

# Promoting Educational Attainment: A Partnership of Families, Schools, and Communities

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# Our roadmap for the next 24 minutes...



- o The Big Picture
- o Key Elements
- o Proposed Solutions

What are the major problems in  
education today?

# Education Today:

A Closer Look at America's Public Schools

*Pop Quiz!*

# True or False?

Student achievement has recently fallen across the nation.

**False!**

*Recent standardized test data actually reveal modest gains in students' knowledge.*

Source: Berliner, D. & Biddle, B. (1995). The manufactured crisis.

# True or False?

America spends a lot more money on education than other countries.

**False!**

*The United States actually spends less than the average industrialized nation.*

Source: Berliner, D. & Biddle, B. (1995). The manufactured crisis.

# True or False?

Private schools are better than public schools.

**False!**

*The average public-private differences in student achievement are minimal.*

Source: Berliner, D. & Biddle, B. (1995). The manufactured crisis.

# True or False?

American education doesn't produce enough scientists, mathematicians, and engineers.

**False!**

*America leads the world in the percentage of its college graduates who obtain degrees in science and engineering.*

Source: Berliner, D. & Biddle, B. (1995). The manufactured crisis.



# The Big Picture: Poverty

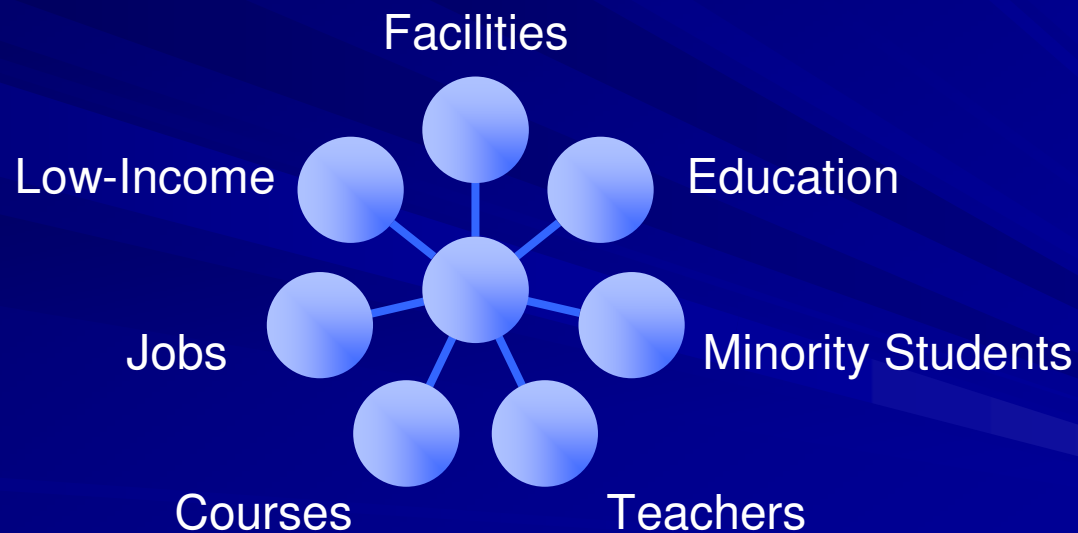
- Difficult to provide good schooling to children that show up to school hungry
- Typical affluent 13-year old is at the same proficiency level as an average 17-year old living in poverty
- 9/10 or more of schools' funding come from state and local sources

Source: Berliner, D. & Biddle, B. (1995). The manufactured crisis.

What are the specific problems in rural education?

# Lower Achievement in Rural Areas:

## Common Explanations



Source: Brown, D. & Swanson, L. (2003). Challenges for rural America.

