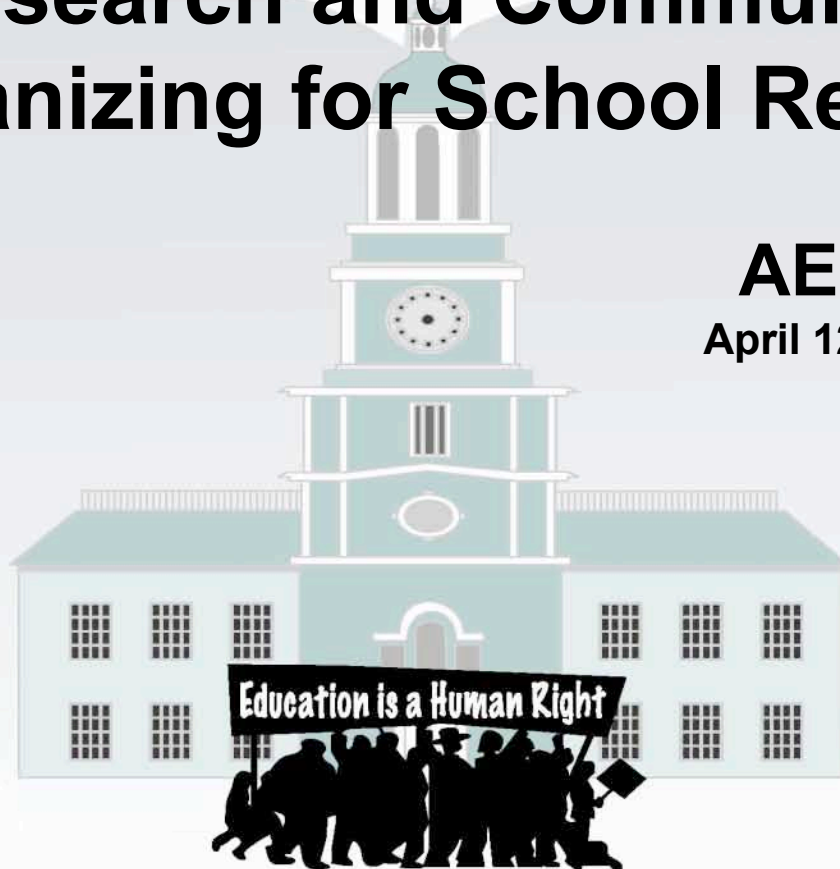


Beyond the Ivory Tower:

Research and Community Organizing for School Reform

AERA

April 12, 2005



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Community Organizing is Changing the Landscape of Education Politics

- An alternative to traditional reform strategies
- Four times as many organizing groups entered the field of education reform in 1996 than in 1990 (Mediratta, 2004).

Community Organizing for Education Reform

Key Findings

- Community organizations are successful.
- Bring a unique and diverse perspective to equity-focused school reform
- Not a simple process, rather there is resistance on multiple levels
- Wide range of equity issues and organizing strategies.
- Research has a role in the organizing process.

Research Use in Equity-Focused Education Organizing

- Research is used, “to educate members, identify schooling problems, legitimize campaign demands, and track schooling improvements (Mediratta, 2004. pp.38)”.
- Increase in research use
- Complex interaction between researchers and organizers (Delgado-Gaitan, 2001)

A Lesson From Equity-Focused Education Reform

- Technical aspects of reform
- Political aspects of reform
- Normative aspects of reform

Oakes (1991)

Dimensions of Research Use for Community Organizing

- ***Technical:*** formulate, evaluate, or improve policies or action plan
- ***Political:*** mobilize support/opposition, get policymaker or media attention
- ***Normative:*** changing thinking, develop generative concept, frame an issue, educate policymakers and the public

External Political Context

Community Organization
Focused on Education Equity

Meaning of
Research Use

Structure of
Research Use

Systemic
educational
inequality

Systemic
educational
inequality

Systemic
educational
inequality

Systemic
educational
inequality

Questions to Engage

- What is research?
- What is the impact of research on community organizing?
- What are some examples of organizations using research?
- What do successful relationships between organizations and university researchers look like?
- Is there a connection between knowledge and power?

