

Separate & Unequal:
California's Racial "Opportunity Gap"

Louis Harris/UCLA's IDEA
May 2004

**REPORT ON THE STATUS OF
PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATION IN CALIFORNIA**

2004

*With Special Emphasis on the Status of
Equality in Public School Education*

A Survey of a Cross-Section of Classroom Teachers
In California Public Schools

Prepared For

The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation

By

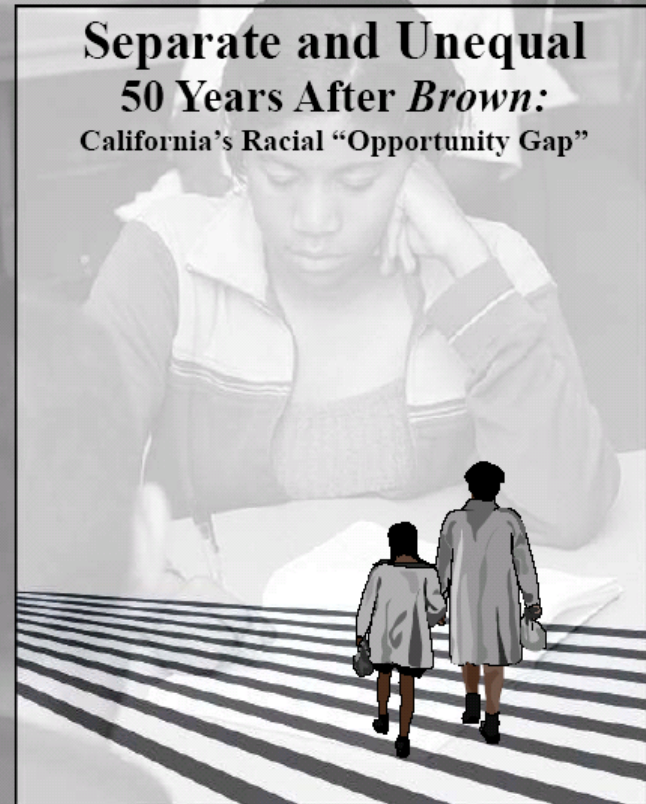
LOUIS HARRIS

With the

Peter Harris Research Group

May 2004

**Separate and Unequal
50 Years After *Brown*:
California's Racial "Opportunity Gap"**



UCLA/IDEA

INSTITUTE FOR DEMOCRACY, EDUCATION, AND ACCESS

Survey of California Teachers

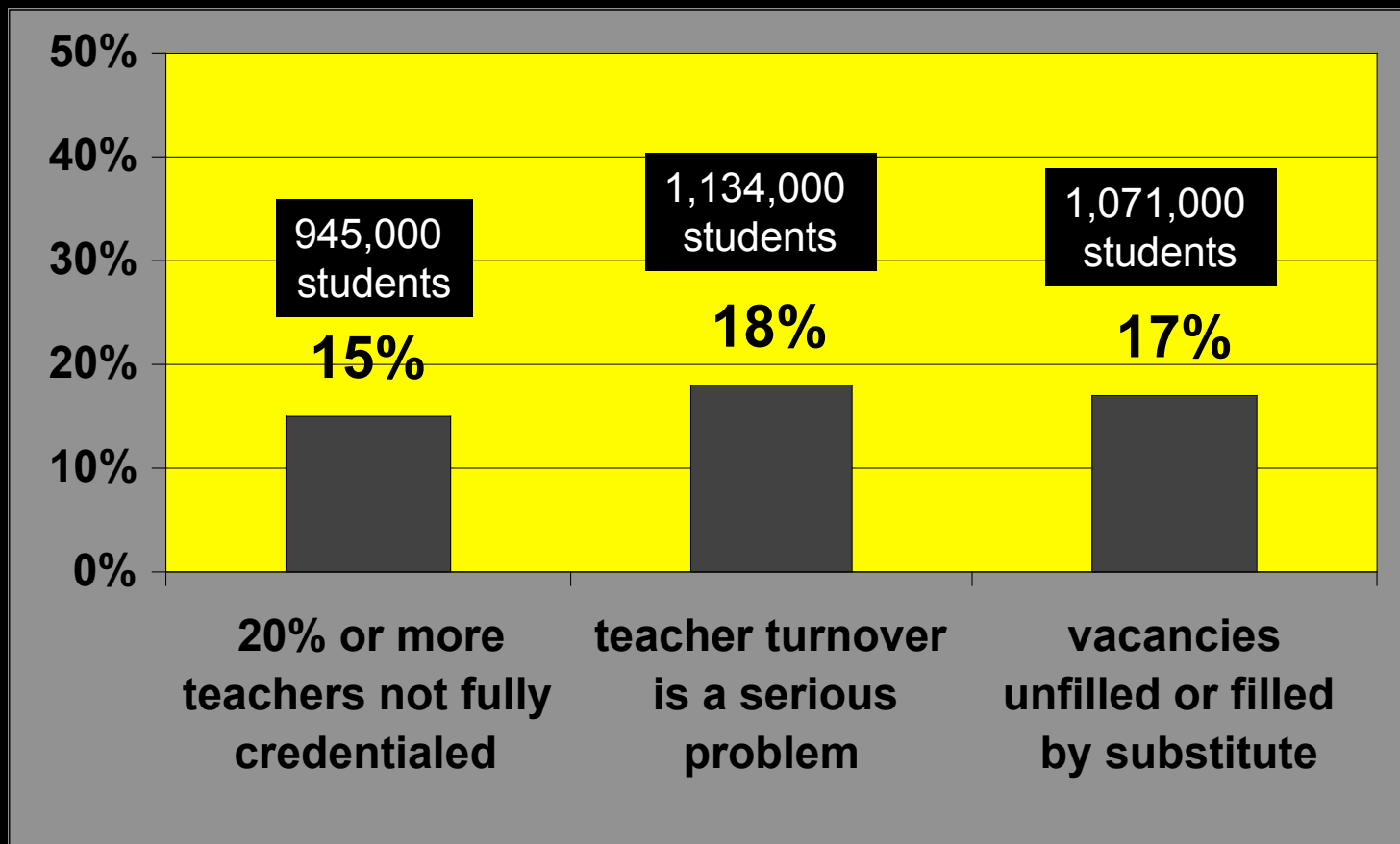
- February/March 2004
- 1056 teachers reporting about conditions in their schools (across 5 California regions)
- Margin of error ± 3 percentage points
- Follows a similar survey conducted in 2002
- Link w/CBEDS data
- Harris analysis conditions by “risk”
- UCLA IDEA of race, conditions, and outcomes

Findings

- Many California teachers and students lack the basic resources for learning.
- Teachers in schools serving low-income students, English learners, and African-American and Latino students report problems far more often.
- Racial isolation, opportunity problems, and lower achievement converge.
- Teachers overwhelmingly support new strategies for improving the quality and equity of schools.

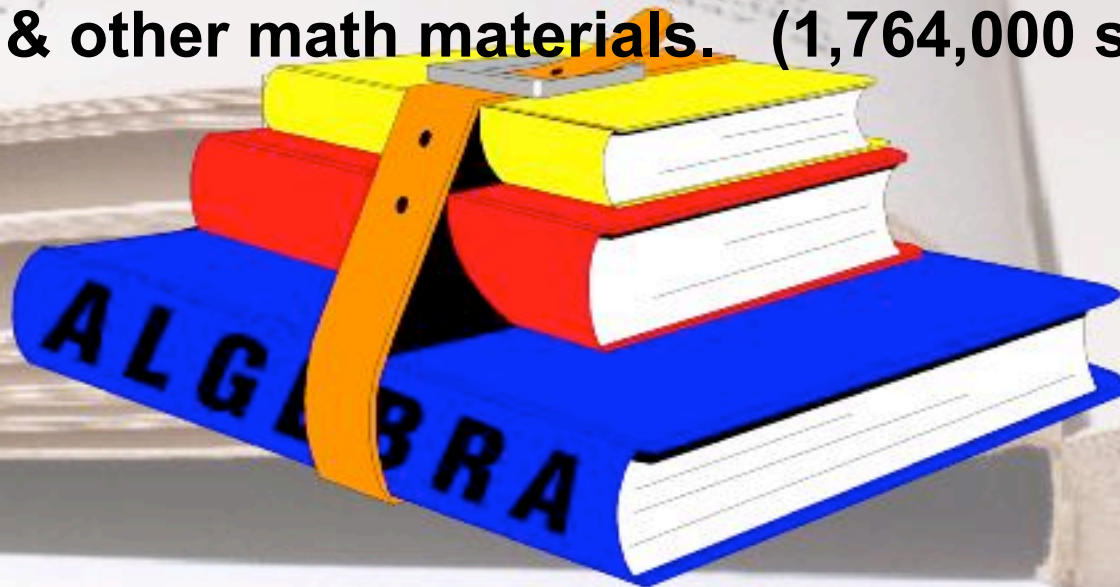
**Many California teachers and students lack
the most basic resources and conditions
for learning.**

