

# **Board of Education Ad Hoc Committee on Student Assignment**

**January 12, 2009**

# Overview

## Purpose

- Provide a regular and public way for Board of Education commissioners to discuss the redesign of the student assignment system and get input from the community

## Outline

- Staff Update
  - Alternative Schools
  - Guiding Principles
  - Community Input
  - Timeline
- Presentation by Goodwin Liu, Associate Dean and Professor of Law, Berkeley Law

## Questions and Discussion

# Update

- Collecting and analyzing data re: demand and attendance patterns
- Developing guidelines for establishing school capacities
- Creating a community engagement plan
- Developing recommendations for special education, multilingual programs, PreK-12 program articulation, career/technical pathways, and assignments via Pupil Services
- Redesigning the Program Placement Committee
- Working with Omega Group to develop simulations
- Defining alternative schools / programs

# Alternative Schools

- Originally alternative schools offered a unique program
- Some schools may be less unique now because our portfolio of schools has changed (more K-8 programs, more language programs, opened new schools, closed some schools, etc.)
- Alternative schools have no geographic preference i.e., no attendance area
- The list of schools without an attendance area has grown since the attendance areas were established under the Consent Decree in the early 1980s; this is because the attendance boundaries were not revised as we opened schools and closed schools over the years

# Alternative Schools

- Currently there are 34 schools without attendance areas (this does not include Charter schools or County Community schools)
- We have begun work to
  - Define ‘alternative’
  - Establish parameters for identifying ‘alternative’ schools
  - Identify schools that should be considered ‘alternative’

# Alternative Schools

- Questions being explored:
  - Should we have ‘alternative’ schools? If yes, why?
  - What do we need to consider when identifying ‘alternative’ schools
  - In reviewing our non-attendance area schools:
    - Are there extra ordinary criteria for acceptance?
    - Is the school designed to serve a specific population?
    - Does the school have a unique grade configuration?
    - Does it offer a totally unique curriculum?
    - Do small schools by design offer a unique curriculum?
    - If a school has a unique program as well as a general education program, should it be considered alternative?
    - What is the historical context?

# Guiding Principles

- What are ‘guiding principles’?
  - Broad philosophy / set of principles that guide the work
- Why are guiding principles important?
  - Create a clear purpose and tell us what we want to achieve
  - Help focus the work and allow us to move faster in creating options to consider
  - Guide the decision making process
  - Provide transparency and a clear guiding structure

# Guiding Principles

- Gathered community input over the years via surveys and various community engagement activities, for example:
  - Student Assignment Task Force: 2002-03 and 2003-04 school year
  - Community Advisory Committee on Student Assignment: 2004-05 school year
  - Parent Advisory Council: 2005-06 Community Outreach Campaign
  - Student Enrollment, Recruitment and Retention: Community Conversations 2006-07

# Guiding Principles

- Considerations important to the community
  - Academic achievement
  - Community input
  - Desire for choice
  - Desire to consider neighborhoods/proximity
  - Equitable access to high quality schools and programs
  - Integration and diversity
  - Predictability and convenience
  - Program pathways and coherence
  - Resource allocation /costs (e.g., Transportation)
  - Transparency in the process
  - Verification of self-reported data

# Guiding Principles

- Developing guiding principles is not straightforward
- Many of the considerations that have been identified as important to the community are in competition with each other, for example:
  - Choice v. predictability
  - Choice v. diversity
  - Geographic proximity v. diversity v. choice

# Guiding Principles

These two design choices illustrate how some priorities are in conflict. Clearly there are options within the spectrum, but priorities will need to be traded-off.

Design Options	Advantages	Limitations
1. Choice	Unrestricted choice	Less simplicity Less predictability Diversity?
2. Neighborhood / Attendance Area	More simplicity More predictability	Less choice Diversity?

# Guiding Principles

## Key Questions

- Which is more important: diversity, predictability, or choice?
- How do we define 'diversity'?
- Do we want to maintain a total choice system or move towards a more limited choice system that assigns students to schools in their neighborhood?