A Readers Theater

- Aim to capture both the meaning and structure
- Multiple equally valued perspectives
- Meaning is negotiated both by the organizations/university and the external environment of organizing
- Authentic stories and experiences
- Based on interviews with researchers and community organizers

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Defining Research











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Linking Research and Community Organizing









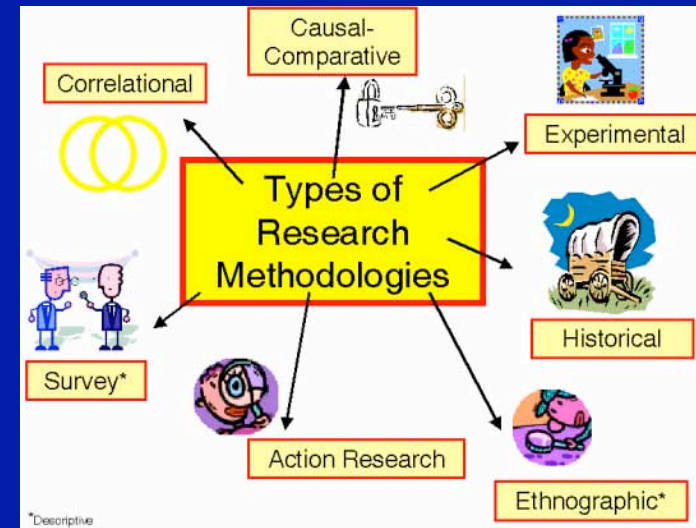




What Terminology Do You Use?

Community Partners:

- “I use the language of investigation.”
- “I speak the same language as people in power.”
- “We have to be researchers if we want to make change.”



What Terminology Do You Use?

University Researchers:

- “I stay away from jargon when talking to either group.”
- “With policymakers I always try to stay on message.”
- “I use the same materials when speaking with youth and parents as with educational researchers.”