California Schools with Serious Teacher Problems

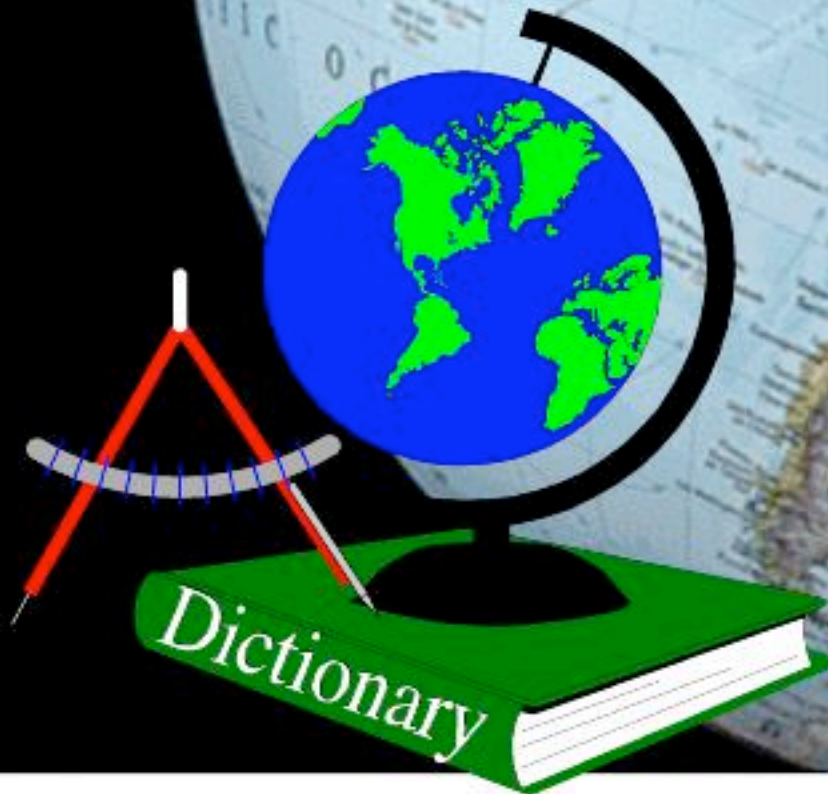


32% of teachers say their classrooms lack enough textbooks for students to take home for homework. (2,016,000 students)

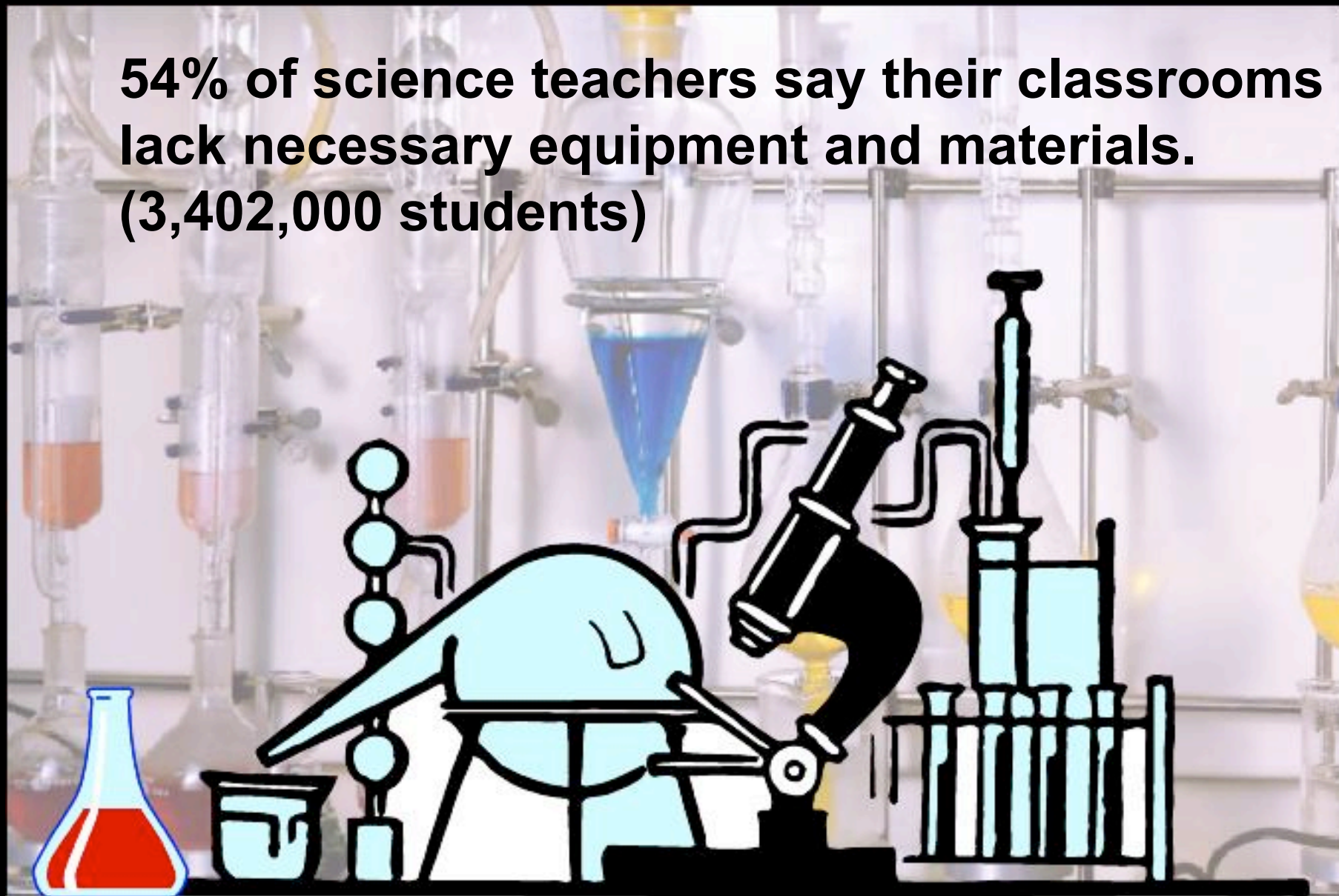
28% teaching math say they don't have enough calculators, manipulatives, measuring tools, graph paper, & other math materials. (1,764,000 students)



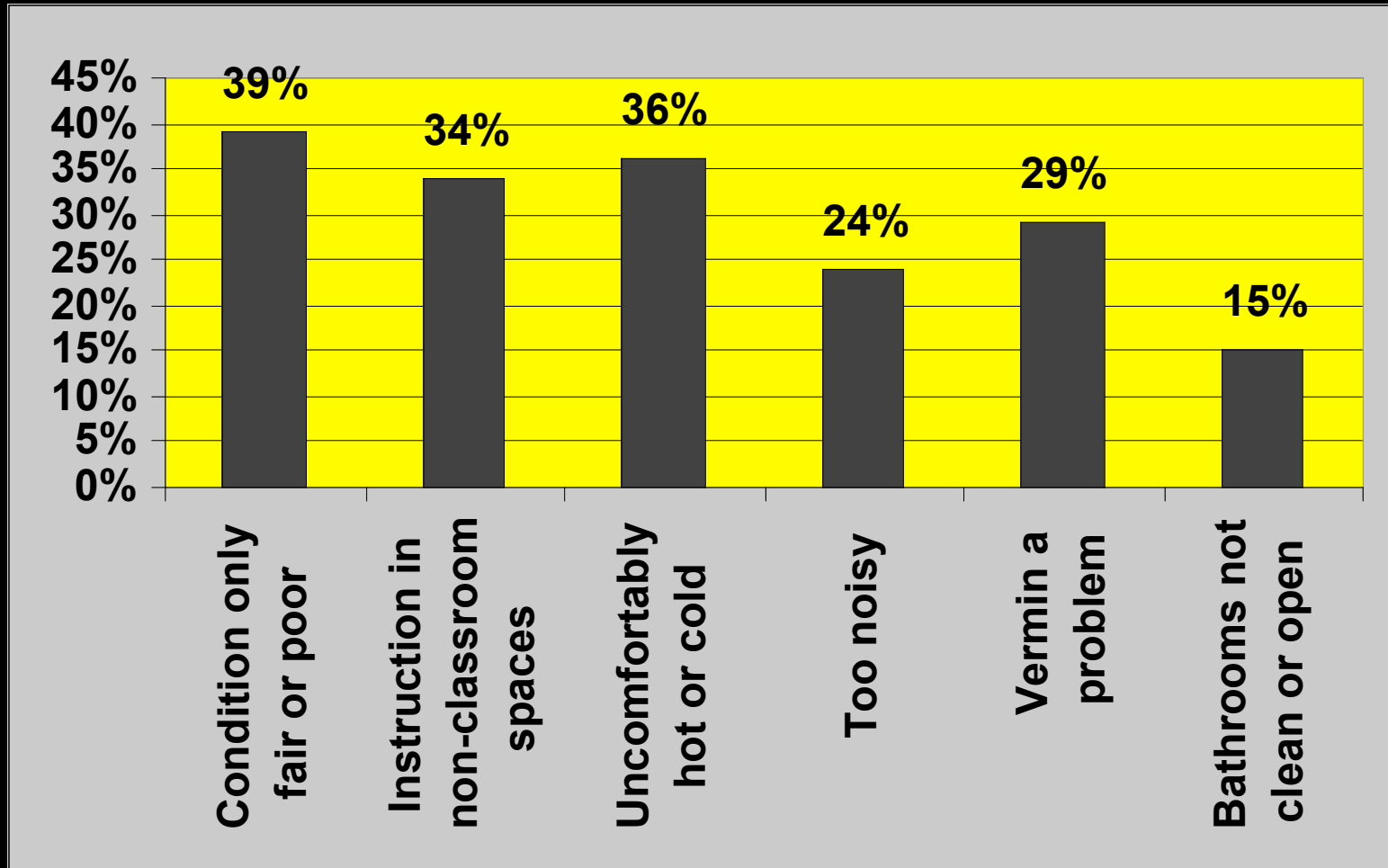
50% of social science teachers say their classrooms lack an atlas, globe, or dictionary. (3,150,000 students)



