

# The Purpose of Education

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**Robert C. Enlow**

President and CEO



# The Purpose of Education



# Four Views on the Purpose of Education



The purpose of education has always been to every one, in essence, the same—to give the young the things they need in order to develop in an orderly, sequential way into members of society. Any education is, in its forms and methods, an outgrowth of the needs of the society in which it exists.” – Dewey

“Under the Providence of God, our means of education are the grand machinery by which the 'raw material' of human nature can be worked up into inventors and discoverers, into skilled artisans and scientific farmers, into scholars and jurists, into the founders of benevolent institutions, and the great expounders of ethical and theological science” – Mann

“Whether the individual pursues an education for the sheer delight in learning or to acquire knowledge for personal decision-making and action or to better serve his God—or even to do no more than flaunt his learning before others—the choice of purpose (as well as means) is his and not society’s.” – Rogge

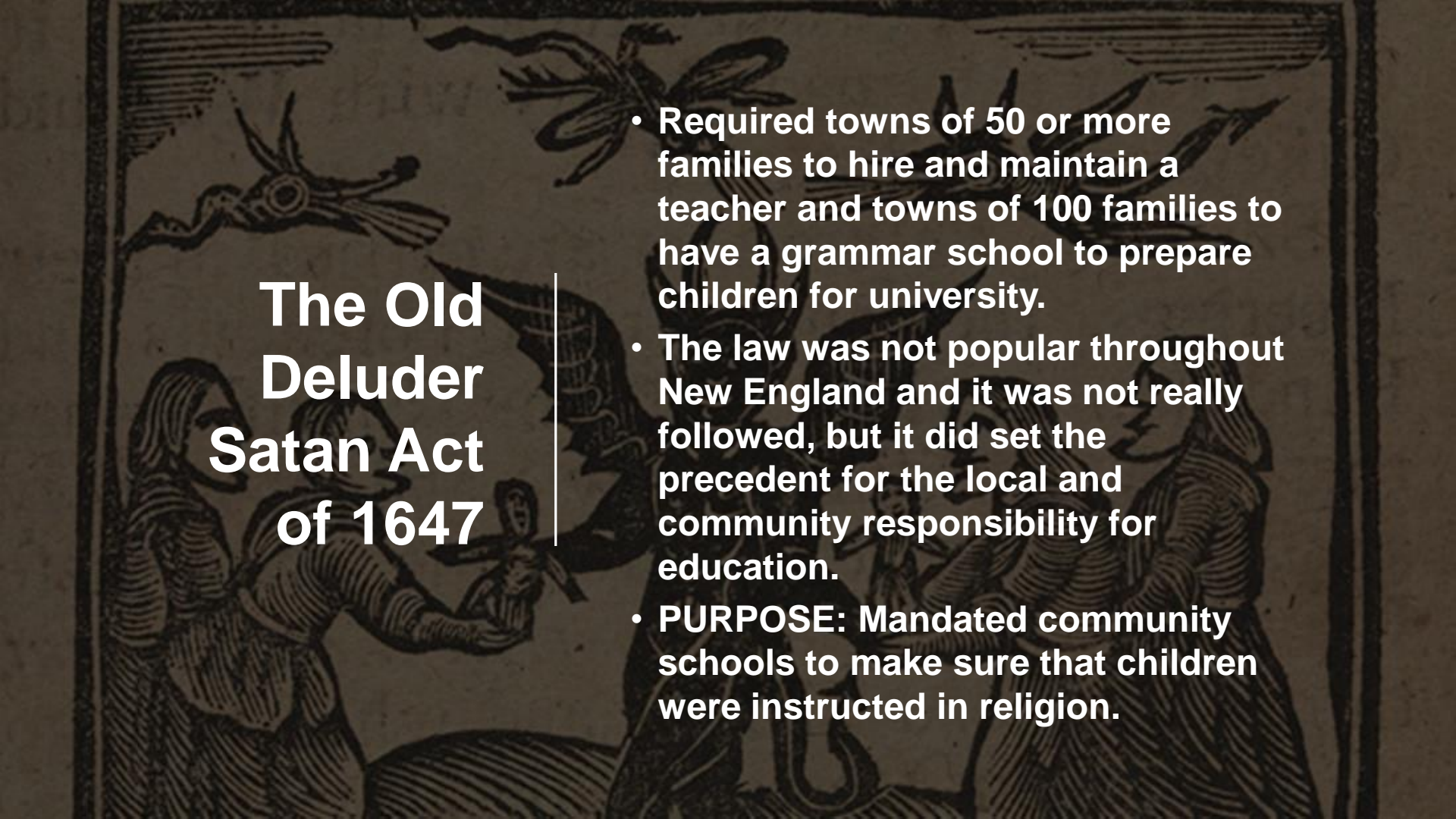
“The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. But education which stops with efficiency may prove the greatest menace to society. The most dangerous criminal may be the man gifted with reason but no morals. ... We must remember that intelligence is not enough. Intelligence plus character—that is the goal of true education.” – MLK