Practical
Example



Cut Jargon

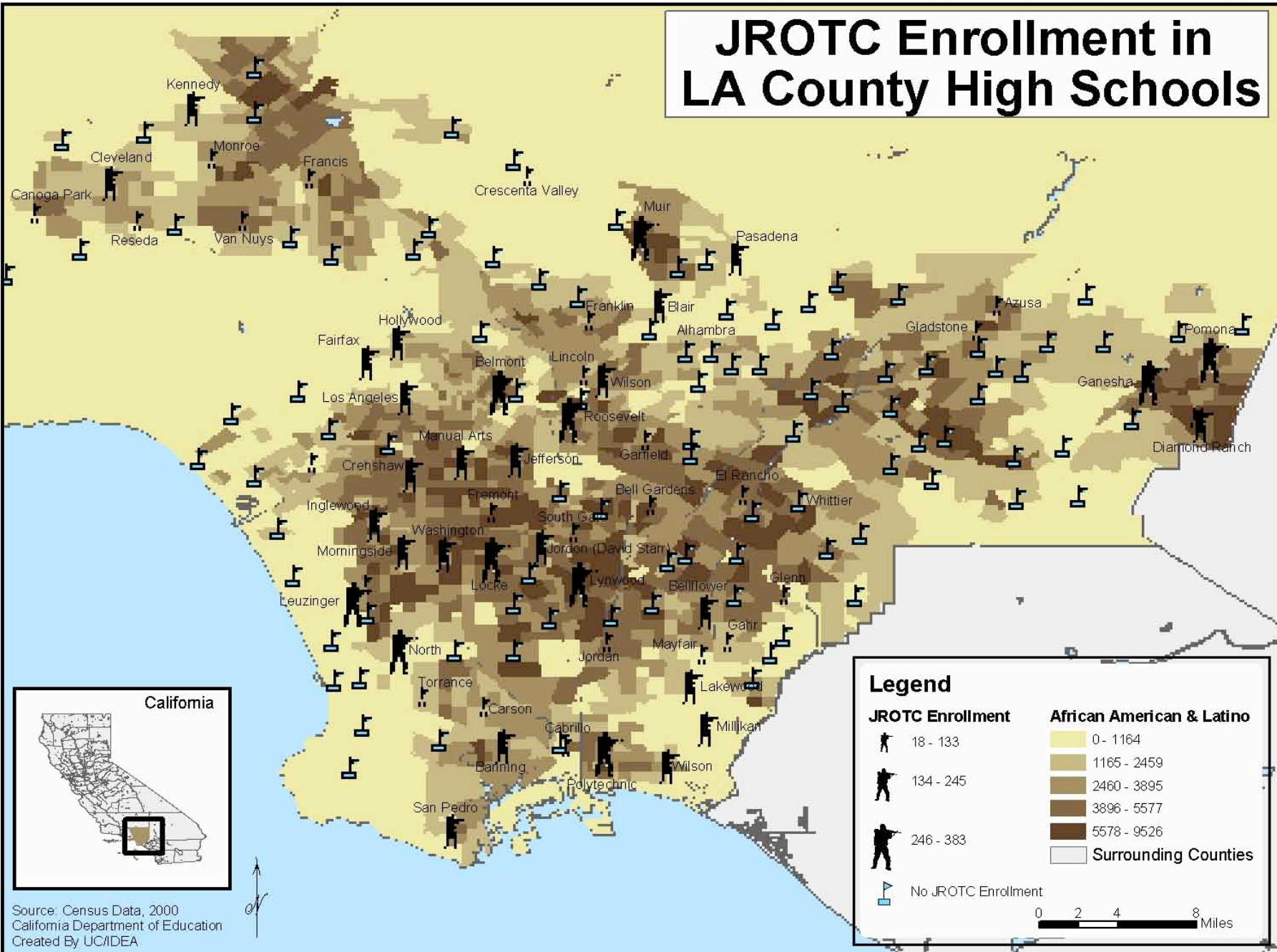


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Presenting Research



JROTC Enrollment in LA County High Schools



Legend

JROTC Enrollment	African American & Latino
18 - 133	0 - 1164
134 - 245	1165 - 2459
246 - 383	2460 - 3895
No JROTC Enrollment	3896 - 5577
	5578 - 9526
	Surrounding Counties

