Sizing the Challenge
The NYC Experience

Jean-Claude Brizard
Regional Superintendent

Executive Director
Office of Secondary Schools - NYC

Beyond No Child Left Behind

"…despite scattered gains, school achievement continues to be closely tied to family background."

"There is no more important variable in children's schooling than the quality of their teachers."

Thomas Sobol

New York City Situation Overview

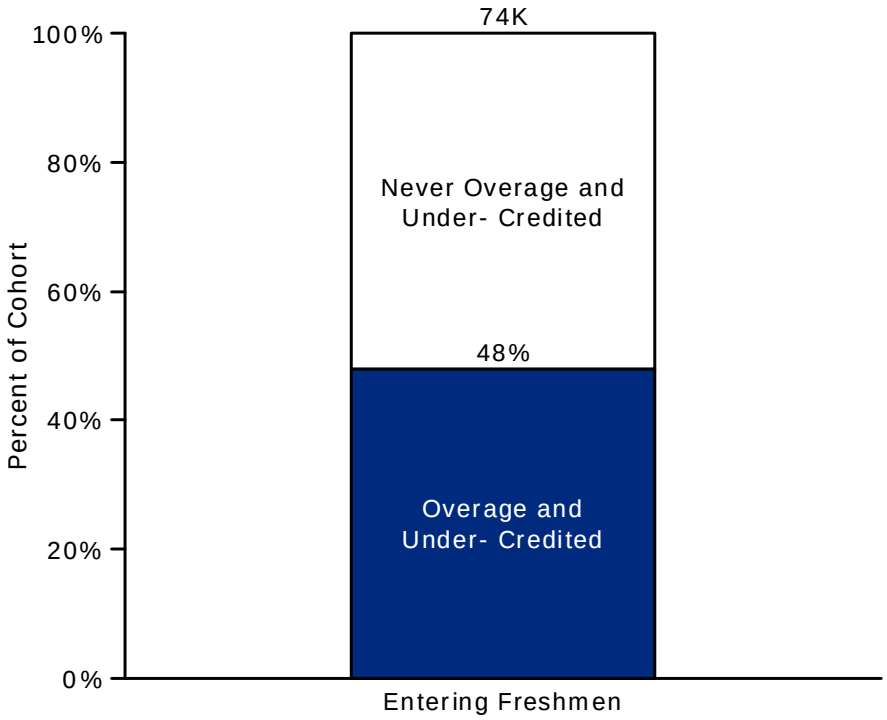
- NYC's school system is the largest district in the United States, serving 1.1 million students
- ~1400 schools
- Nearly 400 high schools
- Nearly 200 small-themed high schools
- Larger HSs serve majority of population

Sizing the Challenge

Approximately Half of All Entering Freshmen Become Overage and Under-Credited During High School

- Overage and under-credited students are at least two years off-track relative to expected age and credit accumulation toward earning a diploma

Percent of Students who Become Overage and Under-Credited in the Class of 2003 Cohort



Definition of Overage and Under-Credited

Age	Credits
Age 16	Fewer than 11 Credits
Age 17	Fewer than 22 Credits
Age 18	Fewer than 33 Credits
Age 19-21	Fewer than 44 Credits

Note: 44 credits are required for graduation in New York City

2 Credits = 1 Carnegie Unit

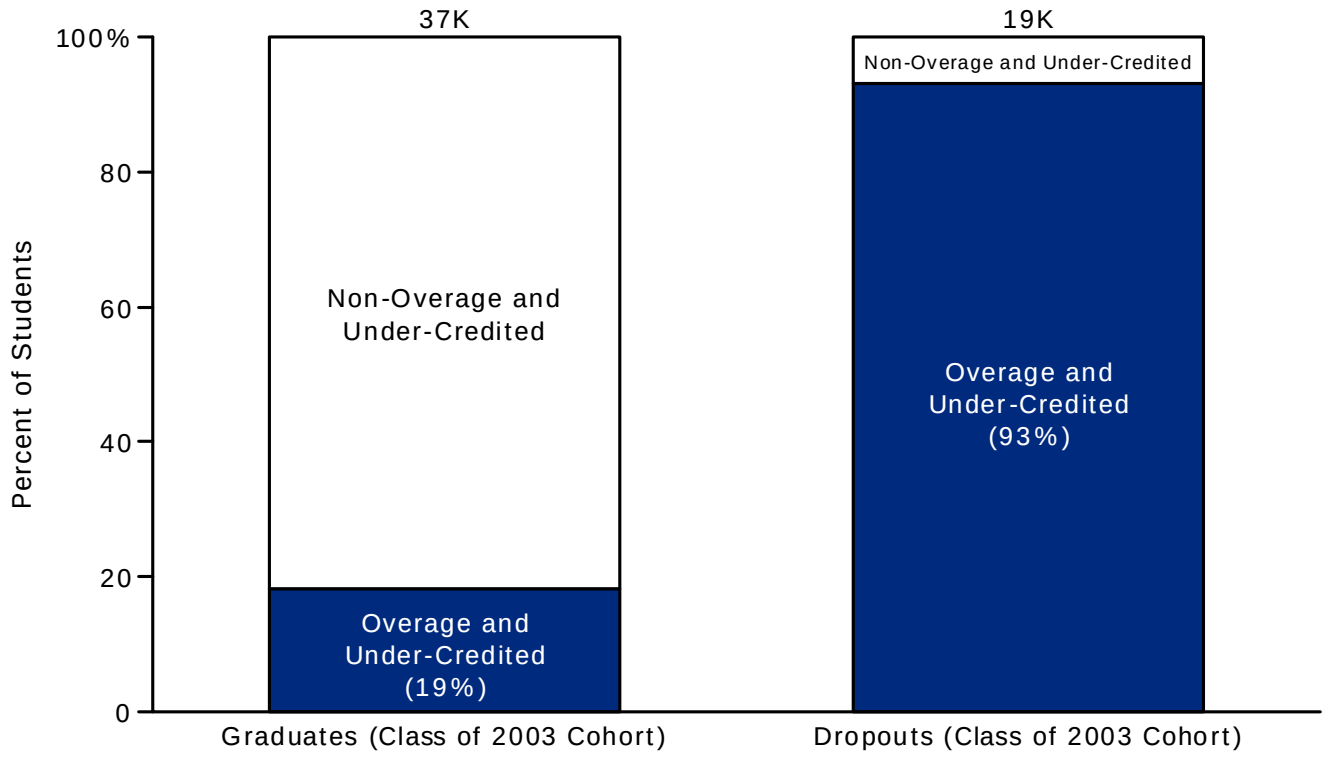
Note: Excludes District 75 students; Includes all students who were OA-UC at any point in their high school career
Source: ATS Data

Sizing the Challenge

Nearly All High School Dropouts in NYC Have a History of Being Overage and Under-Credited

- The dropout population *is* the overage and under-credited population, just at different points in time
- By contrast, only 19% of graduates were once overage and under-credited in high school

Graduates and Dropouts by Overage and Under-Credited Status, Class of 2003 Cohort