The image features a textured, brown, parchment-like background. A dark silhouette of a world map is centered behind the word "HISTORY". The word is written in a large, bold, white, sans-serif font. The letters of the word are slightly distressed, with some dark spots and irregular edges, giving it a vintage or weathered appearance. The overall composition is simple and evokes a sense of history and global exploration.

**HISTORY**





## The Old Deluder Satan Act of 1647

- Required towns of 50 or more families to hire and maintain a teacher and towns of 100 families to have a grammar school to prepare children for university.
- The law was not popular throughout New England and it was not really followed, but it did set the precedent for the local and community responsibility for education.
- **PURPOSE:** Mandated community schools to make sure that children were instructed in religion.



# K-12 EDUCATION 1700-1840

- Primarily privately funded by parents through fees
- Totally locally “run”
- Sectarian academies and itinerant teachers
- Very disparate – huge differences in education between New England and the South, between men and women and between black and white
- Bill 79 in 1779 – A bill for the general diffusion of knowledge by Jefferson
- **PURPOSE:** Education as a means to ensure a stable democracy





# K-12 EDUCATION 1840-1890

- Horace Mann and the rise of “Common Schools”
- Agrarian calendar
- James Blaine and the No Nothing Party
- 1865 New York Regents Exam
- 1867 Department of Education Act
- **PURPOSE:** Creating a common set of values

# *The Committee of Ten*

Henry C. King

Professor in Oberlin college

Oscar D. Robinson

Principal of  
High School  
Albany, N.Y.

William Harris

Commissioner of Education  
Washington, D.C.

Richard H. Jesse

President of the  
University of Missouri,  
Columbia, MO

James B. Angell

President of the University  
of Michigan

John Tetlow

Head Master of the  
Girls' High School  
and girls' latin  
school,  
Boston, MA

James Baker

President of the  
University of  
Colorado

James Mackenzie

Head Master of the Lawrenceville  
School, Lawrenceville, NJ

1892 - 1954





**1954 - 1965**



# 1965 - The Rise of the Federal Government in Education

- ESEA Act of 1965
- Full Cabinet Office under Carter
- Nation at Risk – Started the era of reform
- Goals 2000
- NCLB
- Race to the Top
- ESSA
- We have tried everything man!
- PURPOSE: Measurement, equity, homogenization





THE RESULTS OF STANDARDIZATION

## 4<sup>TH</sup> AND 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE READING

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**35% & 34%**

According to the 2019 NAEP, the percent of American 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders who are at or above proficient in reading.

**18% & 15%**



## 4<sup>TH</sup> AND 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE MATH

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**41% & 34%**

According to the 2019 NAEP, the percent of American 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders who are at or above proficient in math.