0 2 4 8 Miles

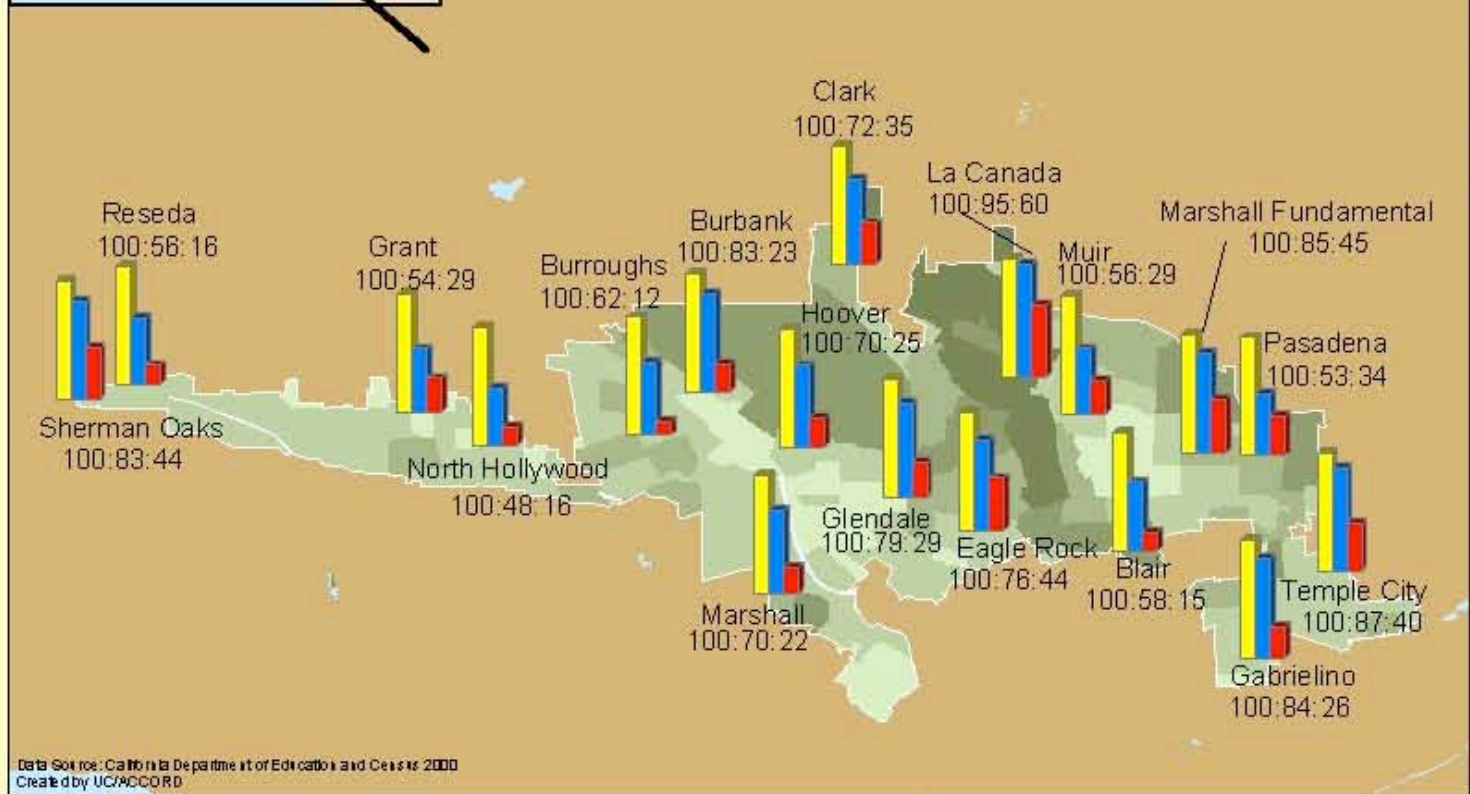


Source: Census Data, 2000
 California Department of Education
 Created By UC/IDEA

2002 College Opportunity Ratio (COR)

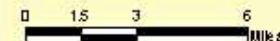
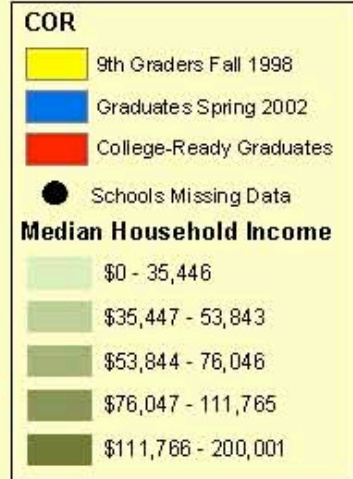
California Public High Schools Prepare Few Underrepresented 9th Graders for College

Senate District 21
Jack Scott



College-Ready:

Graduates completing courses required for CSU and UC admissions with a grade of C or better.