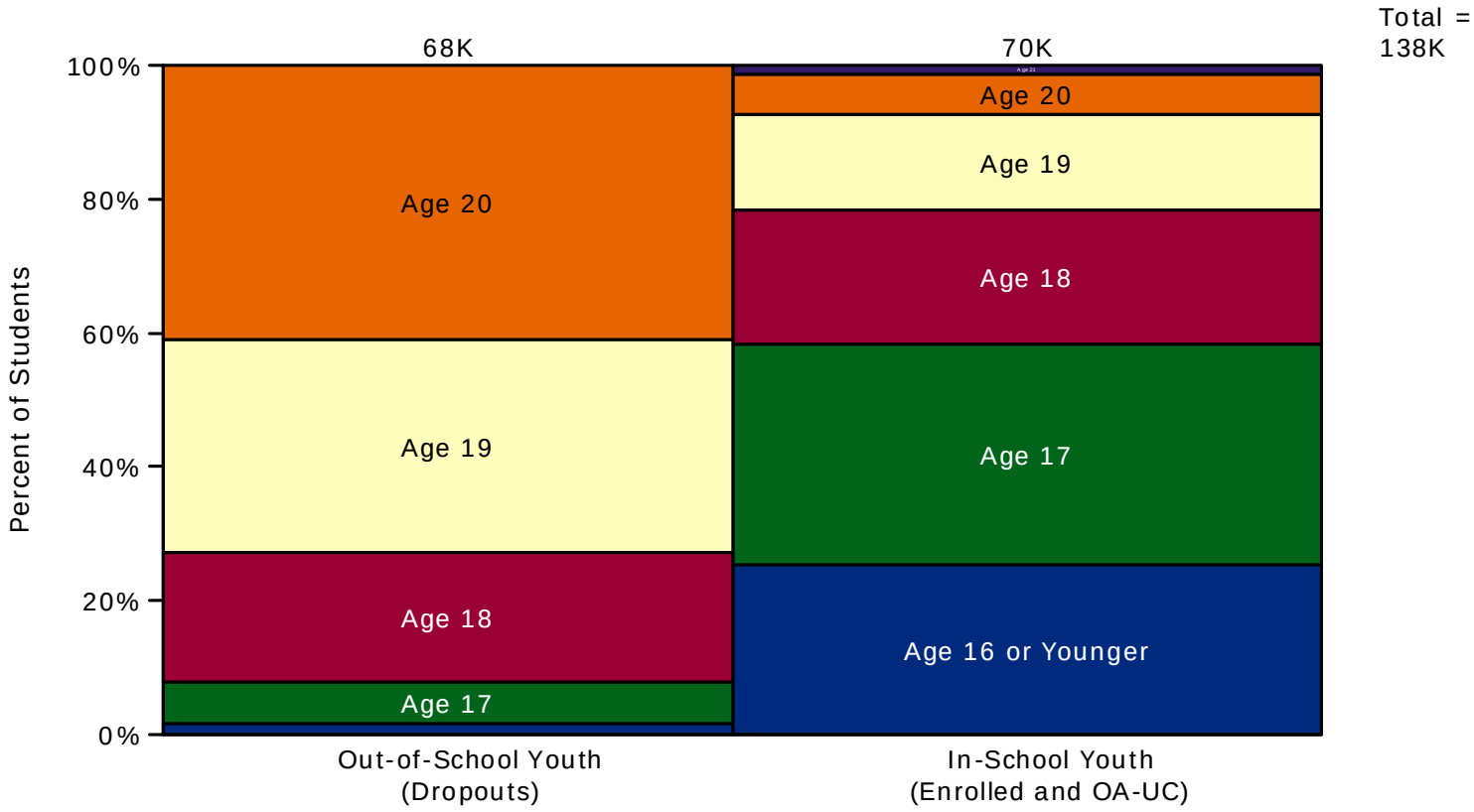
Note: Excludes District 75 Students
Source: ATS Data

Sizing the Challenge

Nearly 140K NYC Youth Age 16-21 Have Dropped Out or Are Significantly Off-Track for Graduation

- Including in- and out-of-school youth, there are approximately 138K overage and under-credited youth in New York City at any given point in time

In- and Out-of-School Overage and Under-Credited Youth, by Age on June 2005

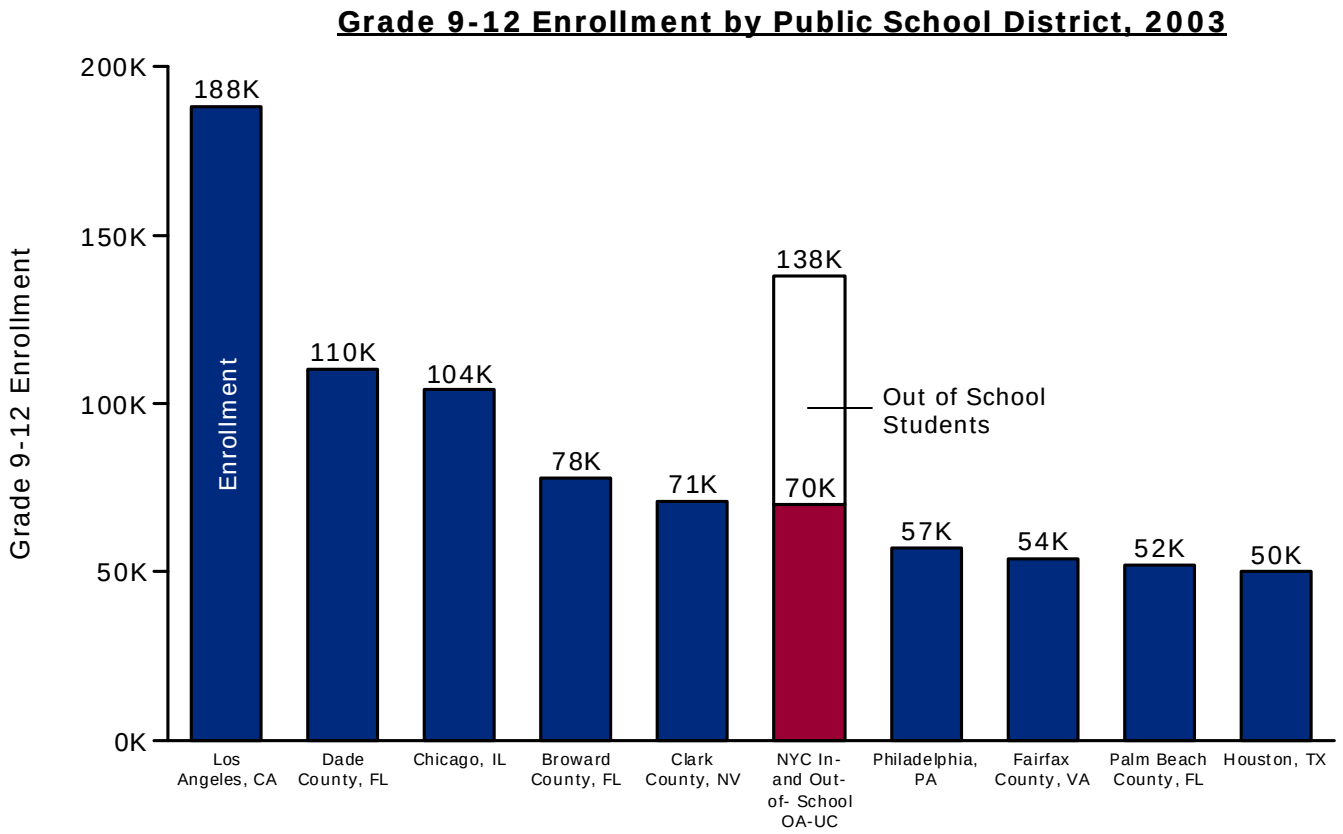


Note: Includes District 75 students; Students are counted as out-of-school youth only if they are dropouts (as opposed to other discharges)
Source: ATS Data

Sizing the Challenge

NYC's Overage and Under-Credited HS Population Is Bigger than All but Five Other US School Districts

- NYC's estimated 70,000 overage and under-credited youth who are *enrolled* in school represent a population of students that is smaller than only five other US school districts
  - The total NYC population of in- and out-of-school overage and under-credited youth is larger in size than the high school districts in any city except Los Angeles