**20% & 14%**

## **DROPOUTS 2005-2016**

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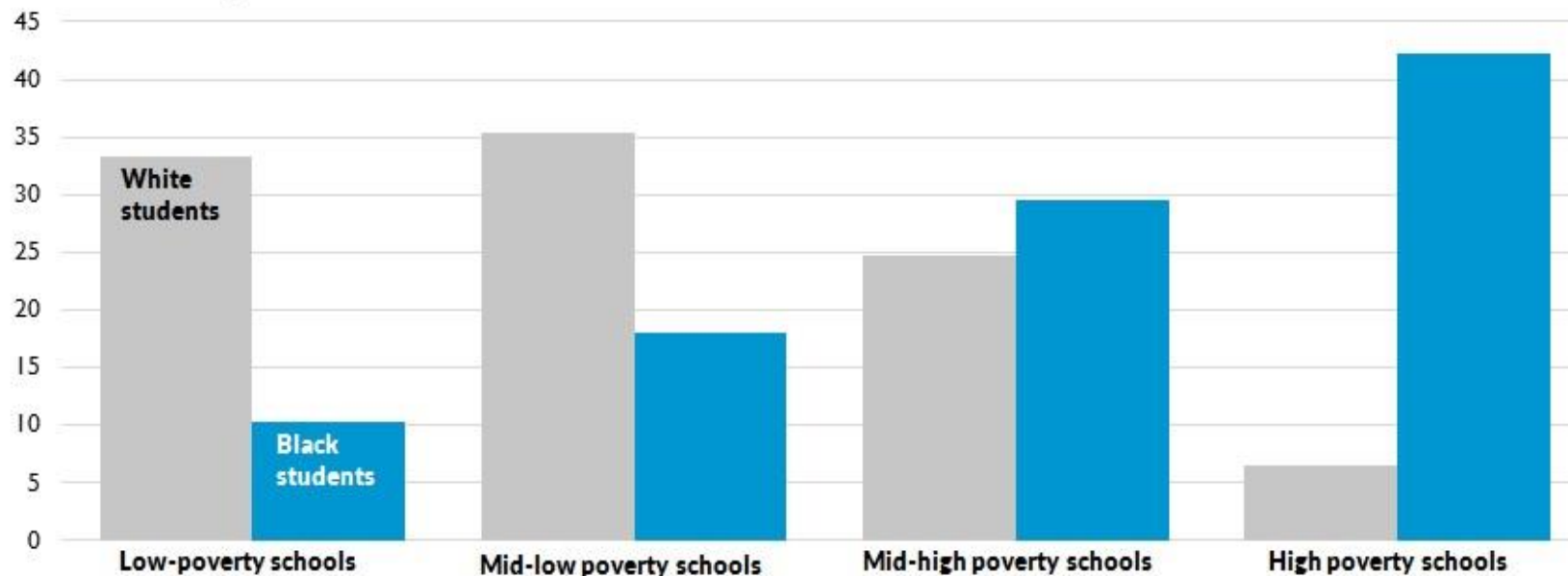
# **31.3 Million**

According to USDOE, the number of 16- to 24-year-old high school dropouts (status dropouts) since 2005.