**54% of science teachers say their classrooms lack necessary equipment and materials.
(3,402,000 students)**

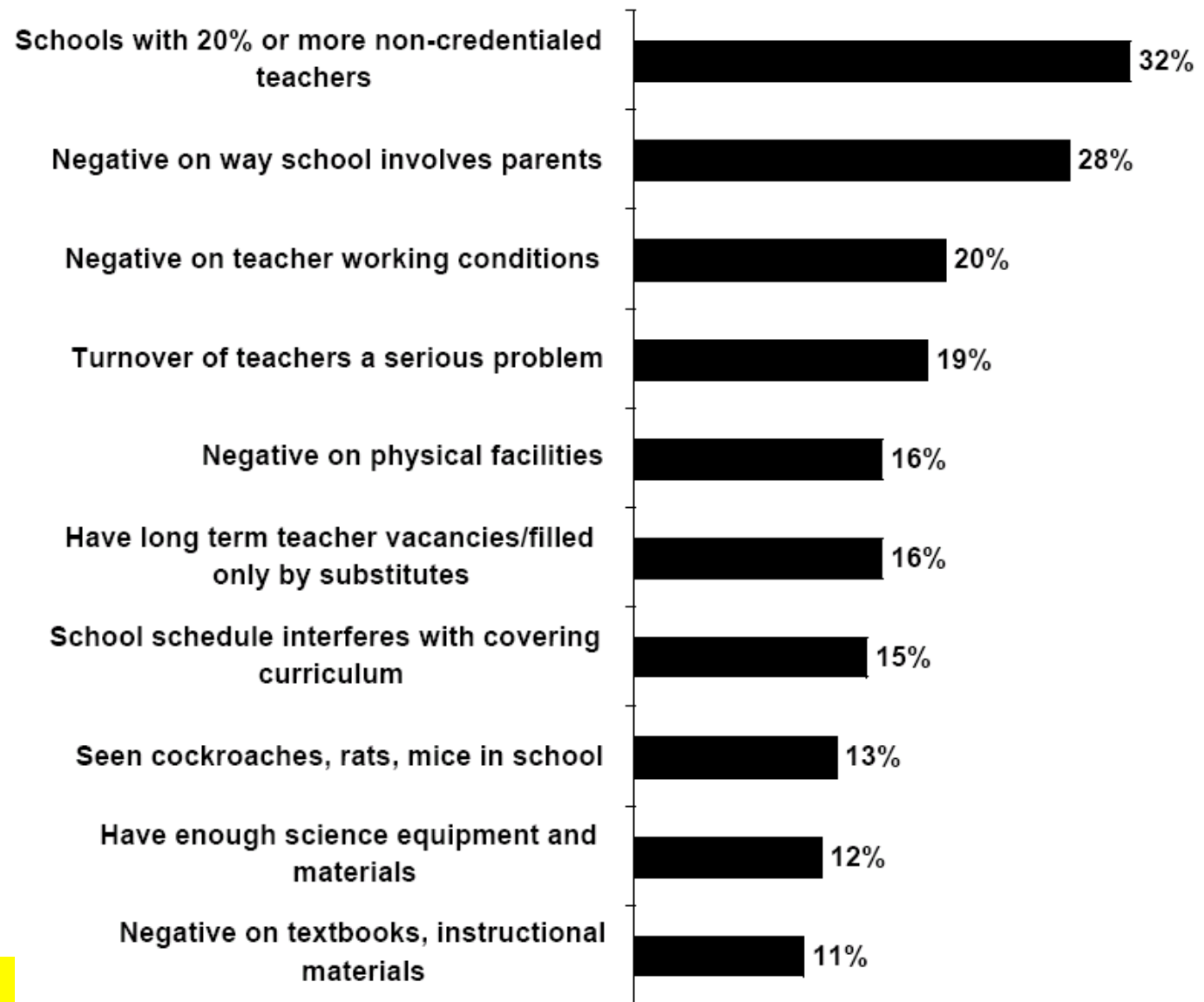


Facilities Problems



Teachers in schools serving low-income students, English learners, and African-American and Latino students report these problems far more often.

**TEN MAJOR GAPS BETWEEN 20% MOST AT-RISK SCHOOLS
AND 51% MAJORITY OF LEAST AT-RISK SCHOOLS**
(risk = poverty and/or English Learners)



Separate and Unequal: Conditions for Teaching and Learning

- Highest concentration of African American and Latino students
- Lowest concentration of African American and Latino students

Eleven times more likely to have 20% or more non-credentialed teachers



Twice as likely to report fair or poor working conditions



Three times more likely to report teacher turnover as a problem



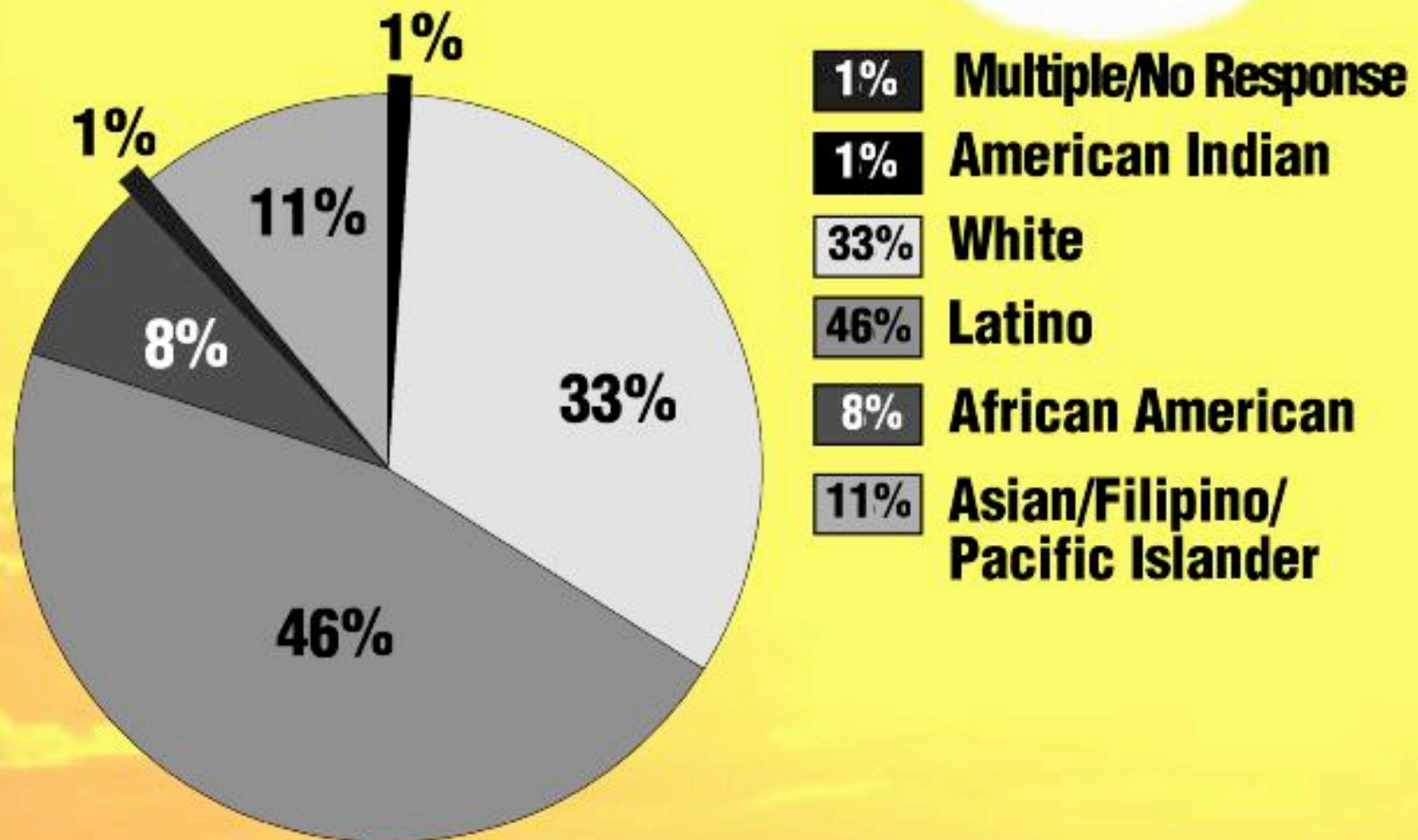
Three times more likely to report having cockroaches, rats, and mice