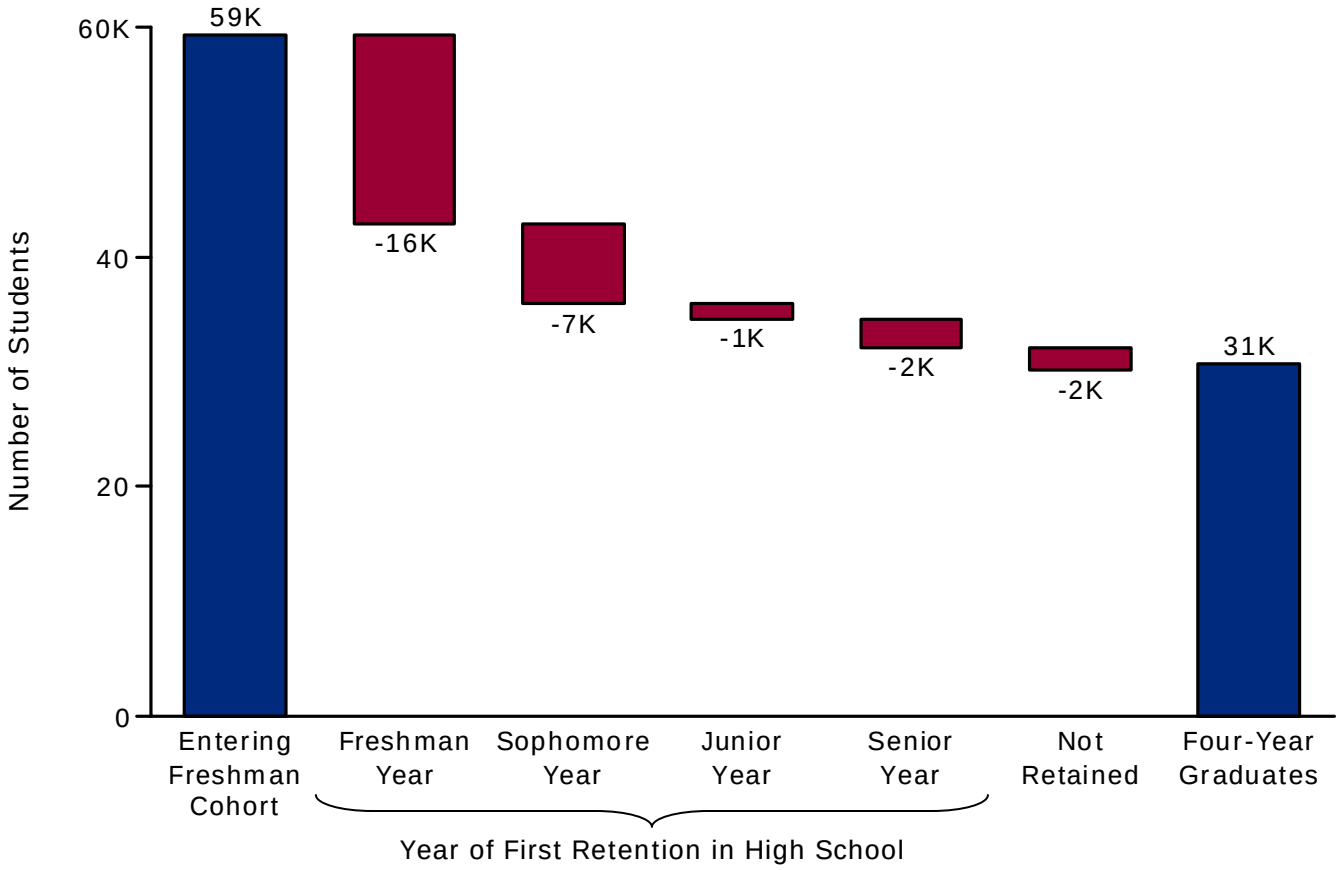
Source: NCES; ATS Data

Secondary School Situation Assessment

“Leaky Faucet” of Student Progression Is Most Problematic in Early Years of High School

- 57% of students who fail to graduate in four years are retained in their freshman year, and 85% are retained in the first two years of high school

Progression of Class of 2003 Cohort to Four-Year Graduation

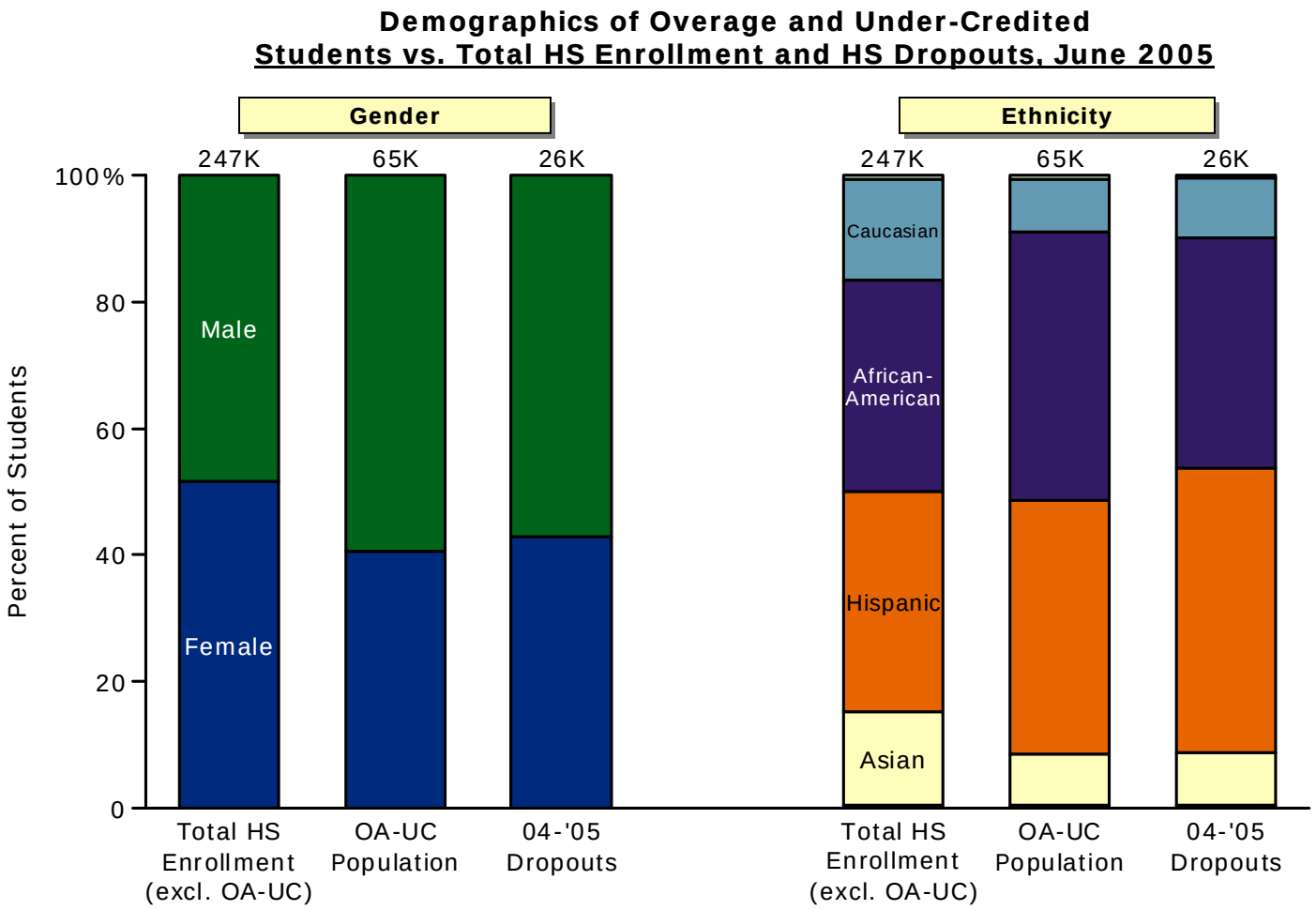


Note: Excludes students who end up discharged with confirmed admission to non-DOE schools or programs
Source: ATS Data

Sizing the Challenge

Gender and Ethnic Makeup of Overage and Under-Credited Population

- There are 11% more males and 14% more African Americans and Hispanics in the OA-UC population than overall. This overlaps with other factors (academic skills, representation in special education).



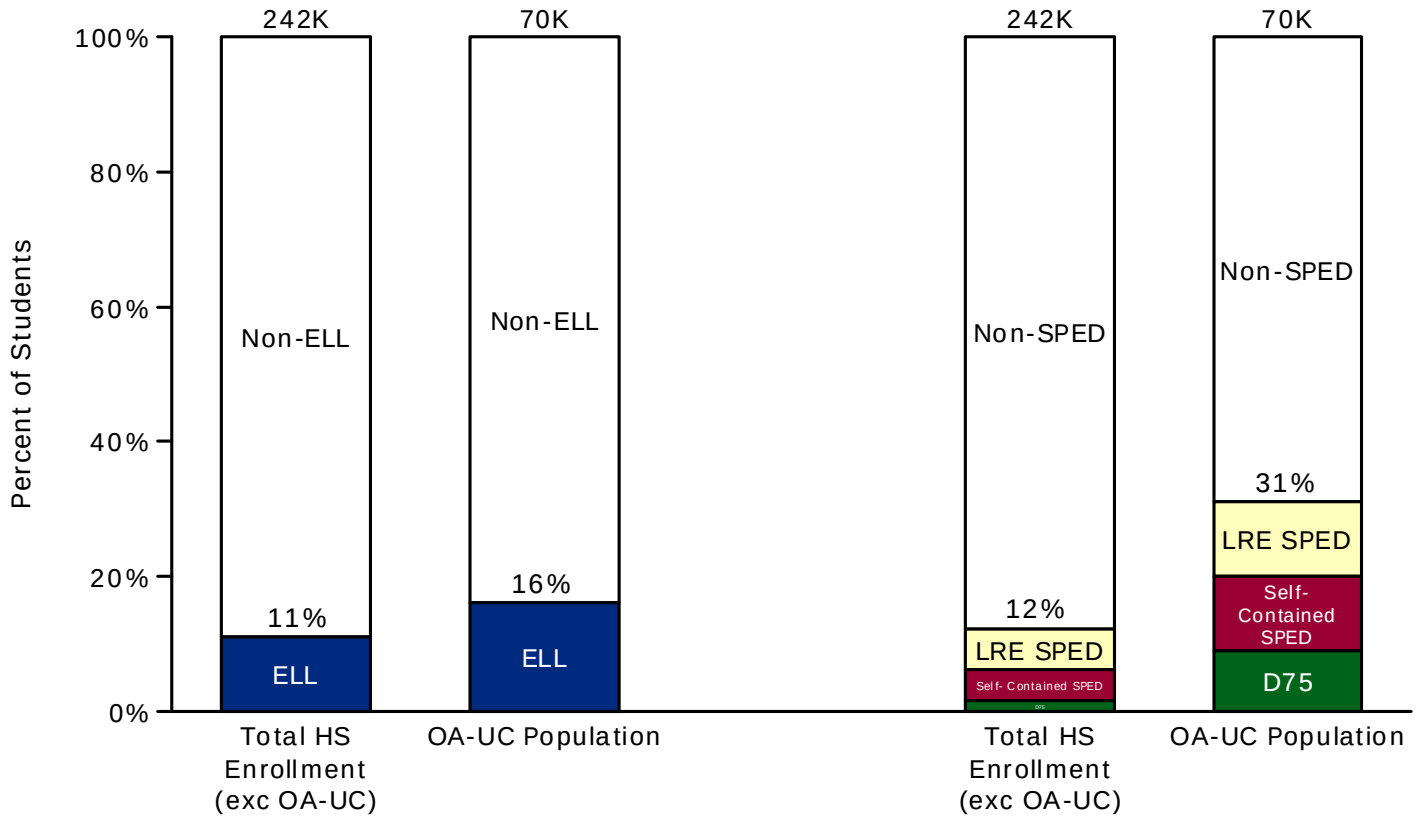
Note: Excludes District 75 students
Source: ATS Data