# Education in Rural America: (Versus Urban)

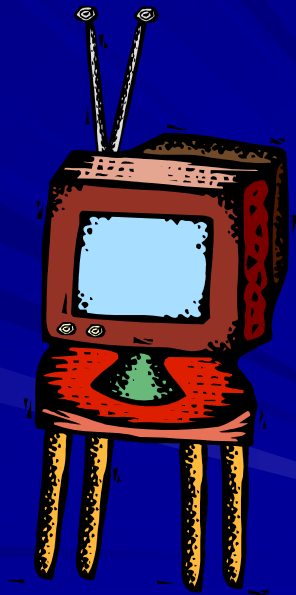
- Same percentage not completing high school
- + Higher percentage completing high school
- + Faster gains in pursuing higher education
- Lower retention of college graduates

Source: Brown, D. & Swanson, L. (2003). Challenges for rural America.

Why not just blame the schools?



“Our kids spend 900 hours a year in school  
and from 1,200 to 1,800 hours a year in  
front of the television set.”



Source: Unks, G. (2000). Schooling in America.

# Key Players in Academic Success:

Putting the Pieces Together



Who is the most responsible for  
education?



# Social Capital: Family



- Parents' Education
- Family Income
- Married or Divorce?
- Siblings
- Interactions

Source: Brown, D. & Swanson, L. (2003). Challenges for rural America.

# Social Capital: School



- Peers
- Financial Resources
- Norms
- Expectations
- Opportunities

Source: Brown, D. & Swanson, L. (2003). Challenges for rural America.

# Social Capital: Community



- Capacity
- Proximity
- Stability
- Equality

Source: Brown, D. & Swanson, L. (2003). Challenges for rural America.

# An Additional Layer: Social Class

- Time Orientation
- Expressing Emotions
- Awarding Respect
- View of Education

Source: Unks, G. (2000). Schooling in America.

# Four Proposed Solutions:

1. Help parents understand
2. Meaningful parent involvement
3. Integrate new families
4. Guiding programs and activities

Source: Brown, D. & Swanson, L. (2003). Challenges for rural America.

# Five Alternative Solutions:

1. Community could help families regain dignity by improving standard of living
2. Americans should spend more money on school located in communities with greater needs
3. Improve school buildings and facilities
4. Cross-age tutoring generate largest gains in learning for the least cost
5. Mentoring programs provide youth with motivated adults to serve as role models and support

Source: Berliner, D. & Biddle, B. (1995). The manufactured crisis.

What it boils down to...

**US!**

“Perhaps it will only be when the middle class sees that an uneducated and undereducated lower class affects its own standard of living that it will move to share its power and wealth—and change schools.”

Source: Unks, G. (2000). Schooling in America.



# Kids Are Smart...They Know Our Values:



- Schooling
- Books
- Citizenship
- Children

Source: Unks, G. (2000). Schooling in America.

# My Advice to Rural Communities...



# True or False?

60% of inmates are illiterate.

True!

*The sooner you drop out, the greater your chances of going to jail. The majority of students drop out because they cannot read.*

Source: Trelease, J. (2001). The Read-Aloud Handbook.

# True or False?

In order for a child in poverty to catch up in reading, they would need to learn an extra 170 vocabulary words each week of the school year.

True!

*And that is along with the 116 they are already supposed to be learning.*

# True or False?

50% of 5<sup>th</sup> graders read an average of four minutes or less a day.

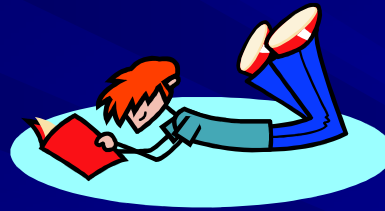
True!

*Additionally, 30% read 2 minutes a day and 10% read nothing at all.*

Source: Trelease, J. (2001). The Read-Aloud Handbook.