## Black public school students are far likelier to attend high-poverty schools

*Share of all students by race*



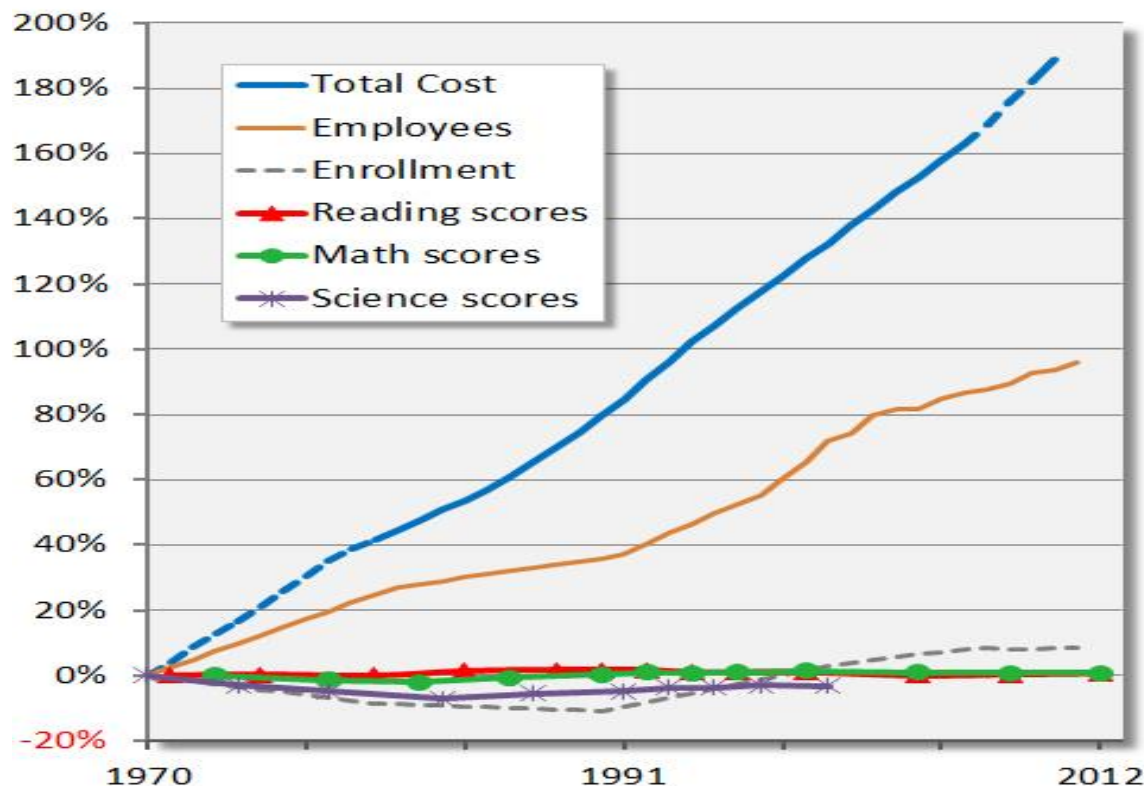
**Note:** Poverty based on a school's share of students eligible for free and reduced price lunch (FRPL). Low-poverty: 0%-25% FRPL. Mid-low poverty: 25%-50% FRPL. Mid-high poverty: 51%-75% FRPL. High poverty: 75%+ FRPL.

URBAN INSTITUTE

S P E N D



# Trends in American Public Schooling Since 1970



**"Total cost"** is the full amount spent on the K-through-12 education of a student graduating in the given year, adjusted for inflation.

In 1970: \$56,903

In 2010: \$164,426

## Data sources:

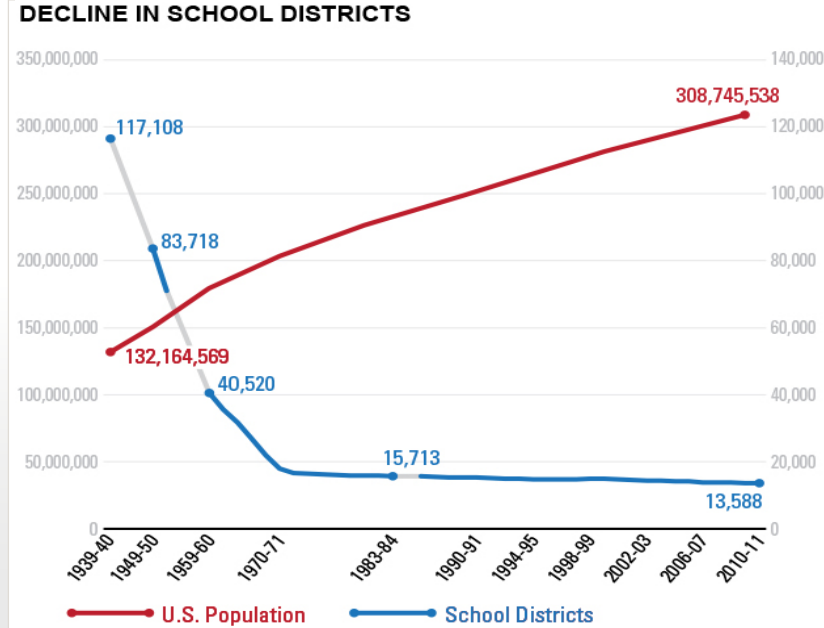
U.S. Dept. of Ed., "Digest of Education Statistics," & NAEP tests, Long Term Trends, 17-year-olds.