Sizing the Challenge

Concentration of Special Needs Students Is More Acute in the Overage and Under-Credited Population

- Differences between OA-UC and the general population are much wider for SPED than ELL
  - 31% of overage and under-credited students have some SPED designation, versus only 12% of the remainder of the student population

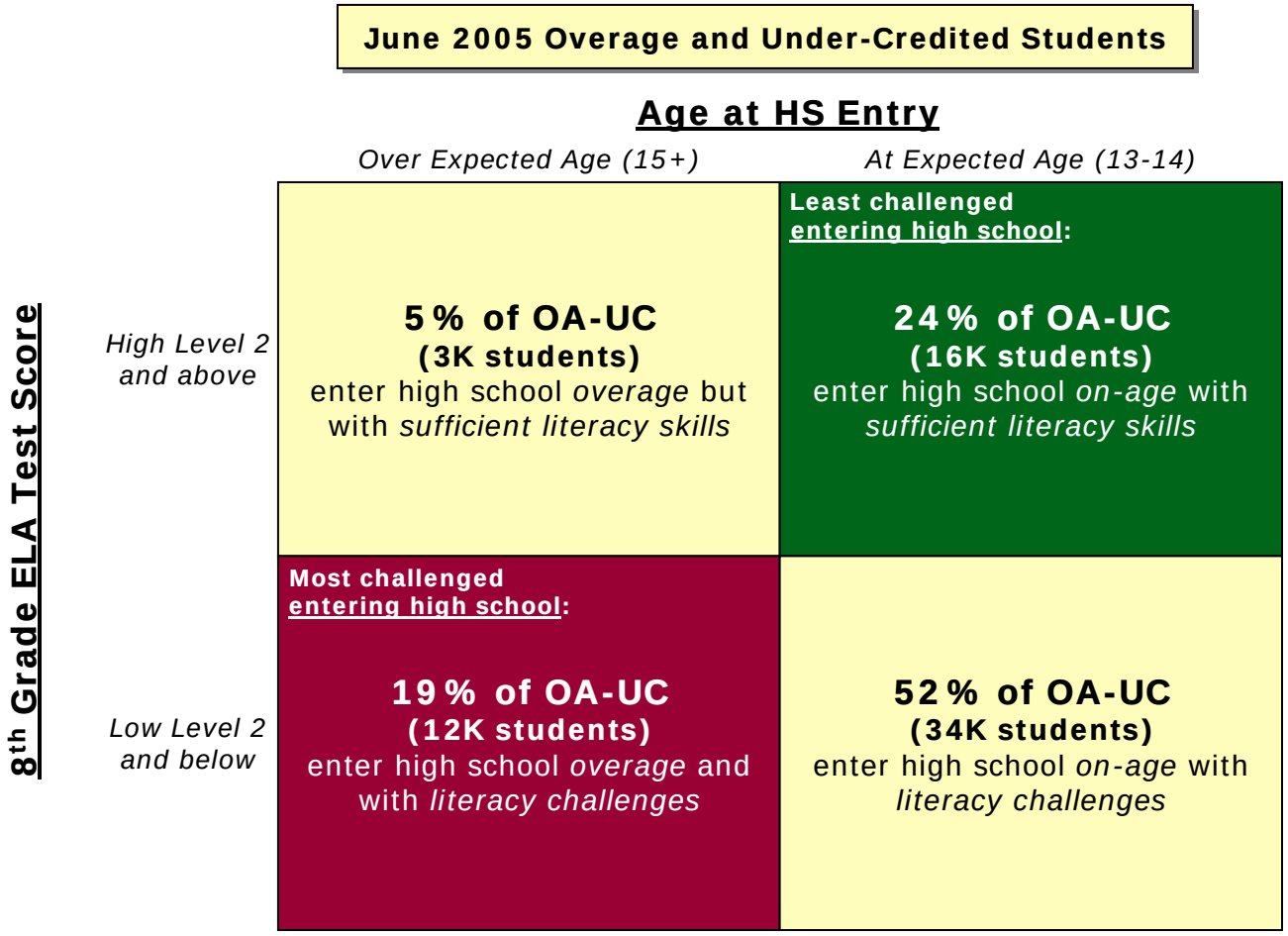
Demographics of Overage and Under-Credited Students vs. Total HS Enrollment, June 2005



Note: Self-Contained SPED contains only those students who are self-contained and enrolled outside of District 75; About 2K OA-UC students are both ELL and SPED
Source: ATS Data

Sizing the Challenge

Literacy Is a Leading Challenge for OA-UC Students, yet 30% Enter High School with Sufficient Skills on 8th Grade Exams



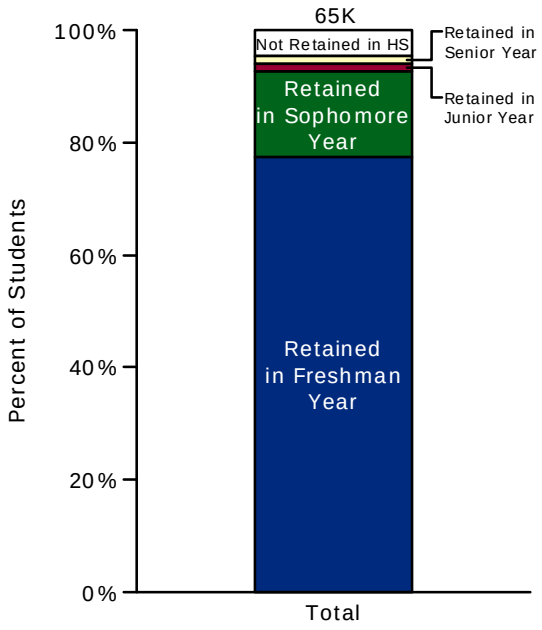
Note: Excludes District 75 students
Source: ATS Data

Sizing the Challenge

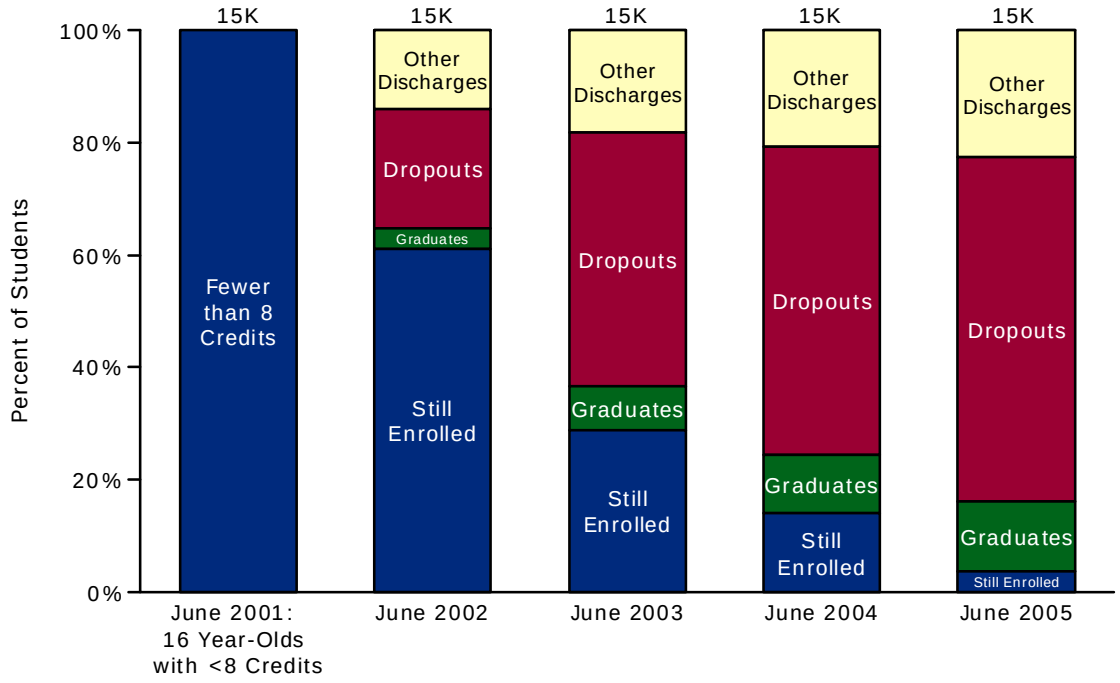
Overage and Under-Credited Students Fall Behind Early, and Leave the System Rapidly Once Becoming Off-Track