# Community Input

Where to learn more:

- Board Meetings: Ad Hoc Committee on Student Assignment
  - January 29
  - February 12
  - Additional dates to be established
- [www.sfusd.edu](http://www.sfusd.edu)

How to provide input:

- Survey
- Email: [StudentAssignmentIdeas@sfusd.edu](mailto:StudentAssignmentIdeas@sfusd.edu)
- Community conversations
- Board Meetings

# Key Activities and Dates

- January 2009
  - Collect and analyze data
  - Develop options
- February and March 2009
  - solicit community input
  - review feedback
  - refine options
- April 2009
  - develop policy
  - approve policy
- May 2009 - October 2009
  - develop administrative procedures
  - revise transportation policies and procedures
  - develop technology and data systems to support policies
  - align staff resources
  - develop outreach and recruitment materials
- November 2009
  - launch outreach and recruitment campaign for SY 2010-11

**Presentation by Goodwin Liu,  
Associate Dean and Professor of Law,  
Berkeley Law**

## **SFUSD demographics (2006-07)**

- **42% Asian/Pacific Islander**
- **6% Filipino**
- **21% Hispanic**
- **12% African American**
- **9% White**
- **9% Multiple or No Response**

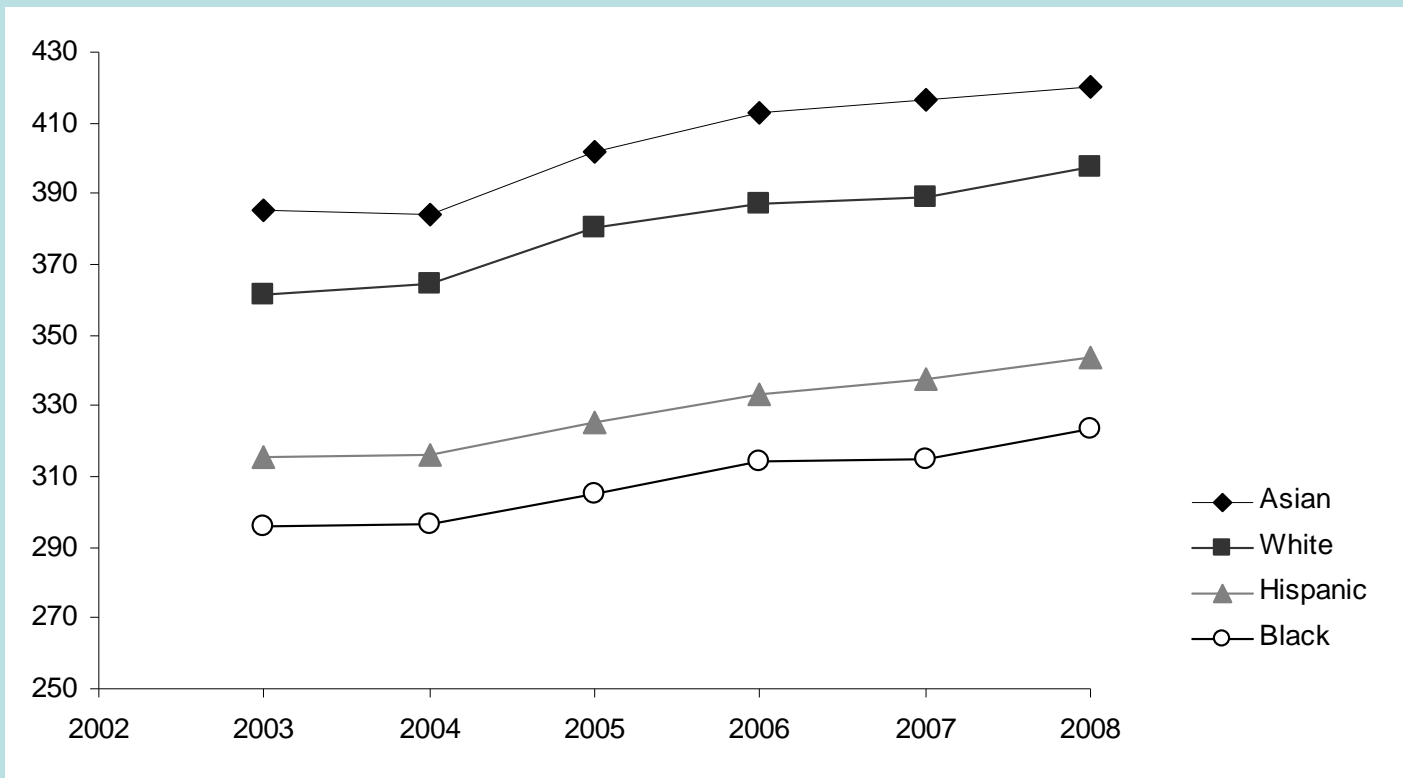
## **SFUSD demographics (2006-07)**

- **8 schools enrolled  $\geq$  50% black**
- **16 schools enrolled  $\geq$  50% Hispanic**
- **37 schools enrolled  $\geq$  50% Asian, and 15 schools enrolled  $\geq$  67% Asian**
- **Although SFUSD has no majority racial group, about half of the schools are racially identifiable.**