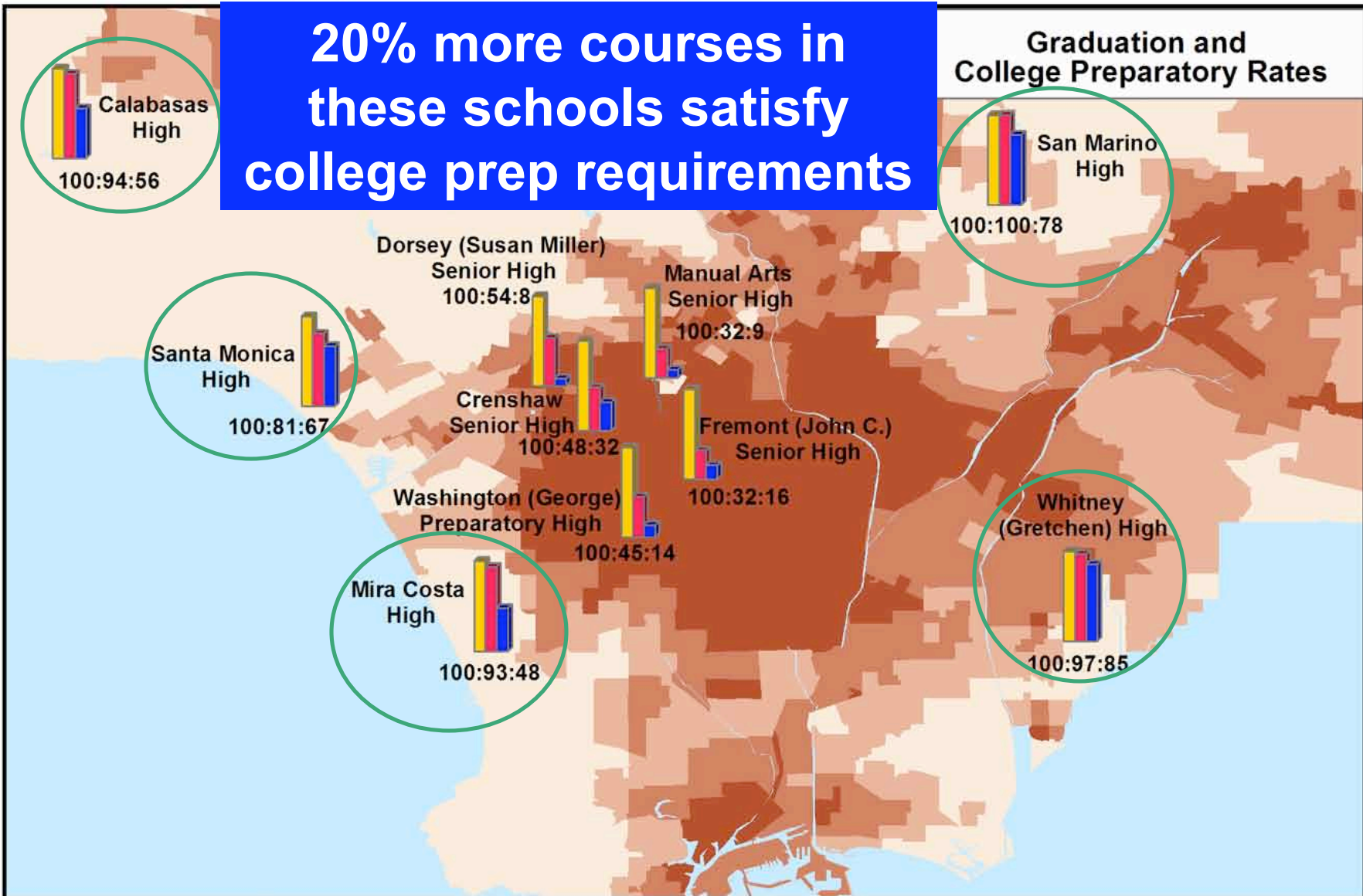
Data Source: California Department of Education and Census 2000
Created by UC/ACCORD

College Opportunity Ratio (COR):

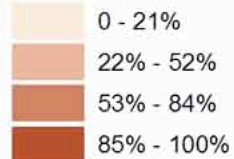
9th graders ____ : # Graduates four years later ____ : # College-ready graduates ____

20% more courses in these schools satisfy college prep requirements

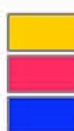
Graduation and College Preparatory Rates