- 78% of OA-UC students were retained in freshman year; 93% were retained either as freshmen or sophomores
- 84% of students who are 16 years old with fewer than eight credits end up leaving the system

Year in Which Overage and Under-Credited Students Were First Retained



Progression of Age 16 – Less than 8 Credit Students, June 2001-05



Cumulative Attrition Rate	35%	63%	76%	84%

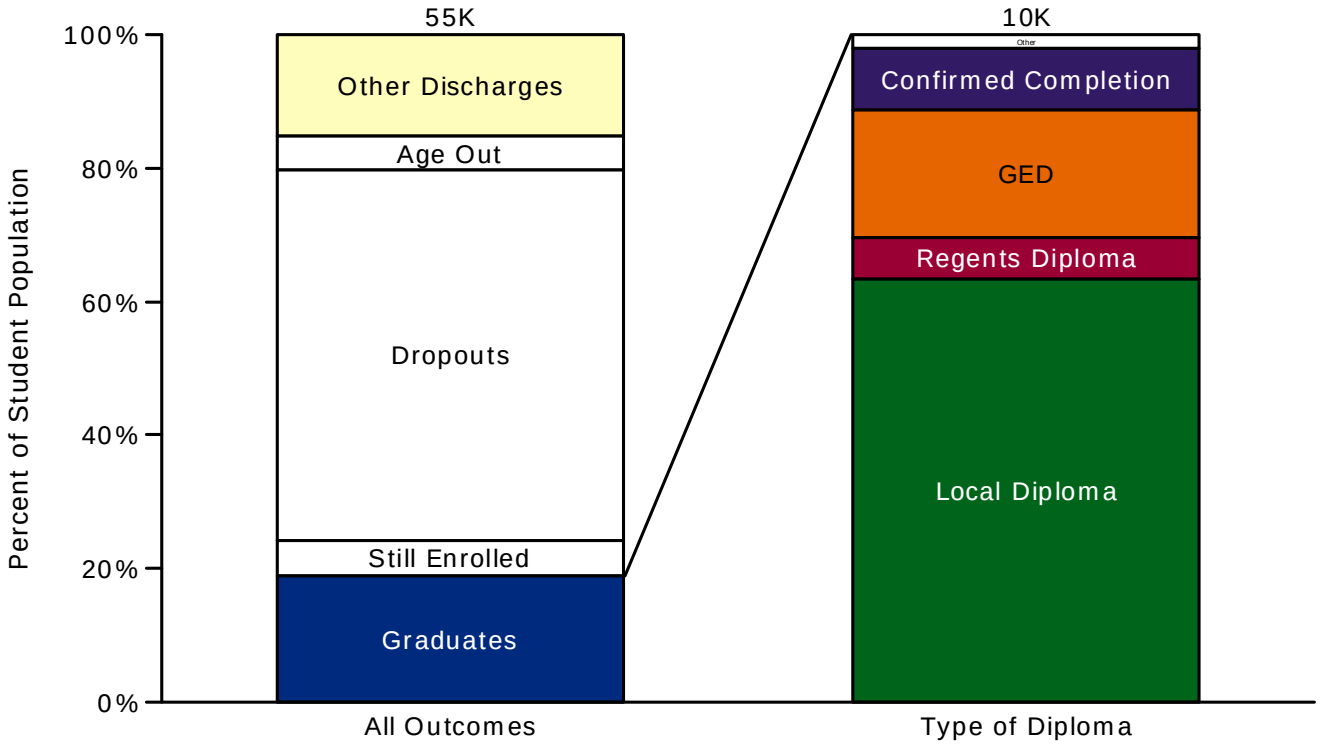
Note: Excludes District 75 Students
Source: ATS Data

Sizing the Challenge

Only 19% of Overage and Under-Credited Students Ultimately Receive a High School Diploma or GED

- 6% of OA-UC graduates receive a Regents diploma (under prior definition of passing eight Regents), while GEDs account for 20% of OA-UC graduates

Age, School Type, and Credential of Overage and Under-Credited Graduates, June 2001 Cohort



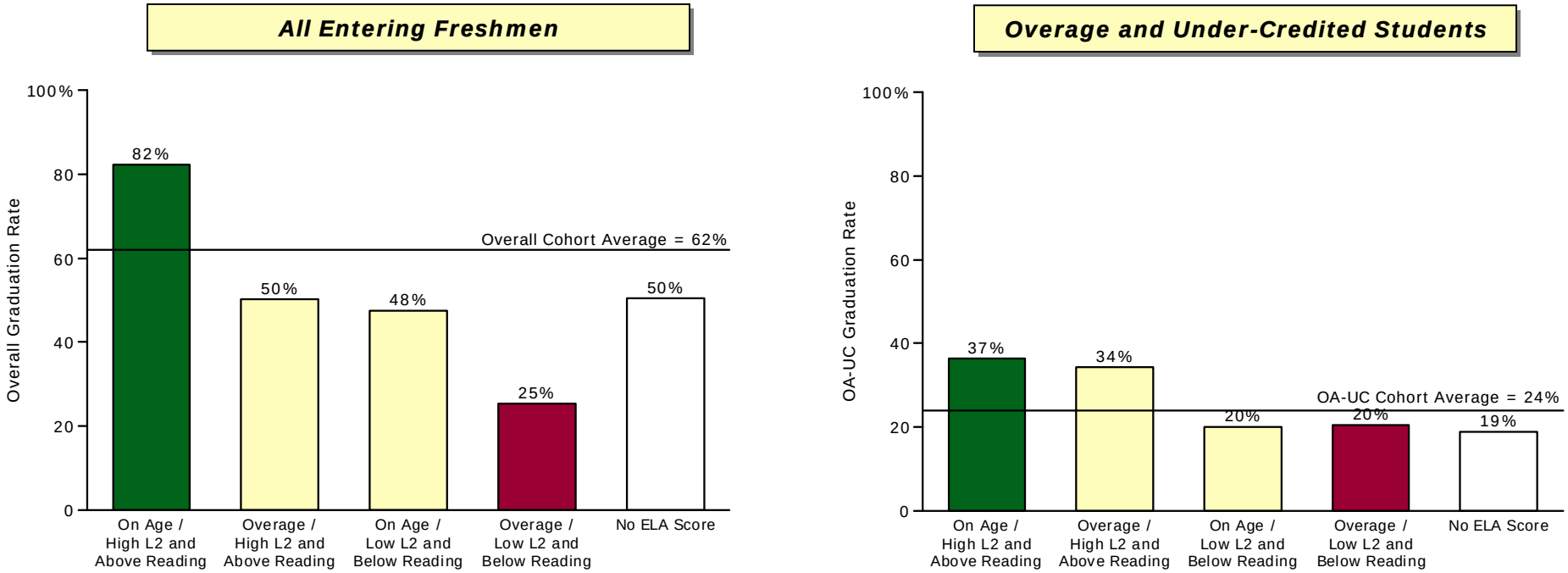
Note: Excludes District 75 students; Excludes IEP diplomas; Confirmed Completion signifies proof presented of receipt of a high school diploma
Source: ATS Data

Sizing the Challenge

Once Students Become OA-UC, 8th Grade Proficiency Levels Do Not Drive Significant Variation in Graduation Rates

- Although incoming skills are important, they are not the sole determinant of student outcomes
  - Even well-prepared students – those entering on-age with at least a high Level 2 ELA score – graduate at only a 37% rate once becoming OA-UC (vs. 82% for the general population)

6-Year Graduation Rate by Age at HS Entry and 8th Grade ELA Level, Class of 2003 Cohort