# The Achievement Gap

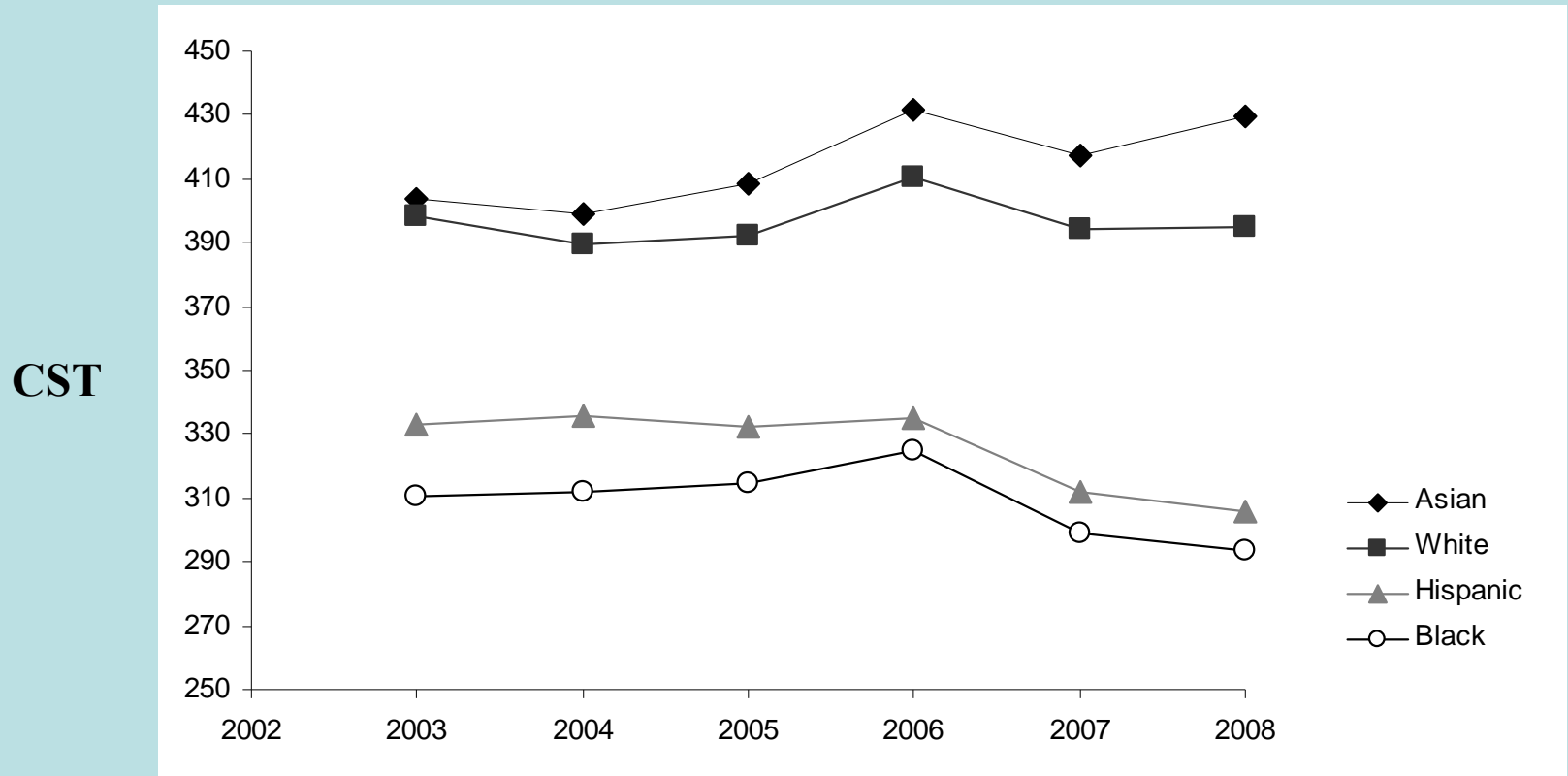
## 4th grade math

CST



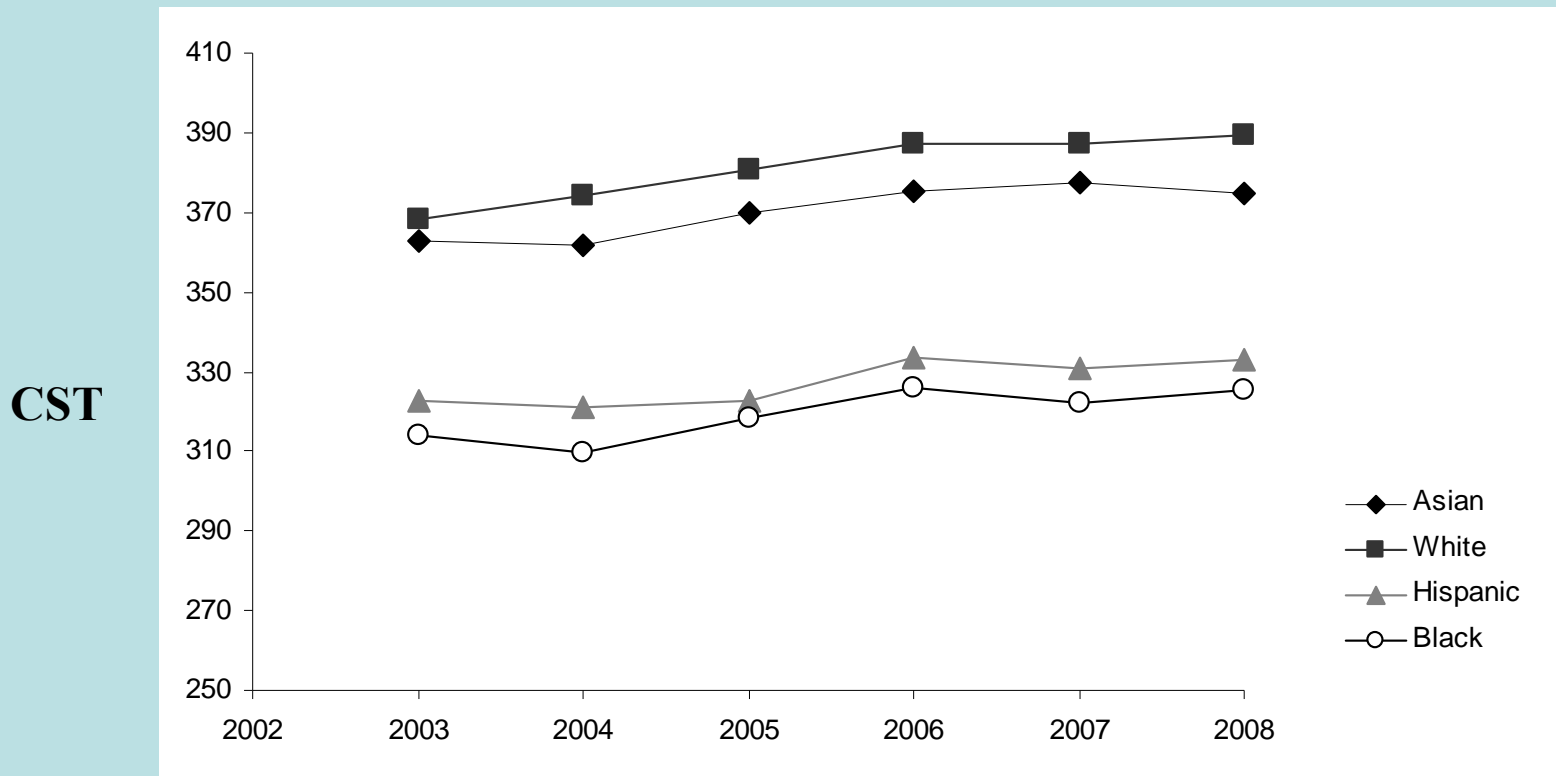
# The Achievement Gap

## 8th grade math (Algebra I)



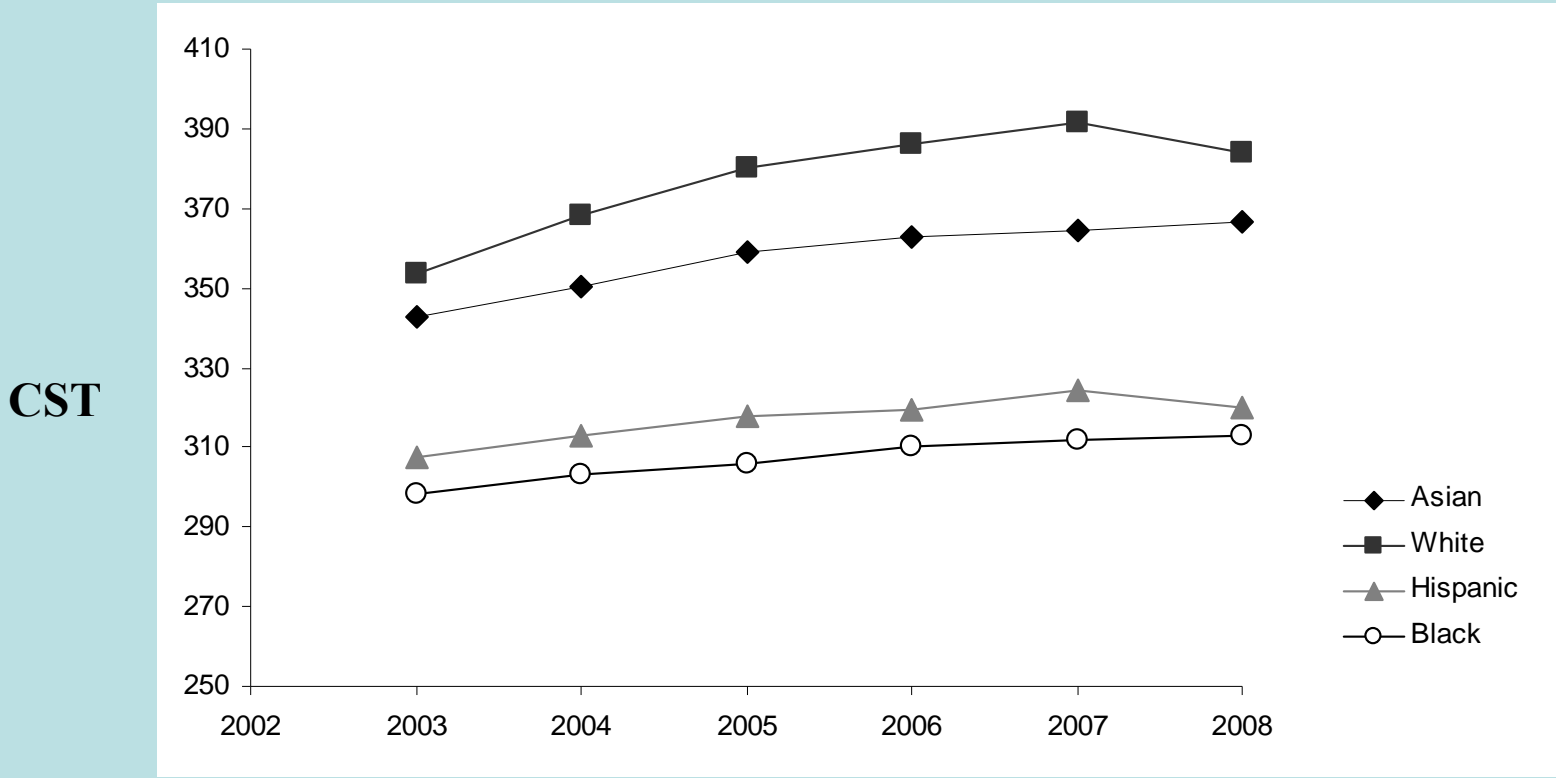