% Black or Hispanic



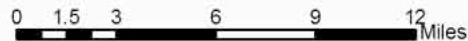
College Opportunity Ratio



9th graders 1998

Graduates 2002

College-ready graduates

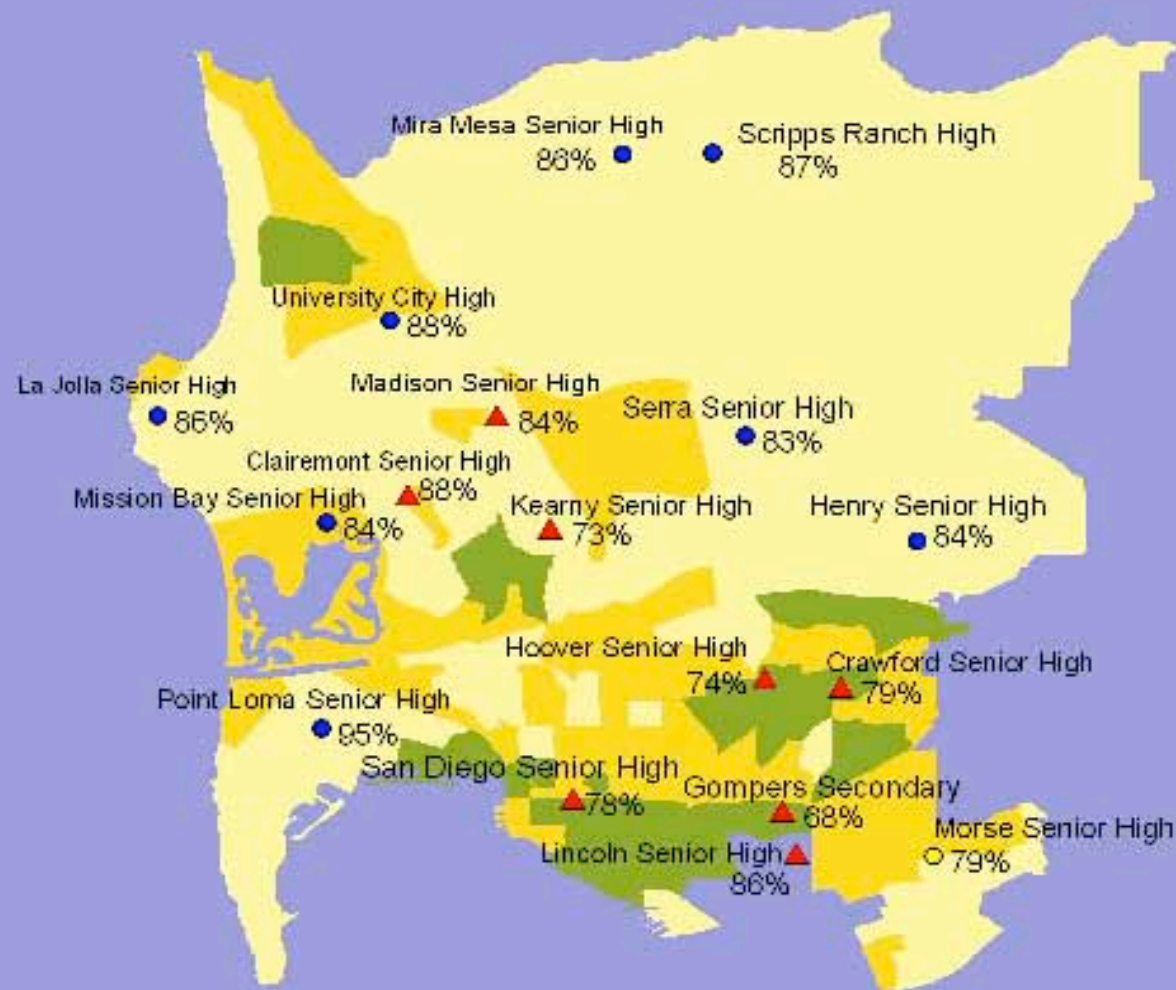


Sources: Census Data, 2000; California Department of Education, 2003

Created by the Institute for Democracy, Education, & Access



Rates of Credentialed Teachers by College-Eligible Graduates in San Diego High Schools