Twice as likely to report bathrooms not working, or closed



California Students 2003-2004

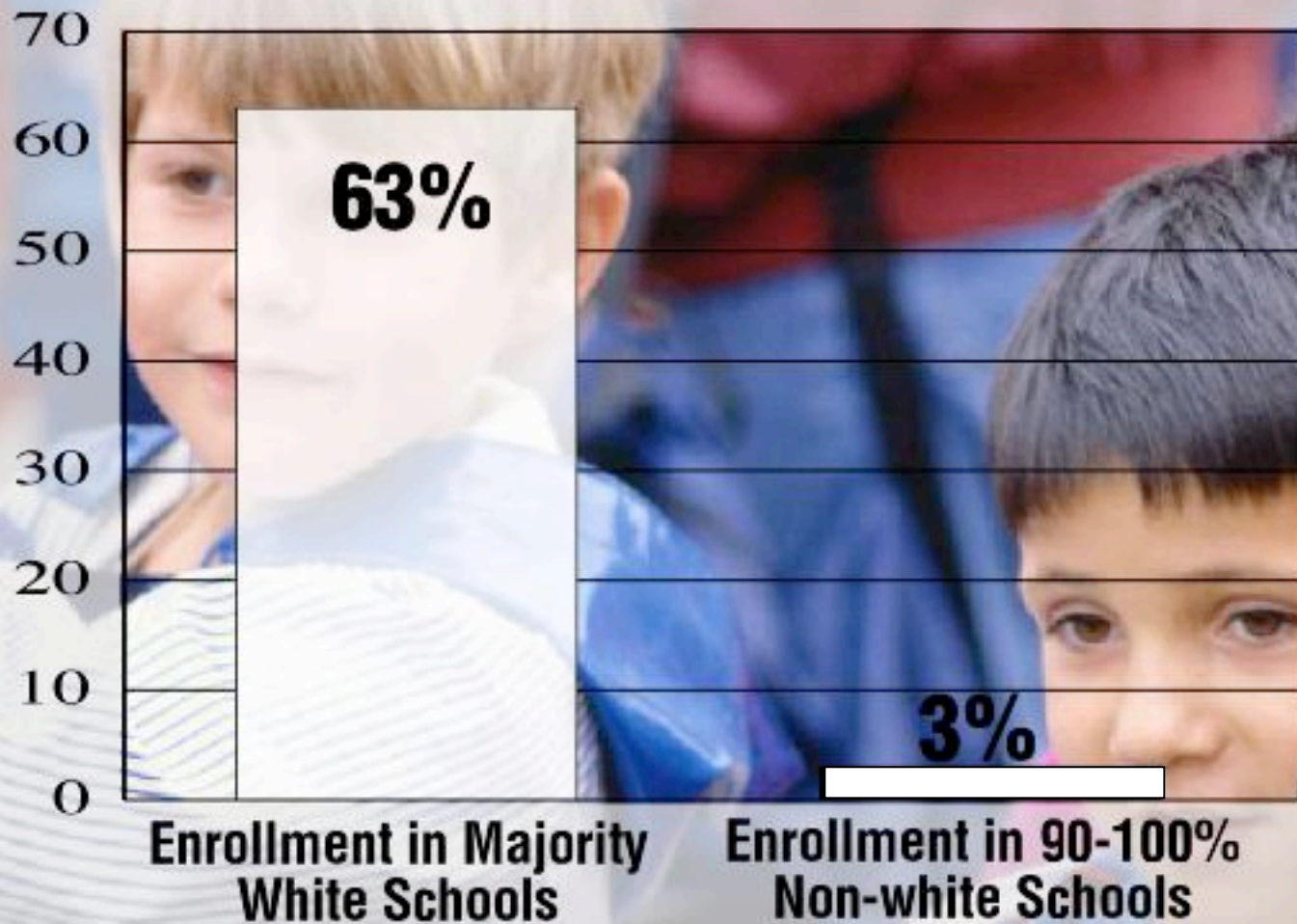


Most California Students Don't Attend Schools that Look Like California's Overall Population

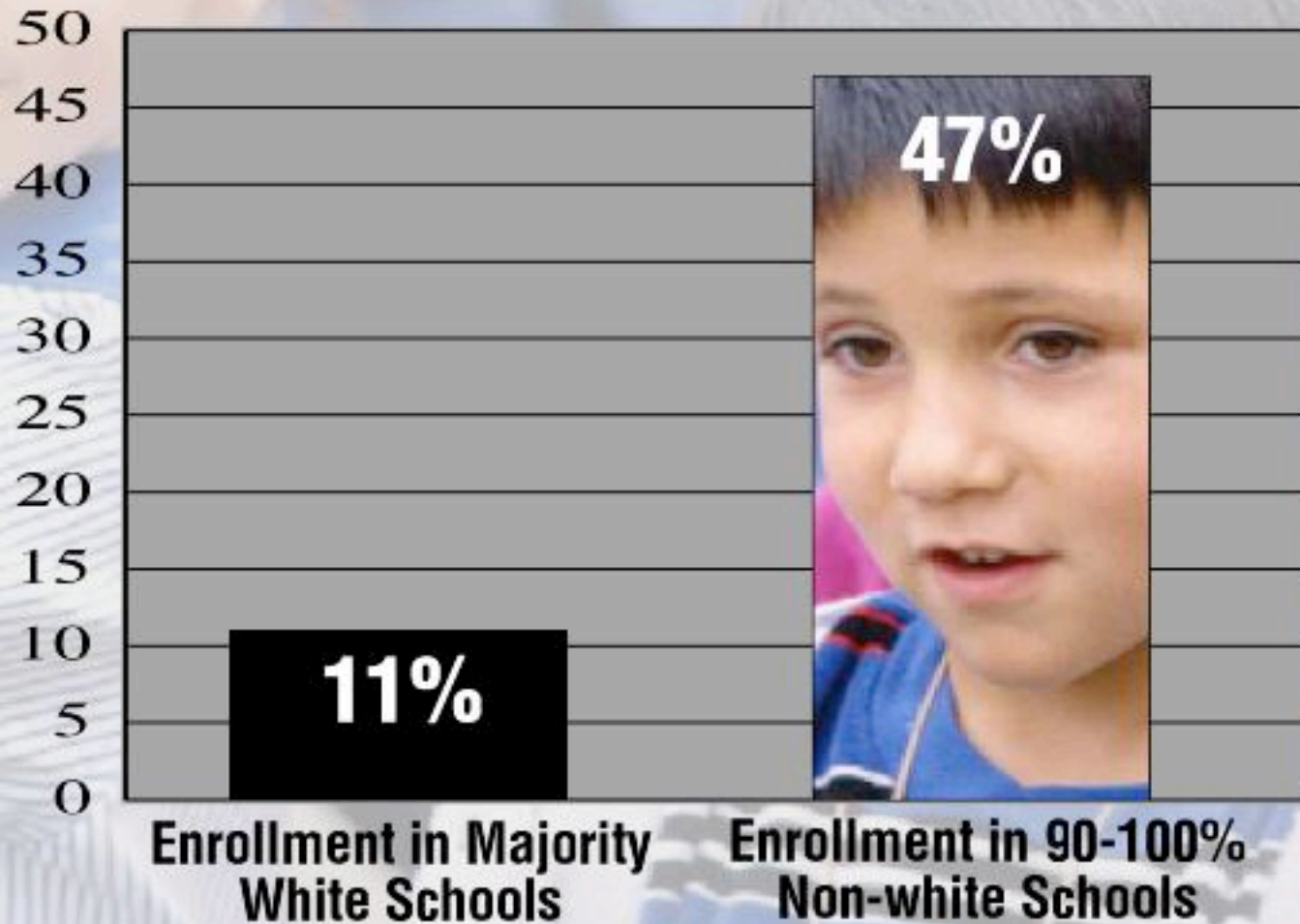
**30% attend White Majority Schools
(1,890,000 students)**