# Twenty-five years of reading research confirms this simple formula—

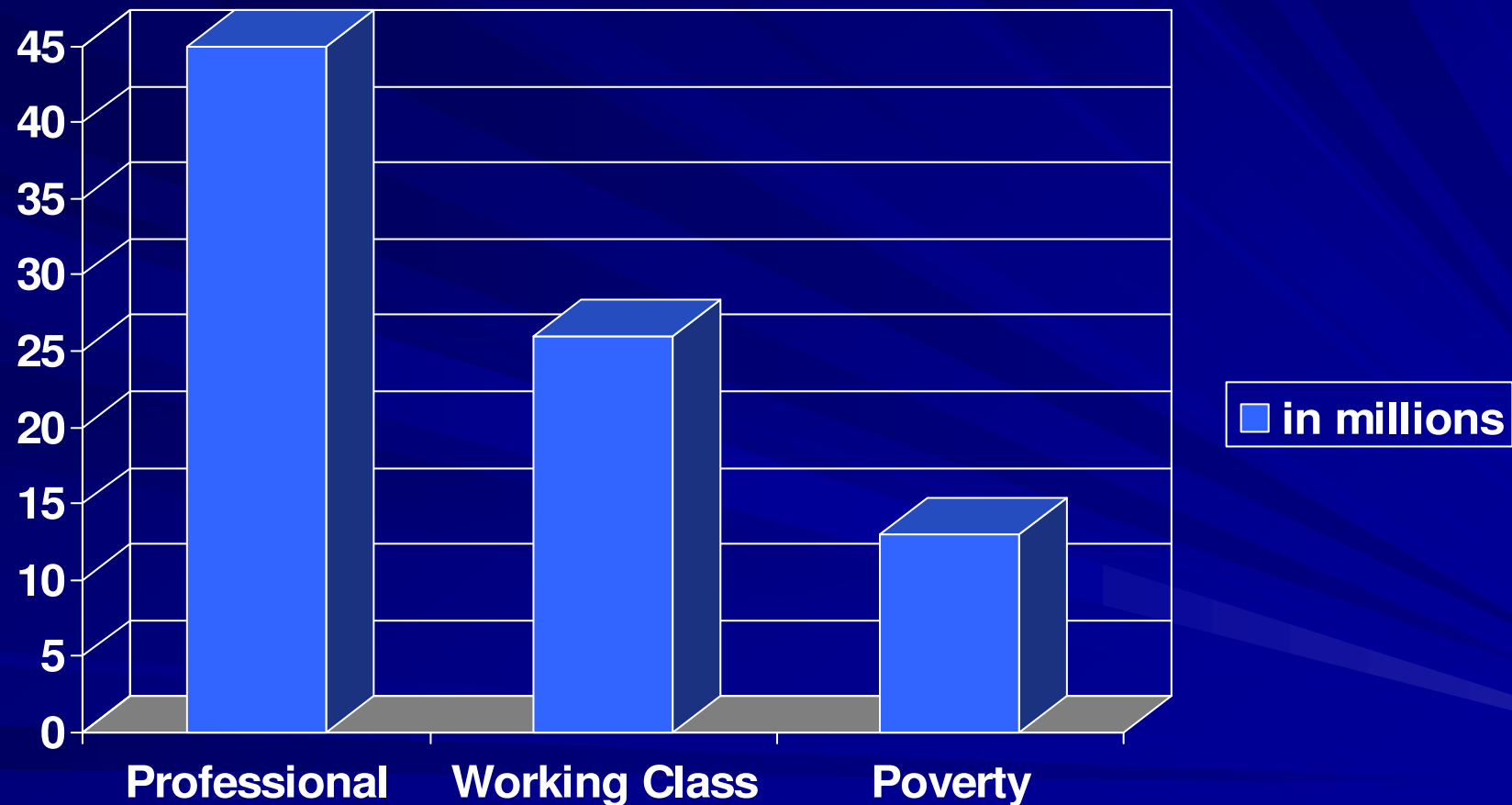
(regardless of sex, race, nationality, or socioeconomic background)



## Students who read the most, read the best, achieve the most, and stay in school the longest!

Source: Trelease, J. (2001). The Read-Aloud Handbook.

# Total Words Heard by Child by Age 4



Source: Trelease, J. (2001). The Read-Aloud Handbook.

# How can we get kids reading?

- Families?
- Schools?
- Communities?



# Times up!



- ✓ The Big Picture
- ✓ Key Elements
- ✓ Proposed Solutions

## References

- Berliner, D. & Biddle, B. (1995). The manufactured crisis: myths, fraud and the attack on America's public schools. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Perseus Press.
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