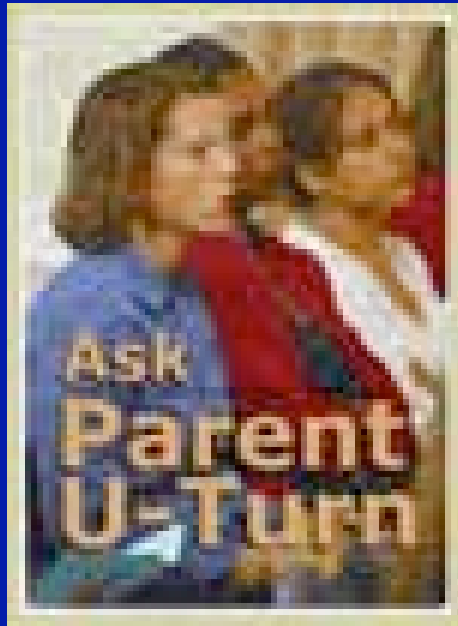
Graduating UC/CSU Eligible

- ▲ Less than 25%
- Greater than 25%

Poverty rate

- Less than 10%
- 10-20%
- Greater than 20%





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**Relationships
between Community
Organizations and
Researchers**







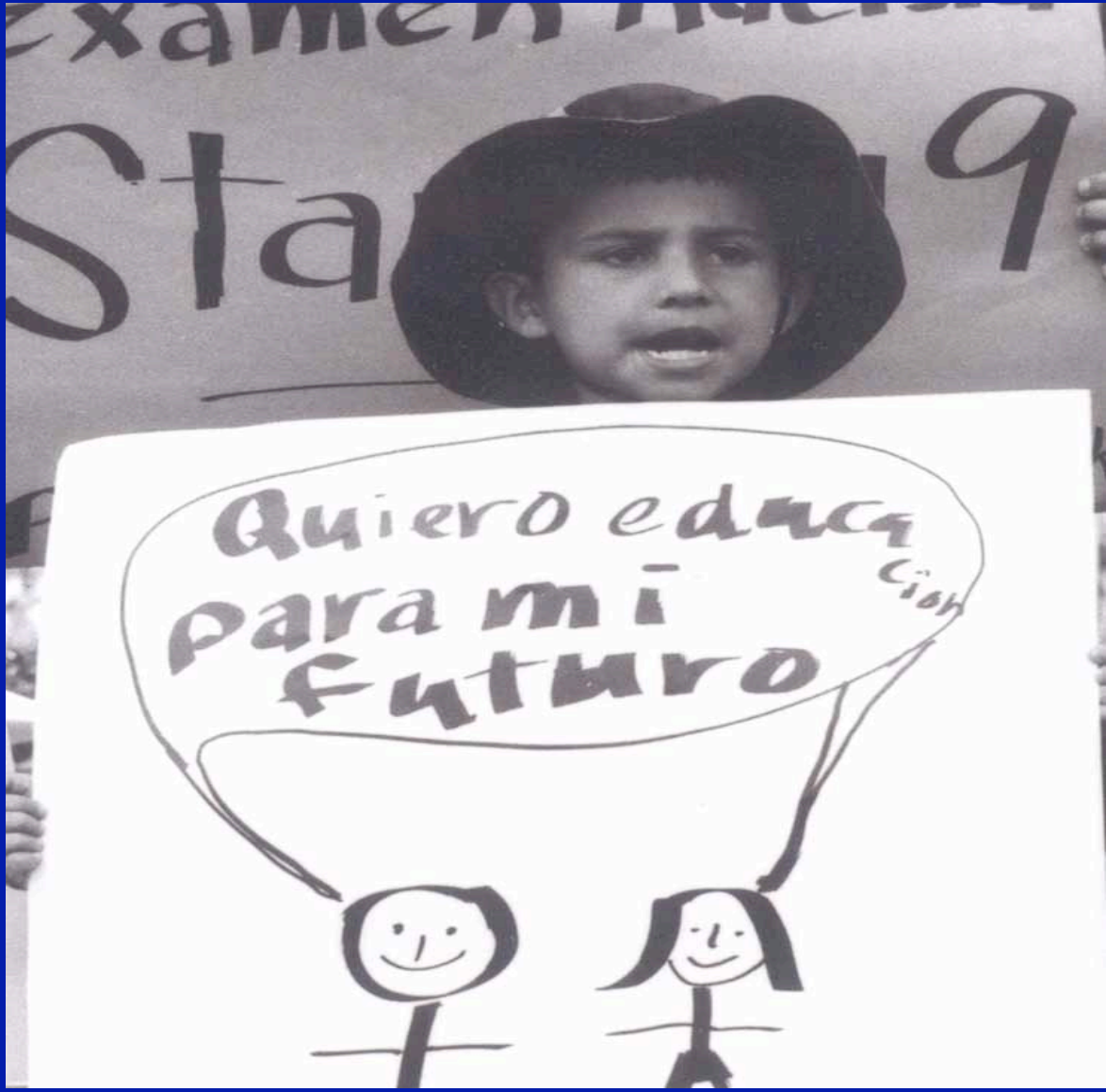
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Knowledge and Power