Andrew J. Coulson

June, 2013



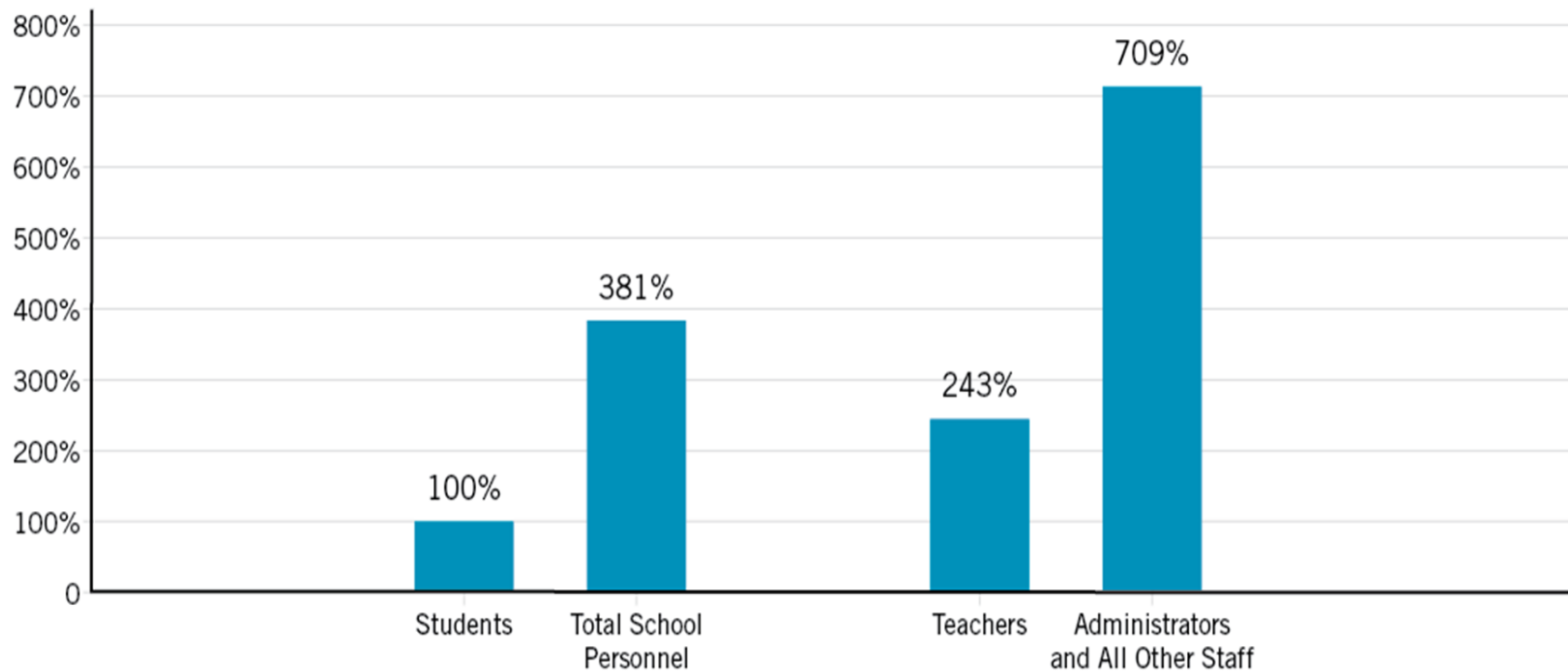
# MASSIVE CENTRALIZATION



- A 90% drop in the number of school districts since 1940s
- Only 13,588 districts from more than double the population