**29% attend 90-100% Non-White Schools
(1,827,000 students)**

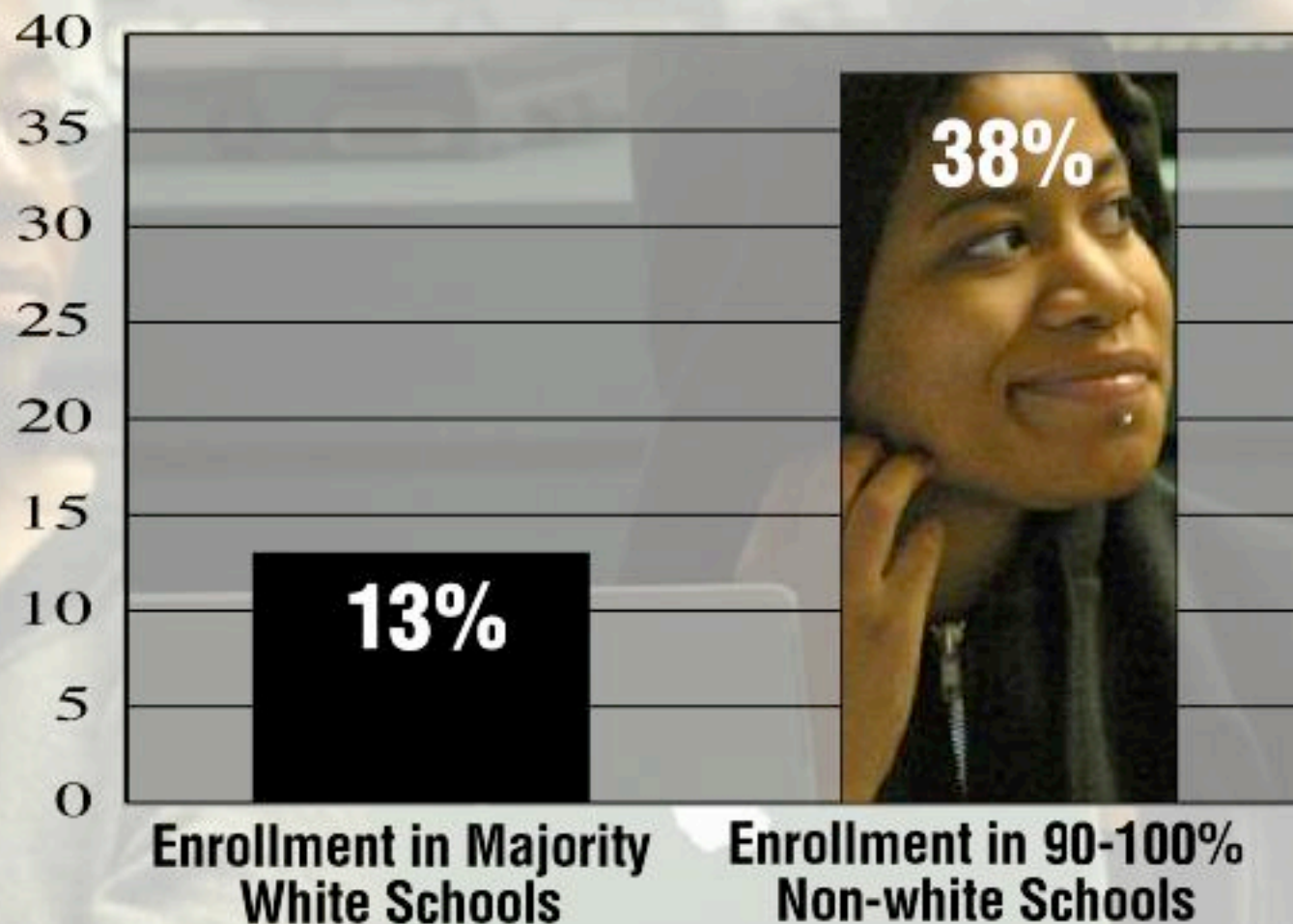
White Racial Isolation in California Schools 2003-2004



Latino Racial Isolation in California Schools 2003-2004



African American Racial Isolation in California Schools 2003-2004



Racial isolation, opportunity problems, and lower achievement converge.

Critical Opportunity Problems Indicators:

1. Quality Teaching:

More than 20% of a school's teachers lack a full credential;

2. Stable Staff:

Teachers report that turnover is a problem, positions can't be filled, or school has difficulty finding substitutes;

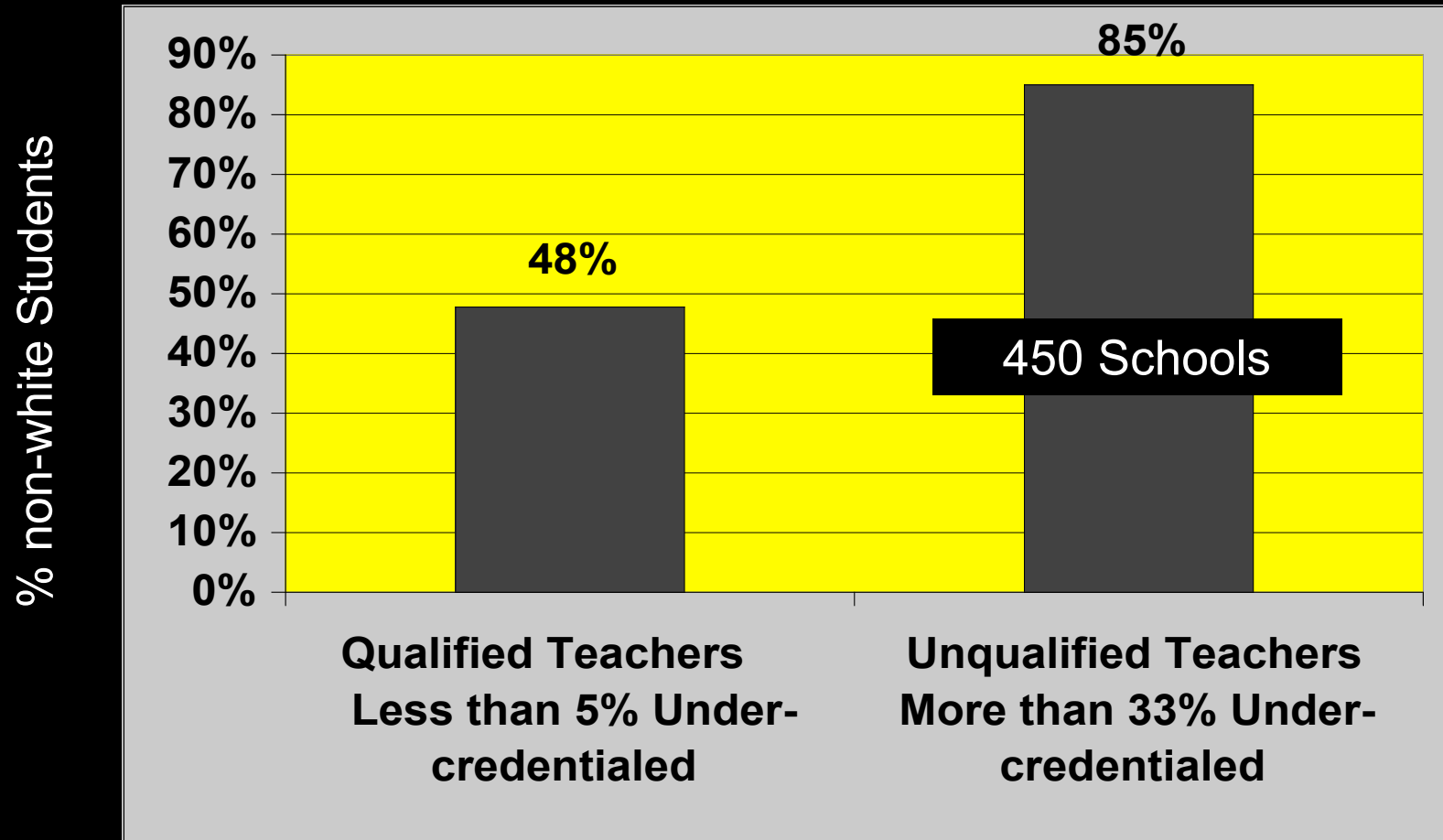
3. Essential Instructional Materials:

Teachers report a lack of textbooks and materials in their classroom, insufficient textbooks for students to take home, or lack of access to fully useable computer;