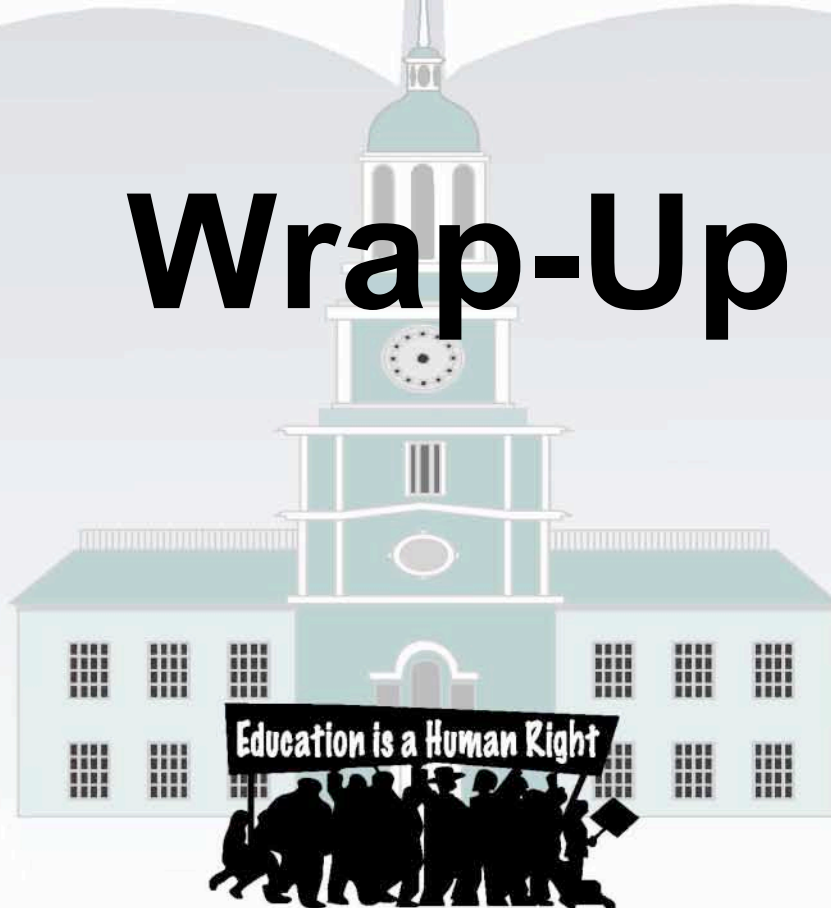






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Wrap-Up



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Discussants Respond



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Research and Community
Organizing for School Reform

Q & A



Beyond the Ivory Tower

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