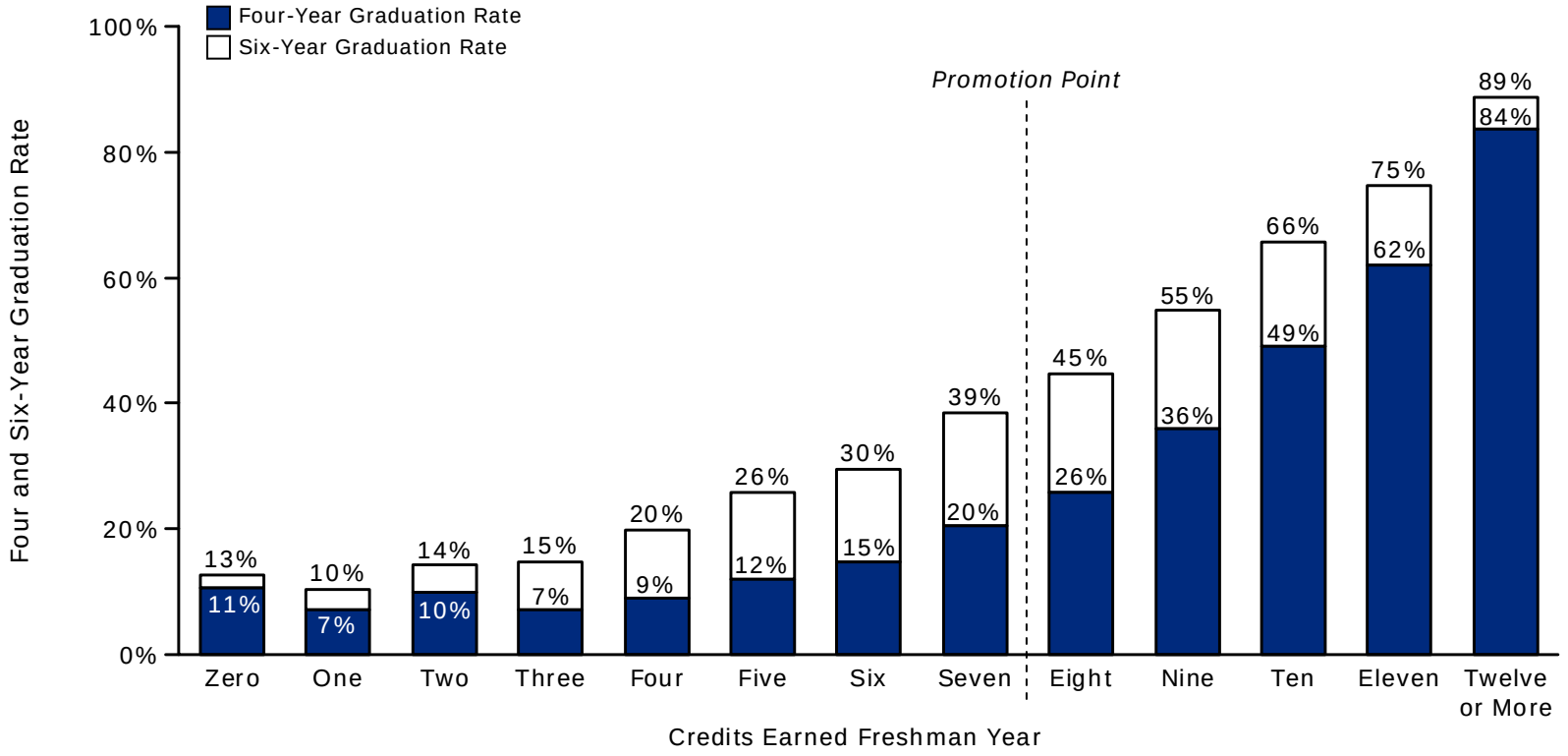


Note: 6-year graduation rate (completion status as of June 2005); Excludes District 75 students, students who receive IEP diplomas and students with confirmed discharges
Source: ATS Data

Secondary School Situation Assessment

Credit Accumulation in Freshman Year Is Highly Predictive of Four- and Six-Year Graduation Outcomes

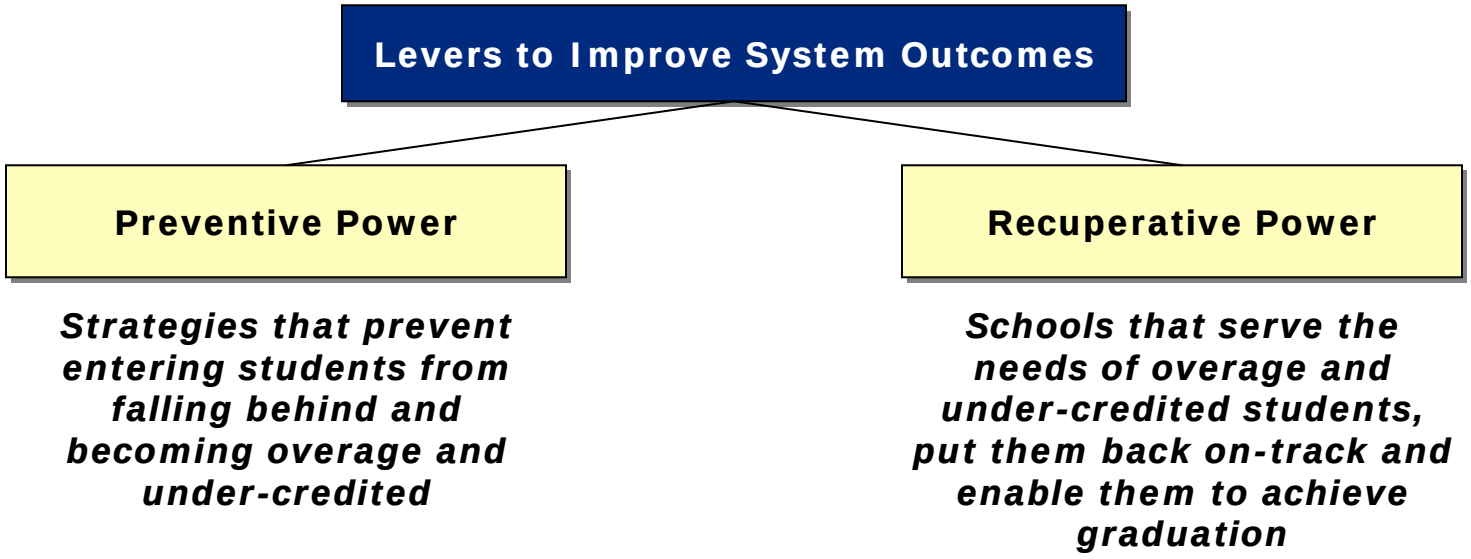
Four- and Six-Year Graduation Rate by Credits Earned Freshman Year, Class of 2003 Cohort



Note: Excludes District 75 students
Source: ATS Data

Identifying Effective Options

Raising the System Graduation Rate Requires Prevention and Recuperation of Overage and Under-Credited Students



Secondary Strategy Goals and Core Elements

Reform Will Increase Graduation Rate Through a Portfolio of Specific Strategies Supported by System-Wide Levers of Change

Increased Personalization and Intensive Focus on Academic Rigor

- System-wide programmatic emphasis on increased personalization of school cultures and academic rigor
  - Specific need for high engagement of and academic support for underperforming students (e.g. intensive recuperative literacy and numeracy/math)

Leadership | **Empowerment** | **Accountability**

- Three core Levers of Change provide the design and implementation basis of all programmatic strategies
- Alignment of all secondary strategies with accountability initiatives—In progress (progress report for High Schools and Transfer Schools)

Portfolio of Strategies to Increase Graduation Rates

Transform Existing Articulated High Schools	Increase the Number of New Small High Schools	Expand and Strengthen Multiple Pathways Portfolio
Targets increase in 4-year rate	*Targets increase in 4-year rate*	*Targets increase in 6-year rate*

Elements of School Design and Impact On Graduation

What Could, and Does, Predict the Graduation Rate at a School?