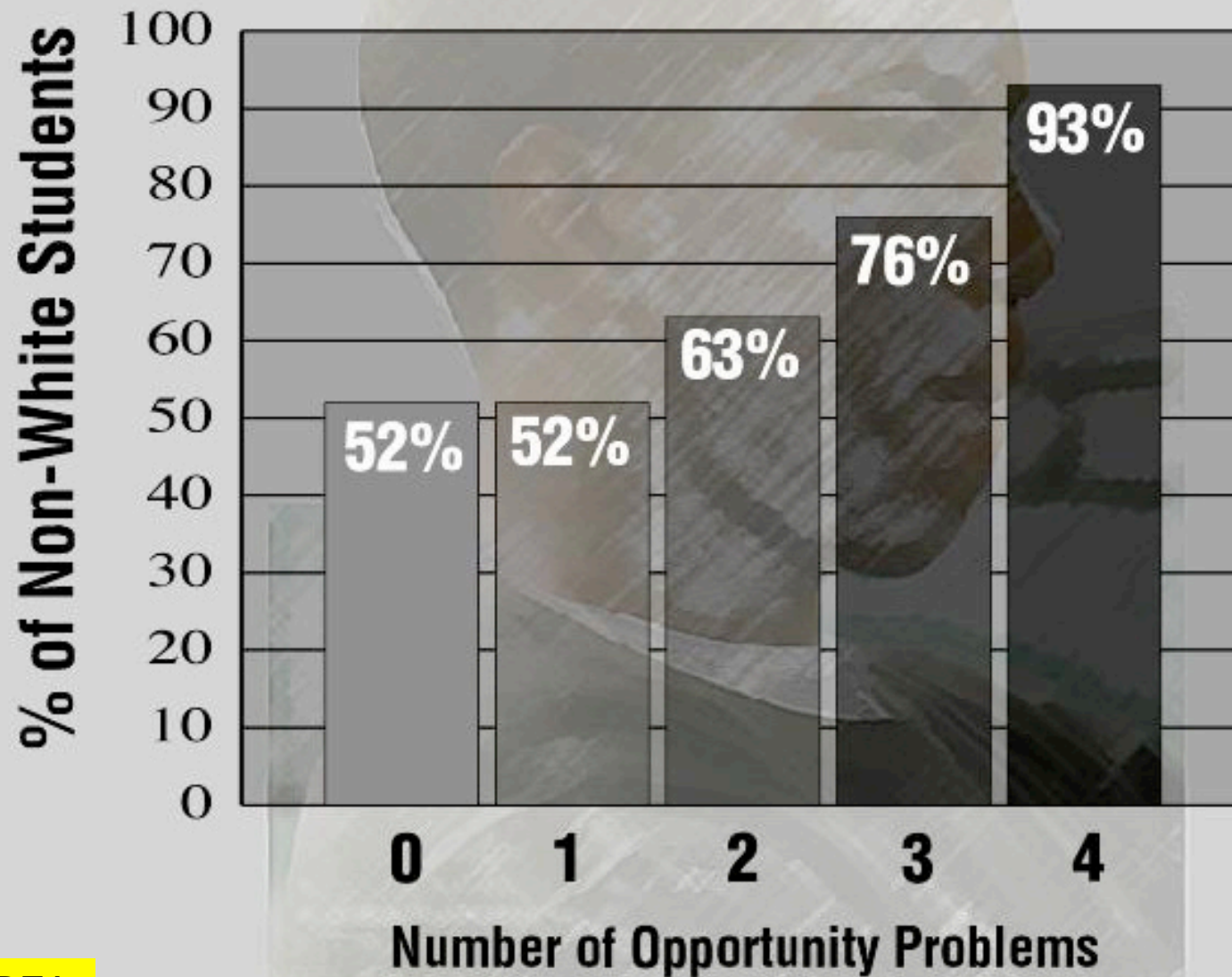
4. Adequate and Safe Facilities:

The state identifies a school as critically overcrowded, or teachers rate their facility as poor or only fair, or report evidence of cockroaches, rats, or mice.

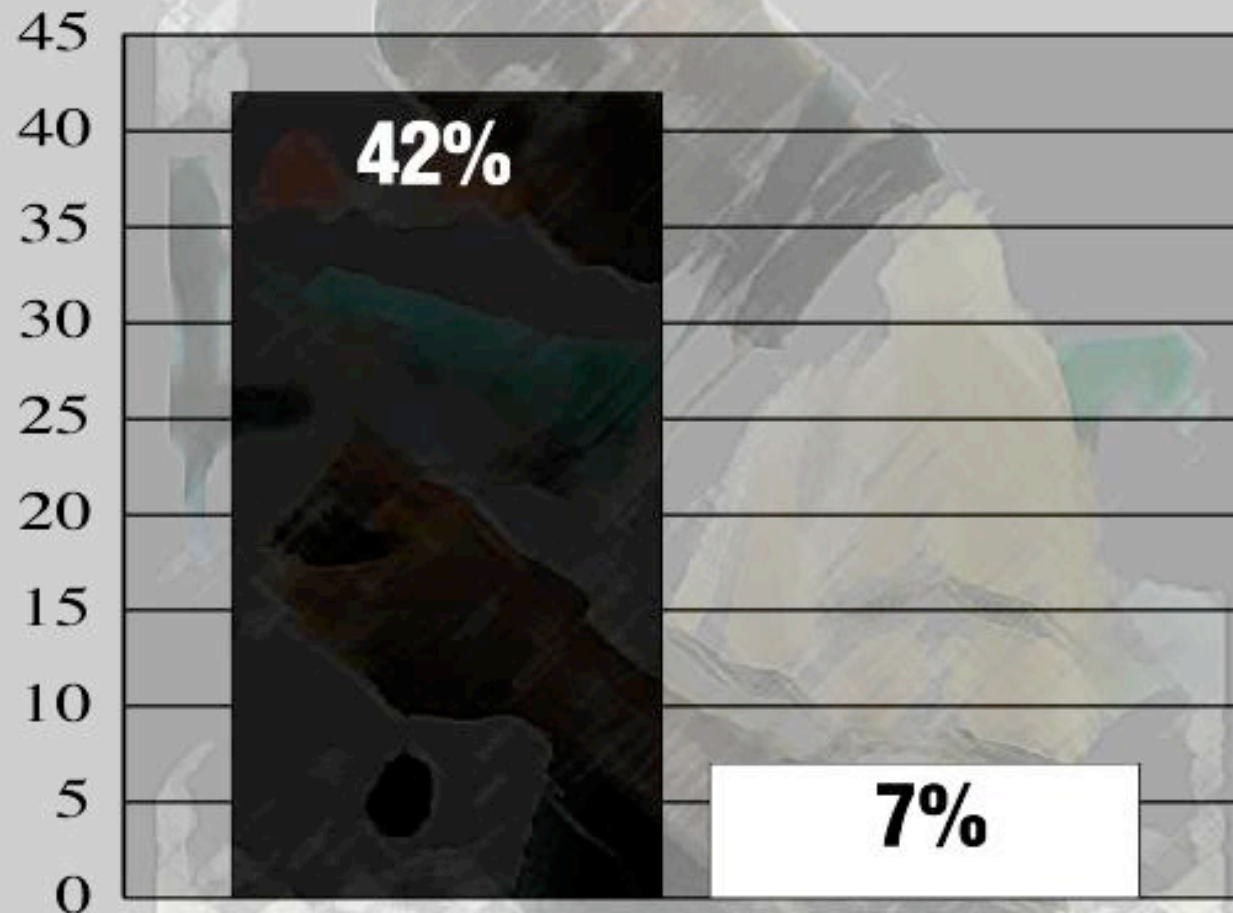
Under-qualified Teachers are Concentrated in Non-White Schools

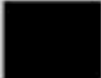



Racial Composition of Schools with 0, 1, 2, 3, and 4, Serious Opportunity Problems