**FIGURE E1**

Growth in Students and Public School Personnel, United States, FY 1950 to FY 2015

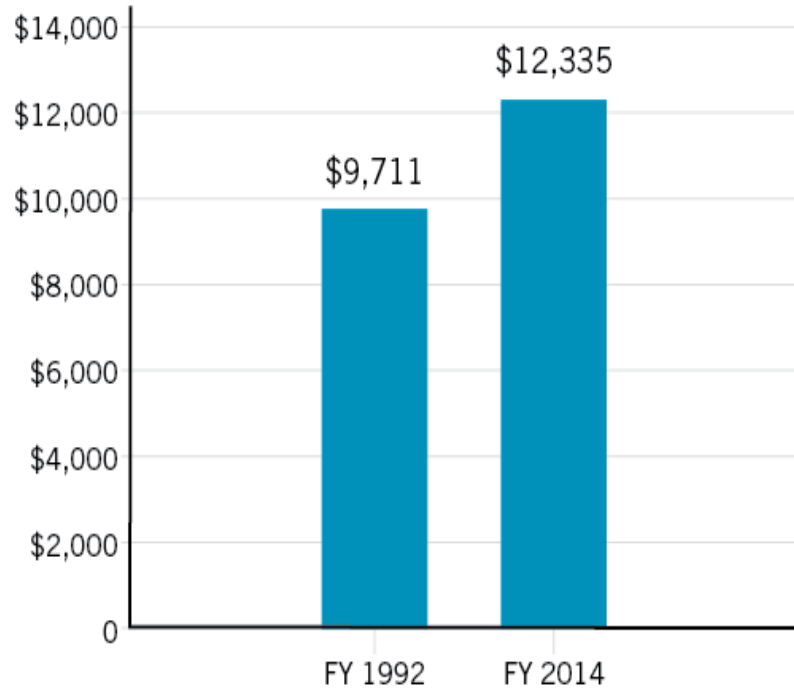




# Funding and Salary Challenge

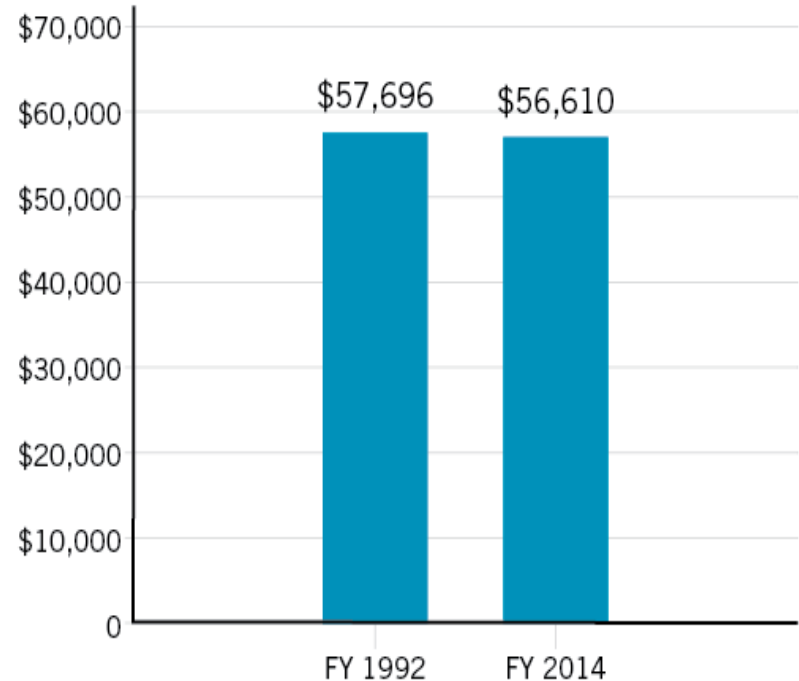
**FIGURE 9**

Increase in Real Public School Spending Per Student, FY 1992 to FY 2014



**FIGURE 10**

Inflation-Adjusted Average Teacher Salaries, FY 1992 and FY 2014





**REGULATIONS**

## 1900 to 1910:

- Nutrition
- Immunization
- Health

## 1910 to 1930:

- Physical education
- The Practical Arts/Domestic Science/Home economics
- Vocational education
- Mandated school transportation

## 1940s:

- Business education
- Art and music
- Speech and drama
- Half-day kindergarten
- School lunch programs

## 1950s:

- Expanded science and math education
- Safety education
- Driver's education
- Expanded music and art education
- Stronger foreign language requirements
- Sex education

## 1960s:

- Advanced Placement programs
- Head Start
- Title I
- Adult education
- Consumer education
- Career education
- Peace, leisure, and recreation education

## 1970s:

- Drug, alcohol abuse education
- Parenting education
- Behavior adjustment classes
- Character education
- Special education
- Title IX programs
- Environmental education
- Women's studies
- African-American heritage education
- School breakfast programs

## 1980s:

- Computer education
- Global education
- Multicultural/Ethnic education
- Nonsexist education
- Bilingual education
- Teen pregnancy awareness
- Hispanic heritage education
- Early childhood education
- Jump Start, Early Start, Even Start, and Prime Start
- Full-day kindergarten
- Preschool programs for children at risk
- After-school programs
- Stranger/danger education
- Antismoking education
- Sexual abuse prevention education
- Expanded health, psychological services
- Child abuse monitoring

## 1990s:

- Conflict resolution and peer mediation
- HIV/AIDS education
- CPR training
- Death education
- Inclusion
- Expanded computer education
- Distance learning