Variable Tested	Methodology / Calculation	Statistically Significant?
Graduation Rate (Dependent)	DAA City Cohort data for each school on graduation rate for class of 2005 (includes GED and IEP diplomas)*; Graduation rates were also calculated for each level of ELA and MAT tests by individual DBN	N/A
Enrollment	Total HS enrollment as of June 2002	✓
Gender	Calculated as proportion of females in student population for each school	✓
Reading Proficiency	School proportion of each of 5 categories of 8th grade ELA performance (L1, LL2, HL2, L3, L4)	✓
Math Proficiency	School proportion of each of 5 categories of 8th grade math performance (L1, LL2, HL2, L3, L4)	✓
Screened / Educational Option Seats	Calculated as the proportion of seats in a given school designated as screened/EO in 2004-5 to the total number of freshman seats, defined as the audited 2004-5 freshman enrollment where available or the total seats listed in each school by program listed otherwise	✓
Career / Technical School (DV)	Indicated as 1 or 0 based on whether school is a CTE	No
Specialized School (DV)	Indicated as 1 or 0 based on whether school is one of the 7 specialized schools (i.e. Stuyvesant)	No
Title 1 Funding (DV)	Indicated as 1 or 0 based on whether school receives Title 1 funding (proxy for student poverty level)	No
ELL Proportion	Percentage of students in 9th grade who are ELL	No
SPED Proportion	Percentage of students in 9th grade who are special education students (DAA Cohort excludes most self-contained SPED students)	No
Student-Teacher Ratio	Calculated as ratio of high school teachers to high school students based on data in the 2004-5 Allocation Memo Part C: Allocation Method	No
Average Teacher Salary	Based on cost of FTE for each school from the 2004-5 Allocation Memo Part C: Allocation Method	No
8th Grade Attendance	Calculated as proportion of students in a school whose 8th grade attendance was lower than 85%	No
Proportion of Classes Taught by Highly Qualified Teachers	Percentage of Math and English classes (separate variables) taught by teachers defined as "Highly Qualified" in that subject by the state of New York	No

*Excludes Transfer, GED, Special Education and Home School programs
Note: Significance based on 95% confidence interval and multiple regressions including combinations with statistically insignificant variables
Source: ATS Data, Parthenon Regression Analysis

Secondary School Situation Assessment

"Beat the Odds" Schools - Principals Articulate Common Critical Elements

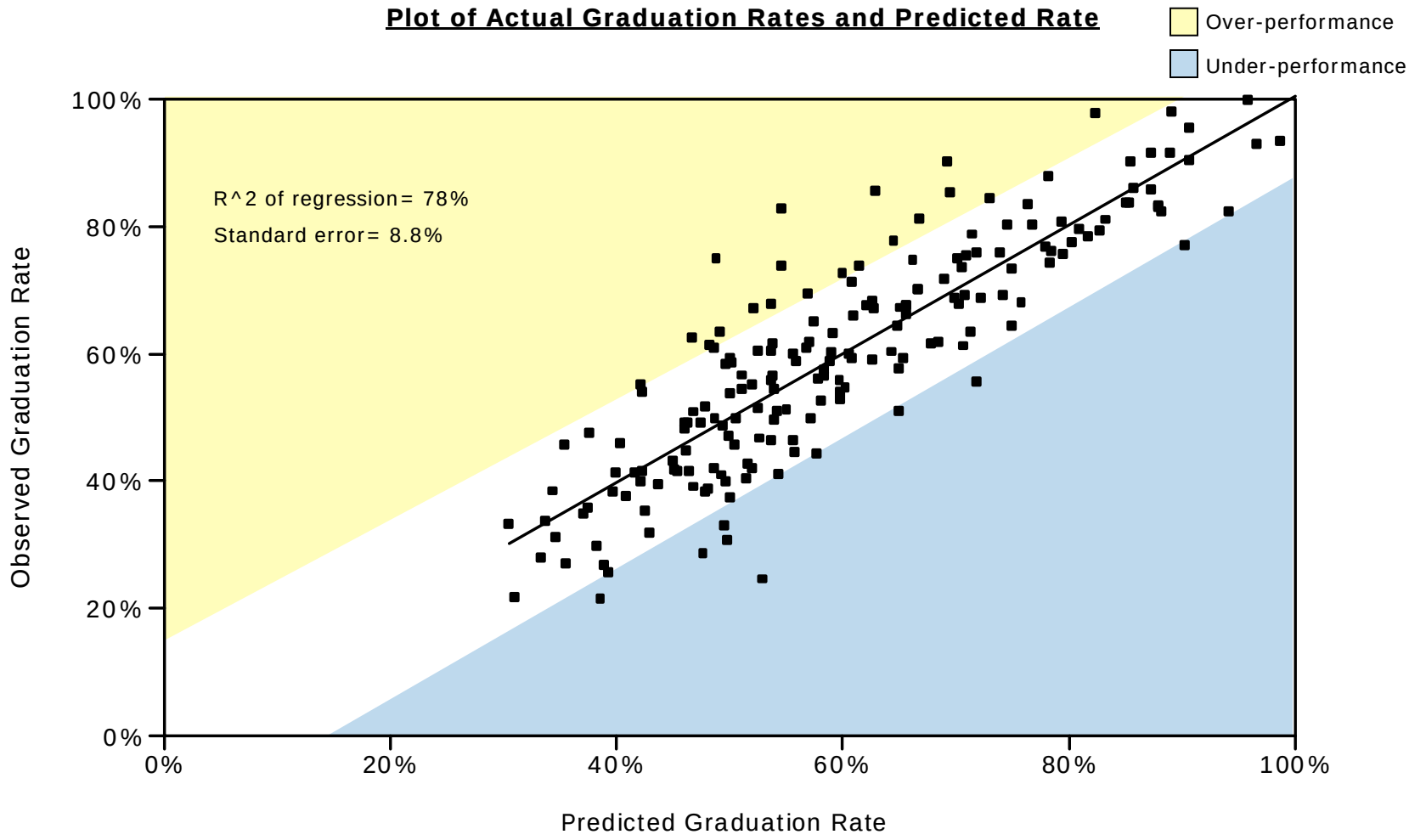
Principals of "Beat the Odds" schools described the key characteristics of their schools:

- **Clear mission**, ethos and overarching design of the school with high expectations for every student's academic achievement and behavior
- **Leadership** that is focused on academic achievement, leadership teams that are aligned, data-driven instruction and decision making, high standards for teacher and staff performance
- **Demanding academic curriculum for all students** including ELL students and Special Ed students; professional development inclusive of ELL and Special Education teachers
- **Curriculum mapping to standards** in all subjects
- **Emphasis on literacy**, including writing, and intensive support for 9th and 10 graders in literacy (importance of all teachers and supervisors having complete training
- **Emphasis on Math** achievement with scheduling, teaming, assessments tailored to achievement by low skilled students
- **Emphasis on assessment** at entry and continuously of student math and literacy skills; common assessments for teachers in subject areas and formative assessments as learning tools
- **Academic interventions available and differentiated**; credit recovery and Regents prep, focused summer programs
- **Youth development supports** – asset oriented and focused on student engagement and achievement, pervasive and continuous (advisors for 4 years, push in guidance, peer mediation) with graduated intensity through partnerships
- **Special education practices** include differentiated curriculum with fluid movement, full inclusion and part time inclusion, CTT model, extensive professional development in Urban Schools Attuned, Wilson and other interventions
- **ELL Instructional** strategies include mirroring challenging ELA curriculum, teachers with dual certification in ELL and ELA,
- **Accountability for achievement by all students**

Elements of School Design and Impact On Graduation

Current Variables Are Predictive of Graduation Rates, but Also Reveal Range of Outcomes Between High- and Low-Performers

- The tested variables explaining 78% of variance across schools, but also show a gap of ~20% points of graduation rate between over- and under-performers



Note: Over-performance and under-performance based on 95% confidence interval
Source: ATS Data, Parthenon Regression Analysis

Secondary School Situation Assessment

Taken Together, School Size and Concentration of Low-Level Students Begin to Predict Preventive Power

School Size

As a single factor, school size explains only **9%** of the variation in outcomes for Level 1 and Low-Level 2 students

Concentration of Level 1 / Low-Level 2 Students

As a single factor, concentration explains **22%** of the variation in outcomes for Level 1 and Low-Level 2 students

School Size Combined with Concentration of Low-Level Students

Run together in a two-factor regression, school size and concentration of low-level students explain **41%** of the variation in outcomes for Level 1 and Low-Level 2 students

Note: Appendix includes list of top- and bottom-perfomers based on divergence from expected results. Regression excludes schools with less than 20 first-time freshmen in 2001-02 who were Level 1 or Low-Level 2. Both independent variables are statistically significant beyond a 99% confidence level
Source: ATS Data

Targets and Proposals for Secondary Reform

Graduation Rate Increases Will Be Achieved Through A Portfolio of Strategies Designed To Meet Differentiated Student Needs

Portfolio of Strategies to Increase Graduation Rate

Transform Existing Articulated High Schools

Targets increase in 4-year rate

- **Instructional Improvement**
  - Adolescent Literacy
  - Mathematics A
  - Academic Interventions
  - Special Needs Students (ELL, SPED)
  - Curriculum Design
- **Personalizing Structures**
  - SLCs
  - 9th grade redesign
  - Extended Time/Day/Year
- **Strengthen & share practices** of "Exceptional Performer" schools to inform strategies for "Mid-Performing" schools

Increase the Number of New Small High Schools

Targets increase in 4-year rate

- Continue **replacement of failing schools** with new small schools

Expand and Strengthen Multiple Pathways Portfolio

Targets increase in 6-year rate

- **Codify and expand** new Transfer School models
- **Pursue innovative model development** for new GED strategies
- **Refine and grow** YABC model

"Averaging performance data to demonstrate gains has no place in education. Every child regardless of race, ethnicity or class must have the opportunity to achieve in great schools with extraordinary teachers and world class content. There is no greater challenge facing our educational system today than the achievement gap and nowhere is it more pronounced than in our urban school districts. We must make every effort to close this gap; we owe this to our children and we must hold ourselves accountable for their success.“

Jean-Claude Brizard

The Achievement Gap

The racial and economic disparity in graduation rates is as wide as ever.