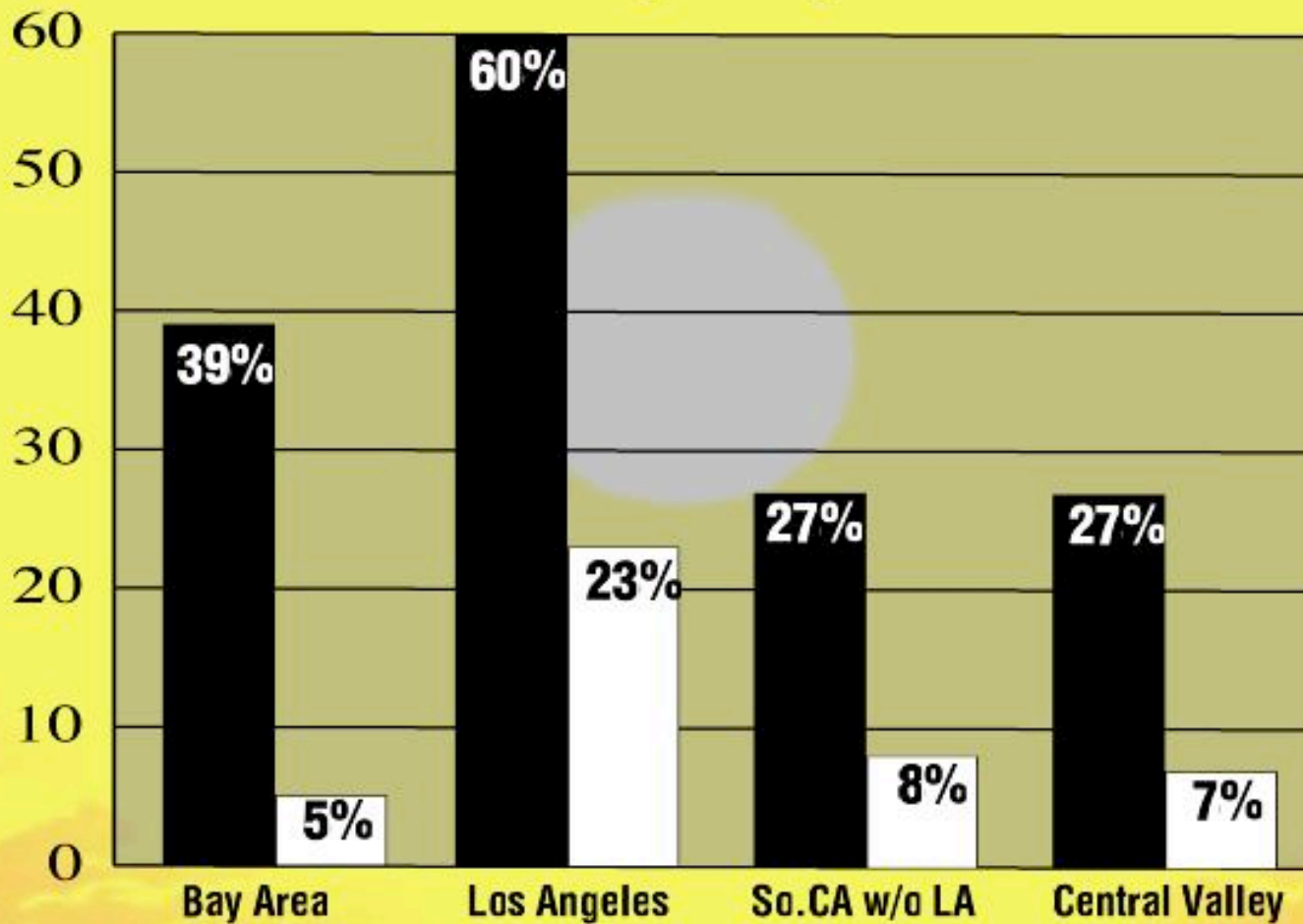


High Problem Schools and Racial Isolation



-  % of 90-100% Non-White schools that are “High Problem” schools
-  % of Majority White schools that are “High Problem” schools

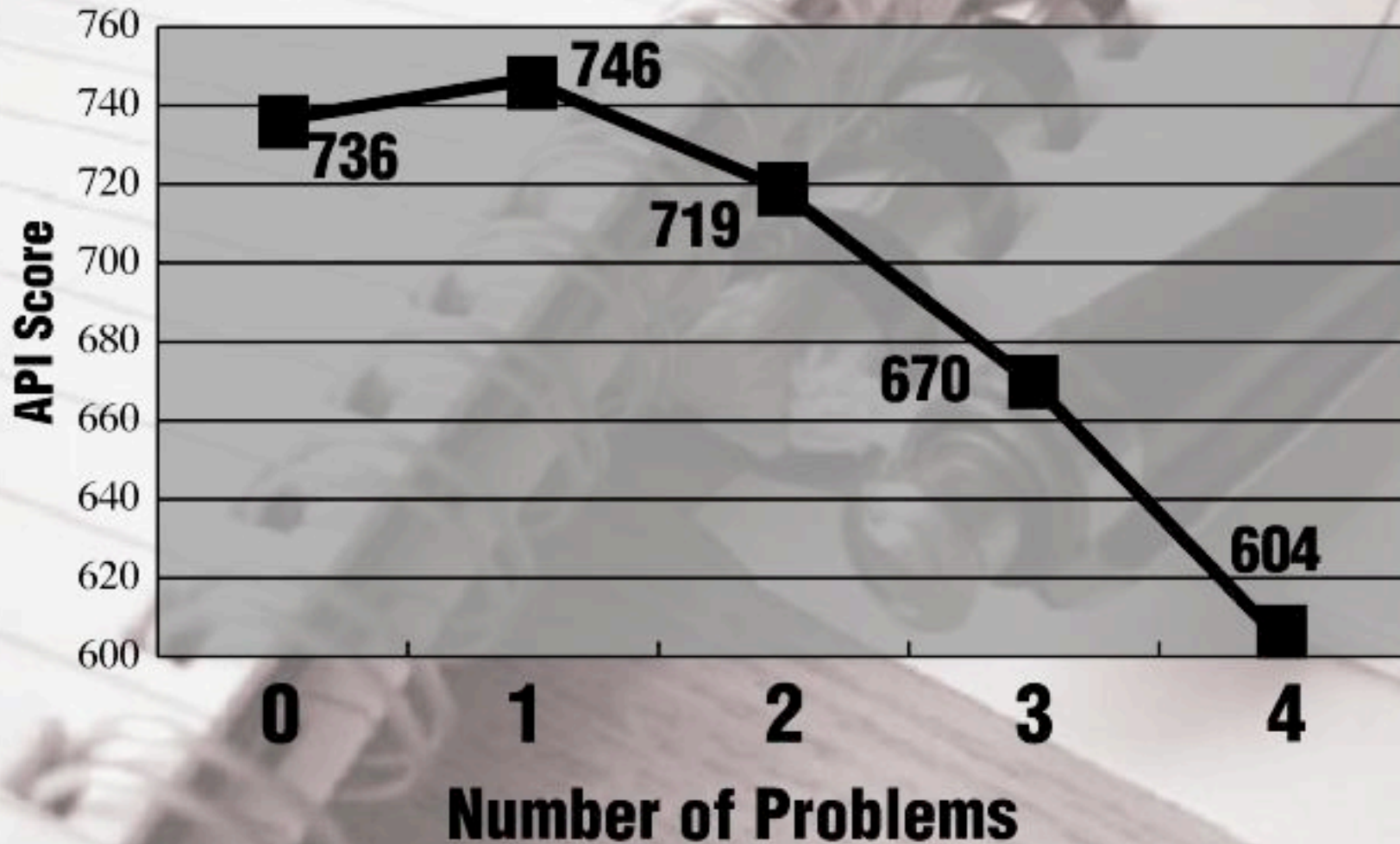
Percentage of Schools That Are “High-Problem” in Each Region by Race



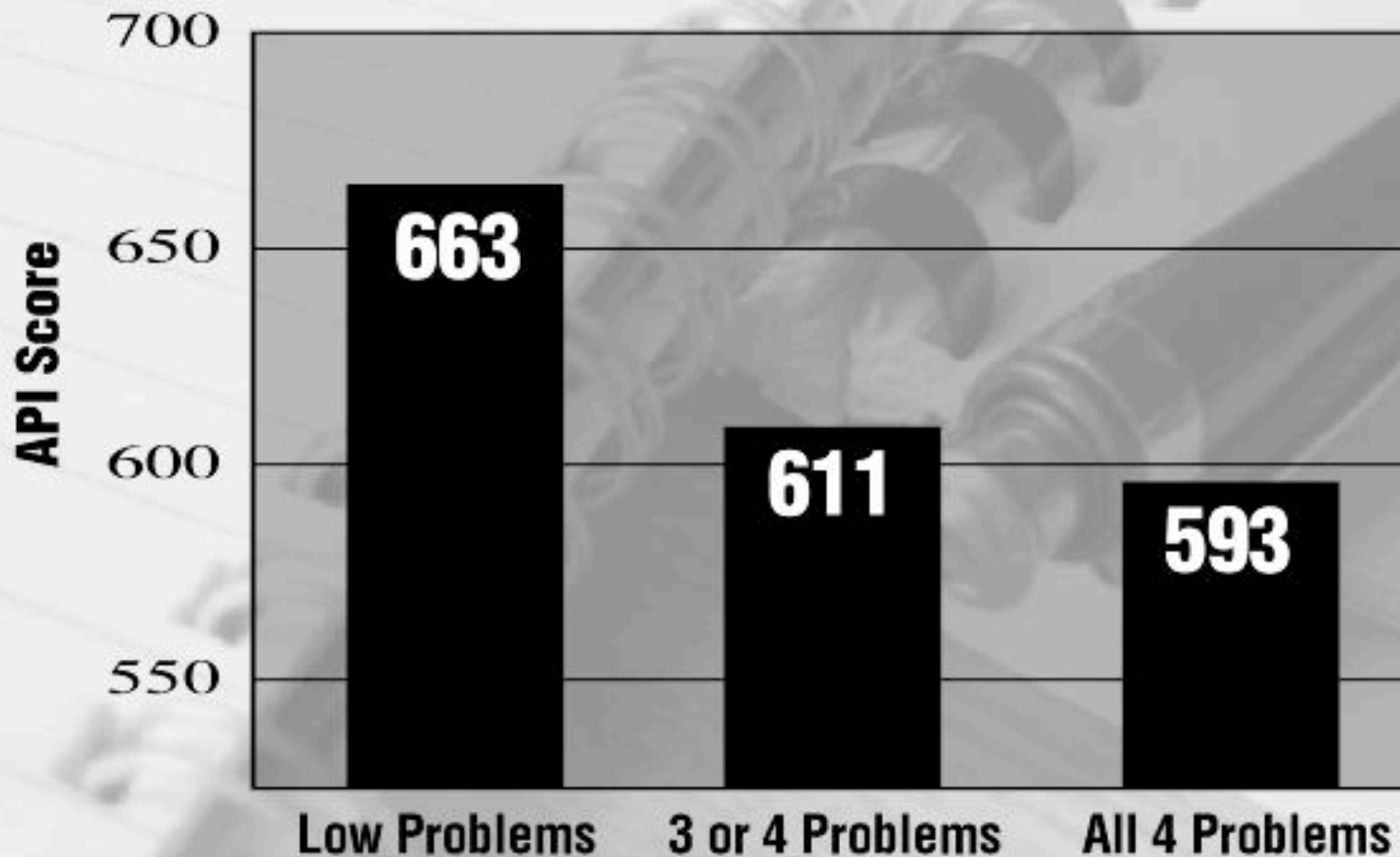
■ % of 90-100% Non-White schools that are “High-Problem”

