compensation
- Aides Compensation
- Substitute Compensation
- Librarian & Media Specialist
- Instructional Materials & Supplies
- Other Non-Compensation
- Other Compensation
- Extended Time & Tutoring

Instruction Support & Professional Growth (ISPG)

- Professional Growth
- Curriculum Development
- Recruitment (of Instructional Staff)
- Special Population Program Management & Support

Pupil Services & Enrichment

- Enrichment
- Social Emotional
- Physical Health Services & Therapies
- Career Academic Counseling
- Parent & Community Relations

Leadership

- Governance
- School Supervision
- School Administration
- Research & Accountability
- Communications
- Student Assignment

Operations & Maintenance (O&M)

- Facilities & Maintenance
- Security & Safety
- Food Services
- Student Transportation
- Utilities

Business Services

- Human Resources
- Finance, Budget, Purchasing, Distribution
- Data Processing & Information Services
- Facilities Planning
- Development & Fundraising
- Legal
- Insurance

Source: ERS

ERS applies a standard coding structure to identify the nature of district spending and compare to our national district database

Leadership & Management

District Governance, Management of the support services provide to Schools

Examples:
Chiefs, Board Members

Shared Services

All FTEs, services, and materials that provide support to schools but generally on as-needed or irregular basis

Examples:
Psychologists, Coordinators

School on Central

All FTEs, services, and materials not reported in the financial system at schools, but play out in schools on a regular and predictable basis

Examples:
Speech pathologists, PTs, OTs

School Reported

All FTEs, services, and materials allocated directly to schools in the district expenditures

Examples:
Teachers, APs, principals

On central office budgets

On school budgets

True district “overhead”

Resources used in schools