- Half of all African-American and Hispanic students will drop out, and only 18% will graduate from high school ready for college
- Children from affluent families are 11 times more likely to earn a bachelor's degree than are children from low-income families

Ron Edmonds, Larry Lezotte, Michael Rutter, and William Brookover were among the researchers who provided evidence that achievement among students from similar backgrounds varied significantly based on the practices of their schools.

DuFour, 2004

What Constitutes Excellent Secondary Schools?

1. Shared Vision and Focus
2. High Expectations, Meaningful Curriculum, and Rigorous Preparation
3. Personalization of Relationships between Students and Adults
4. A Safe and Secure Environment
5. A Professional Learning Community of Students, Parents, School Staff, and Other Stakeholders
6. Performance-Based Teaching and Learning
7. The Use of Technology as a Tool to Enhance and Inform Teaching, Learning and Communication

Professional Learning Communities?

To create a professional learning community, focus on learning rather than teaching, work collaboratively, and hold yourself accountable for results.

- What do we want each student to learn?
- How will we know when each student has learned it?
- How will we respond when a student experiences difficulty in learning?

Dufour

"Quality teaching requires strong professional learning communities. Collegial interchange, not isolation, must become the norm for teachers. Communities of learning can no longer be considered utopian; they must become the building blocks that establish a new foundation for America's schools."

Dufour, Whatever it Takes

“We're also examining why students are not learning; why our students are not achieving and page 7 addressed our ideas. Is our plan for intervention or remediation? Is our plan school-wide or driven by individual teachers? Is our response timely? We're on a tight rope. Are students invited or mandated?”

“The one strand that was common throughout was *working together to find solutions*."

Region 6 principal

Creating the Office of Small Learning Communities

- An SLC Framework
  - Research-based elements
  - Broad enough for multiple intermediaries to work with schools
  - A frame for SLC work throughout the district
- Multiple intermediaries
  - Affords schools help that fits their vision
  - Provides professional assistance to schools tailored to their needs

What Are Small Learning Communities in NYC?

- Smaller divisions within large high schools
- Small groups of students; each group with dedicated, leader, staff and guidance counselor; all groups overseen by one building principal
- Instructional communities that emphasize rigorous curriculum, heterogeneous grouping, differentiated instruction, team teaching, inquiry, block scheduling, and personalization
- Collaboration and accountability among teachers and leaders
- Cohesive mission to prepare students for on-time graduation, college entrance and completion, and/or workplace readiness and industry certification

How Do SLC Fit Into the NYC High School Agenda?

- SLC are part of a "Portfolio of Schools" in line with *Children First* that includes multiple pathways for students including new small schools, larger high schools restructured into SLC, and a range of other alternative schools across the city
- Integral to DOE cross-departmental conversations and work around curriculum, policy, and practice
- Designed around research-based practices for school reform

Theory of Action: Creating the Context for SLCs in New York City

- Building capacity centrally, regionally and school-wide for change and sustainability of an array of design strategies in NYC
- Creating a well-defined approach to teaching and learning that includes high expectations of rigor as well as classroom practices that include content, process, and product
- Establishing clear connections to post-secondary education and careers
- Gathering, documenting, and sharing best practices in NYC and across the nation
- Ensuring the sustainability of all SLC planning so that the work is not dependent on outside funding

Theory of Action: Designing the SLC Demonstration Project

- SLC for comprehensive public high schools
- Research-based practices
- Lessons learned inform the process
- Intermediaries forward the work
- All stakeholders contribute
- An SLC Framework guides the reform

Element # 2 - Rigorous, Relevant Curriculum and Instruction for All Students – Key Practices

- Rigorous and standards-based
- Interactive with authentic student inquiry
- Organized around themes of the SLC where applicable
- Flexible use of time and space
- Instruction targeted to student needs
- Organized around students' needed essential knowledge and skills
- Collaborative with community partners

Scaffolded Apprenticeship Model (SAM) - one example

- Assistant Principals, Lead Teachers, and Team Leaders are dedicated to each SLC to identify desired student outcomes, explore the gap between the present reality and the desired outcomes, and work toward closing that gap
- Systematic leadership development with weekly training, conversations, and study groups
- Collaborative with local college; administrative credential credit earned
- 20% release time to plan, collaborate, and work with teachers

Inclusion of All Students

- Special Education students have access to SLCs
- ELL students have access to SLCs
- Students with an IEP are mainstreamed to the fullest possible extent
- Services are provided through CTT, push-in, and extra classes
- SLCs are not “tracked”, but if resources are limited, students must be able to choose to join the majority of the SLC in the school

Professional Development

- Professional Development based on needs of SLC/School
- Each school has an intermediary that help provide professional development around planning, structures, advisory, use of time, and leadership development
- Office of SLC provides the professional development focus for teaching and learning with UBD, differentiated instruction, and curriculum mapping
- Office of SLC provides guidance and leadership for educational policy and institutional challenges
- Intermediaries and the OSLC create an integrated PD plan for the SLC schools

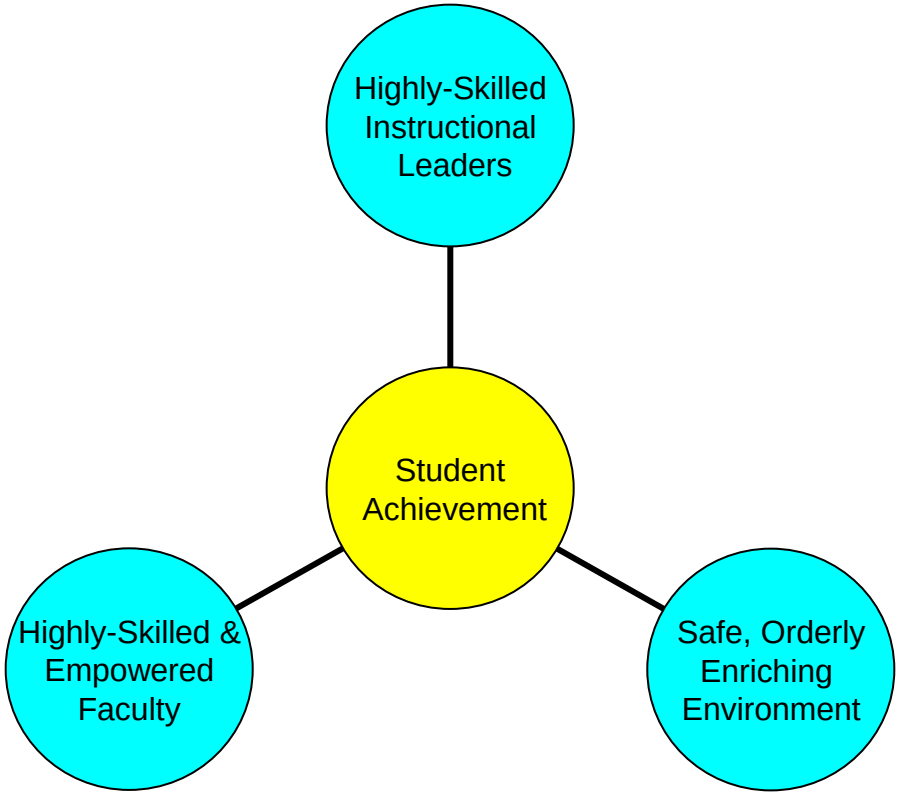
NYC – Early Lessons

- SLC will not work without instructional focus – paying attention only to structures does not change student outcomes
- There isn't only one way to do SLC. Schools make site-based decisions within the context of Framework and in response to their data
- Going wall-to-wall quickly (*rip off the band-aid*) is difficult, but worth it. No one can hide and all students are served.
- Making hard choices early on (*how to rearrange funding to support work: what is most important to us and how are we going to support*). Creating structures and practices that cost more money than a current budget is not sustainable.

NYC – Lessons Learned

- COMMUNICATION: show good work early and often, but in a concise way (bi-weekly memos, sharing good data upward, moving to have one-pagers that show what we've done to support PD and what the outcomes have been)
- Allot time for sharing ideas among schools (separate from planning and logistics meetings) for principals, APs, and teachers
- Visiting other SLC schools within district and outside. Knowing that others are struggling with same issues
- Cross-germinate best practices

Relentless Pursuit of Excellence



Source – The Denver Plan

“The time has come to take the bull by the tail and face the situation.”

W.C. Fields