□ % of Majority White schools that are “High-Problem”

Number of Problems vs. Mean API Score for All schools



Mean API Scores for 90-100% Non-White Schools with Low and High Incidence of Serious Opportunity Problems



Policy Implications: Inventory & Report Problems

- Set standards: What must every student have?
- Inventory the problems
 - Collect data we don't now have
 - Use Harris items as a guide
- Make data public and publicized
 - Report the data in accessible ways
 - Engage local communities in understanding and solving the problems.

Policy Implications: Fix the Problems

- Take action to fix the current problems.
 - Require a local action plan w/community engagement based on local inventory
 - Intervene if problems aren't fixed
 - Oversee local management of funds
 - Provide immediate relief where funds are insufficient
 - Create incentives to attract to & retain in schools with low-income, racially isolated non-white schools
 - Prioritize future spending (including facilities spending) on the schools with the greatest needs

Policy Implications: Preventing Future Problems

- QEC determine and cost out a high quality education model that includes standards for basic resources & conditions.
- **Develop an educational funding scheme based on what providing high quality & the basics to all students actually costs.**
- Regularly monitor and publicly report school, district, & state-level data as part of the accountability system.
- **Build the capacity of local communities to hold schools and districts accountable for providing what students need.**
- Intervene when necessary

What do teachers think about current reform ideas?

Harris added a mini-opinion poll to his Feb/March survey of teachers.

The School Improvement and Accountability Proposal

“The School Improvement and Accountability proposal would change the way public funds for schools are allocated and controlled in the following ways.

First, control over school budgets and school expenditures would be at the school level instead of the district level so that individual principals would set budgets in consultation with teachers at the school. Local schools would be able to spend funds on needs identified by the principal and teachers at the local level.

“Second, the way funding is allocated among schools would change, so that each school would receive an amount weighted to reflect the composition of students at the particular school. For example more money would be allocated to schools with more English language learners, and students with learning and other disabilities.

“Third, students would be able to enroll in any public school. If a higher need student moved to a new school, their new school would receive additional funding, reflecting that student's characteristics. Not a voucher program, students would not be able to use public funding to enroll in a private school.

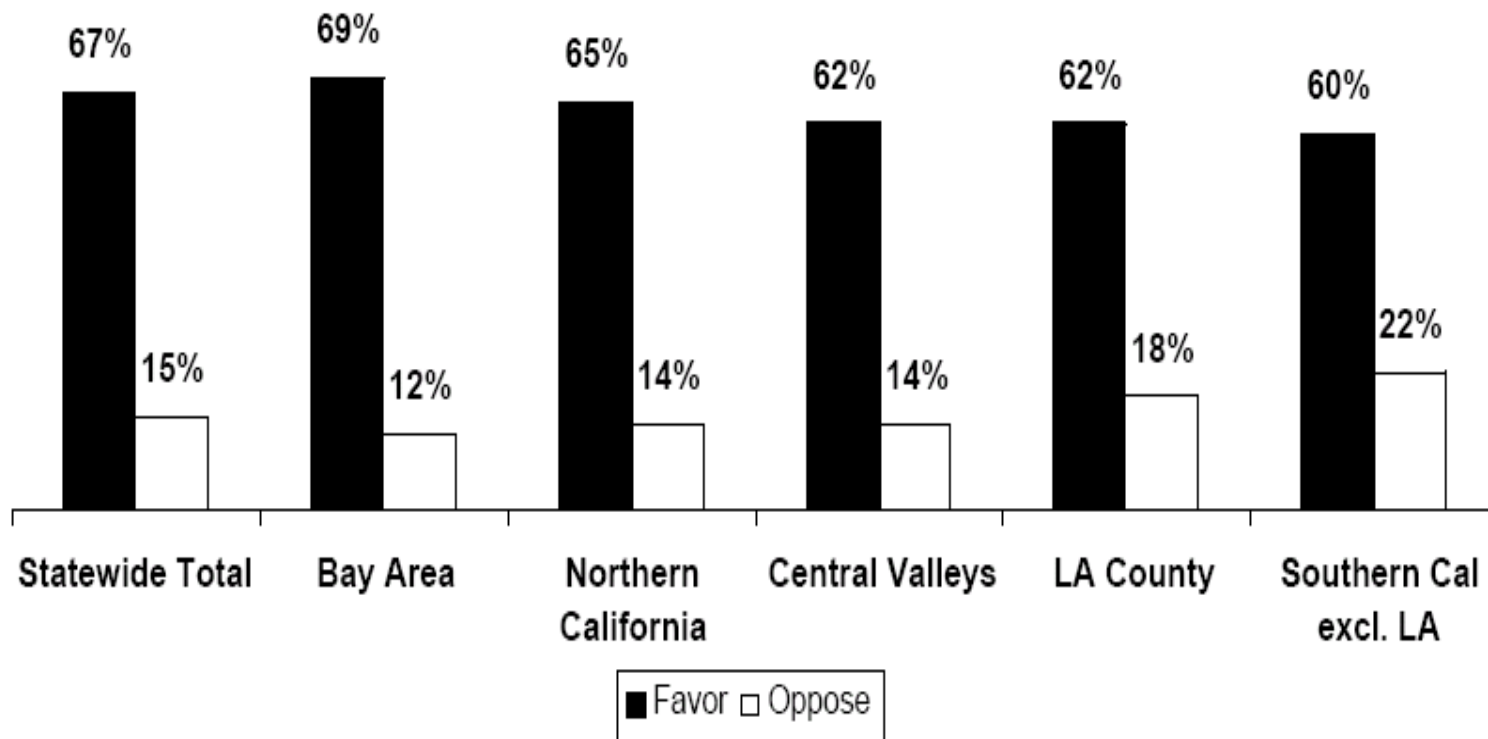
Principals would be held accountable for results, meaning not just test scores but also the opportunities the school provides for students to learn and teachers to teach, for example whether instructional materials and school facilities are adequate, as measured against specific benchmarks. The views of teachers, students and parents would be included in this new accountability system.”²

What do teachers think?

Teachers overwhelmingly supported reform ideas begin discussed at the time of the poll.

This suggests that teachers are quite willing to consider policy changes to improve schools and make them more equitable.

SUPPORT FOR PROPOSAL BY REGION



1. School control over how to allocate and spend its own budget
2. Weighted student funding
3. Public school choice for parents and students
4. Each principal's accountability for opportunities in the school for students to learn and teachers to teach

**HOW CALIFORNIA TEACHERS FEEL ABOUT THREE ELEMENTS
OF THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY PROPOSAL**

	School Budget Control	Weighted Student Funding	Student School Choice	Principal's Accountability
	%	%	%	%
Strongly Support	55	33	20	34
Somewhat Support	27	30	28	31
Subtotal Support	82	63	48	65
Somewhat Oppose	4	8	16	9
Strongly Oppose	3	8	11	8
Subtotal Oppose	7	17	28	17
Neutral	10	19	23	17
Not Sure	1	1	1	1

CHANGE IN SUPPORT OF
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY PROPOSAL
DEPENDING ON THE EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES ON SCHOOL FUNDING

	Baseline Support		What If Support		Change	
	Favor	Oppose	Favor	Oppose	Favor	Oppose
Region	%	%	%	%	%	%
Bay Area	69	12	39	37	-30	+25
Northern California	65	14	43	30	-22	+16
Central Valleys	62	14	50	25	-12	+11
Southern Cal excl. LA	60	22	48	31	-12	+9
LA County	62	18	54	26	-8	+8
Statewide Total	67	15	47	30	-20	+15

Full reports available at
www.ucla-idea.org