- Tech Prep, School to Work programs
- Technical Adequacy
- Post-secondary enrollment options
- Concurrent enrollment options
- Expanded Talented and Gifted opportunities
- At risk and dropout prevention
- Homeless education
- Gang education
- Service learning
- Bus, bicycle, gun and water safety education

## 2000 to 2010

- Bully prevention
- Anti-harassment policies
- Expanded early childcare and wrap around programs
- Elevator and escalator safety instruction
- Body Mass Index evaluation
- Organ donor education and awareness programs
- Personal financial literacy
- Entrepreneurial and innovation skills development
- Media literacy development
- Contextual learning skill development
- Health and wellness programs



# Education Reform

NEW WAY



Vouchers

Standards

Magnet  
Schools

Charter  
Schools

Education  
Savings  
Accounts

STEM

Virtual Schools

Testing

Education Tax  
Credits

# The New School



## Bottom-Up, Parent-Centered Ideas

- Micro Schools (Empowered Arizona Families)
- Family Pod Schooling
- Individual tutors
- Stronger Together ATX
- Native American ESAs and EFS from USDOE
- Oklahoma and South Carolina ESA programs with GEER funds
- Much more homeschooling
- Hybrid homeschooling



## Reform

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Improves the system

Starts with processes and behaviors

Result is existing system, only better

Role of the public is limited

Innovation is controlled

Power is centralized

Top-down

## Transform

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Changes the purpose of the system

Starts with values and desires

Result is a different system

Role of the public is essential

Innovation is permissionless

Power is distributed

Bottom-up

**All this leads to one  
simple question:**

**How will we  
organize  
education in  
the future and  
what are some  
characteristics  
of what the  
best policies  
would look like  
to meet every  
child's needs?**





# Questions?

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