# The Achievement Gap

## 4th grade English

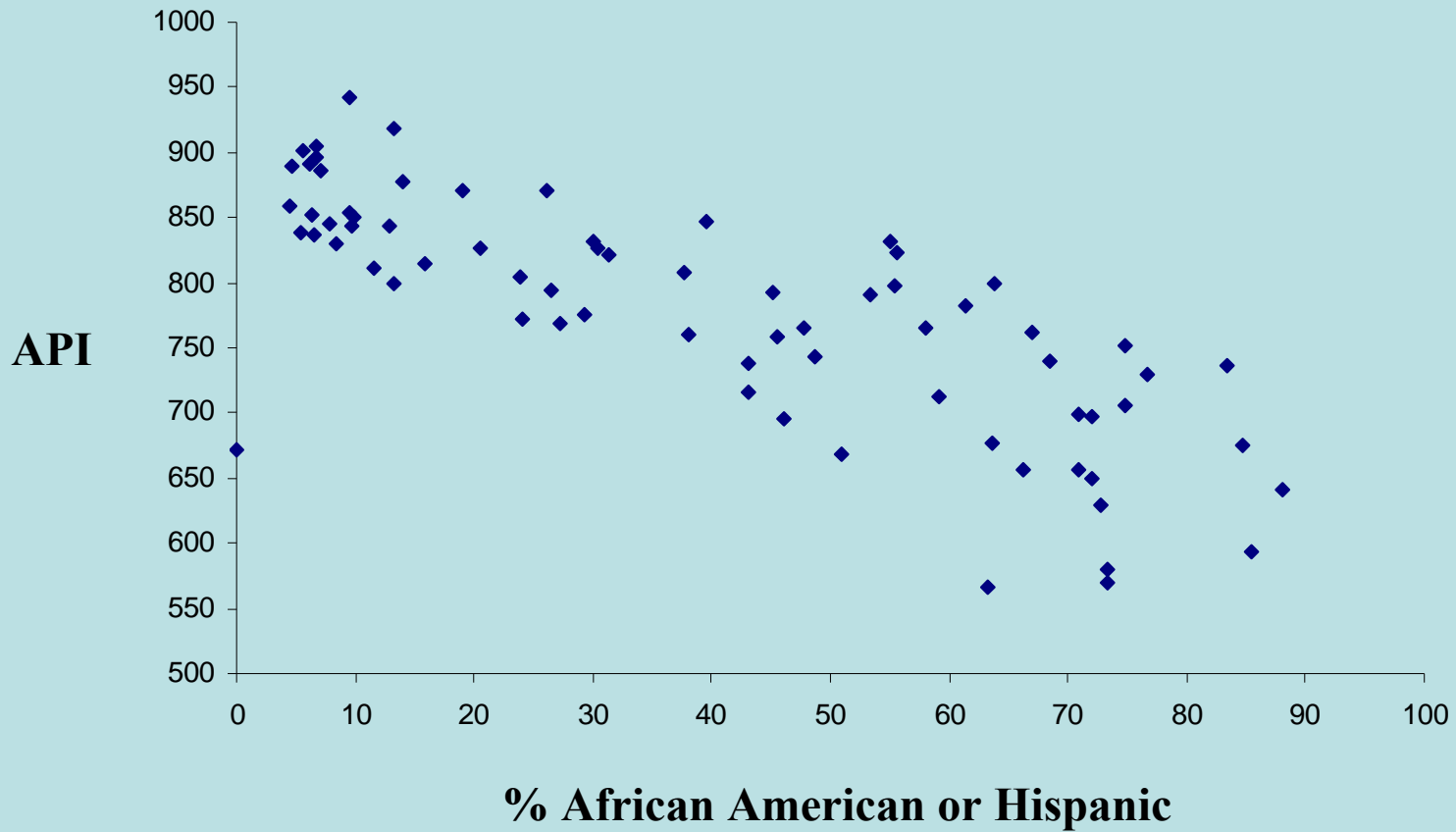


# The Achievement Gap

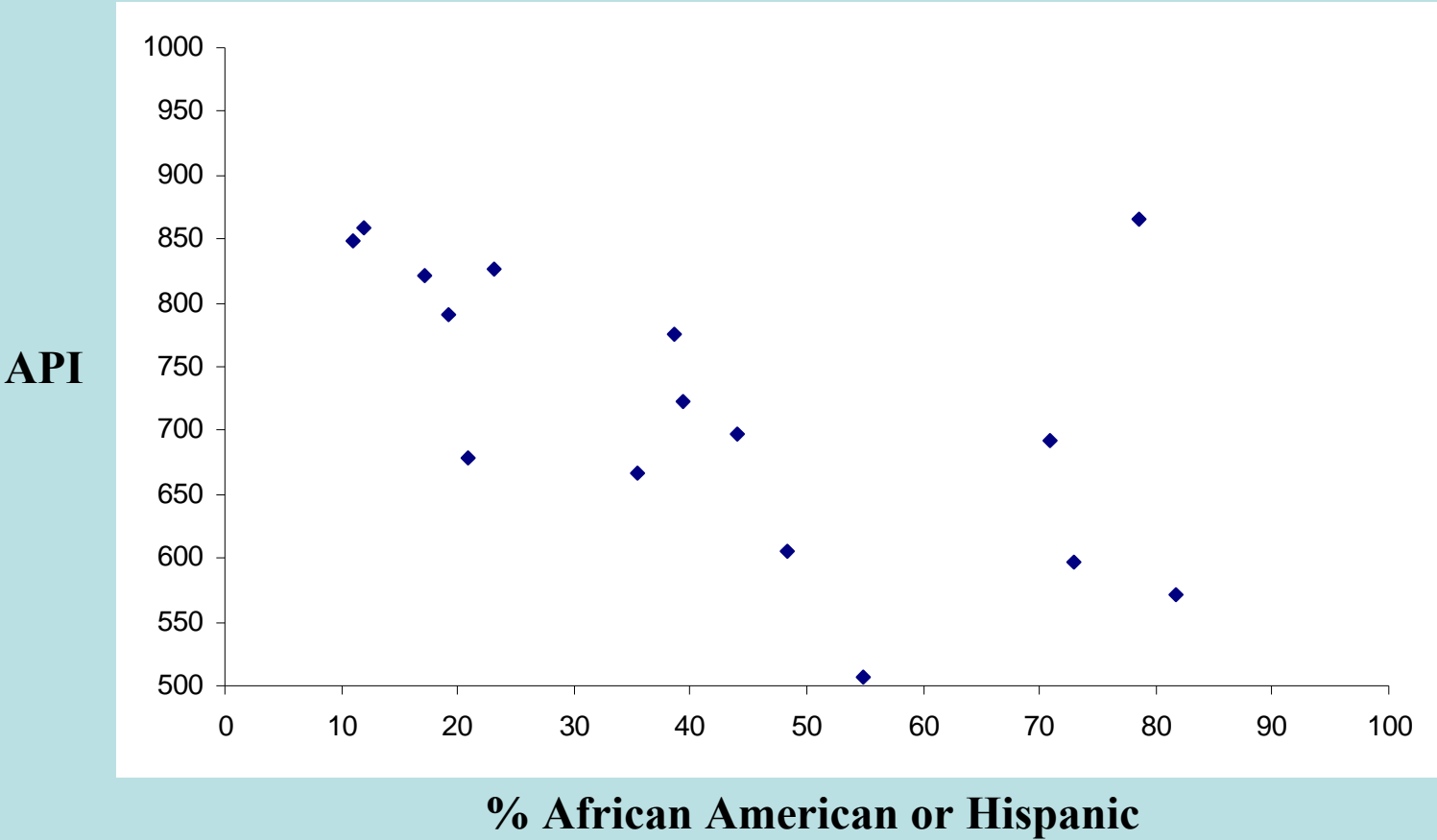
## 8th grade English



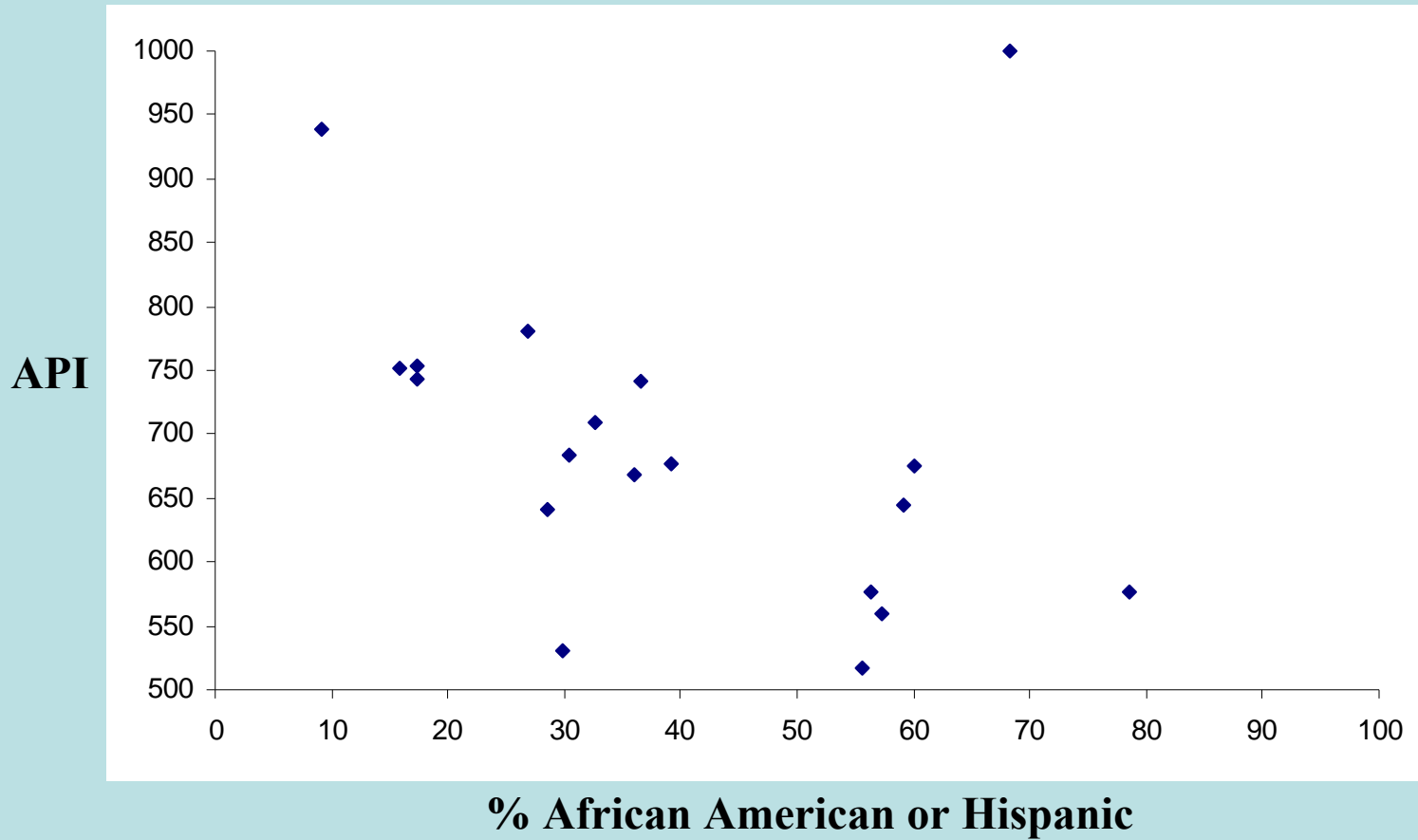
# Elementary schools (2007)



# Middle schools (2007)



# High schools (2007)



# Evidence of race-specific effects

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## **1. Amicus Brief of 553 Social Scientists in Seattle/Louisville litigation**

- » Attending desegregated schools improves educational attainment, interracial relations, and employment outcomes
- » Early studies show modest achievement gains for black students, especially when desegregation occurs in the early grades and occurs voluntarily

# Evidence of race-specific effects

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## 2. Moving to Opportunity (MTO) study

- » Housing desegregation program with experimental design administered by HUD in Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, New York from 1994 to 1998
- » Economic desegregation in housing did not result in significant student achievement gains
- » However, MTO students continued to attend racially segregated schools

# Evidence of race-specific effects

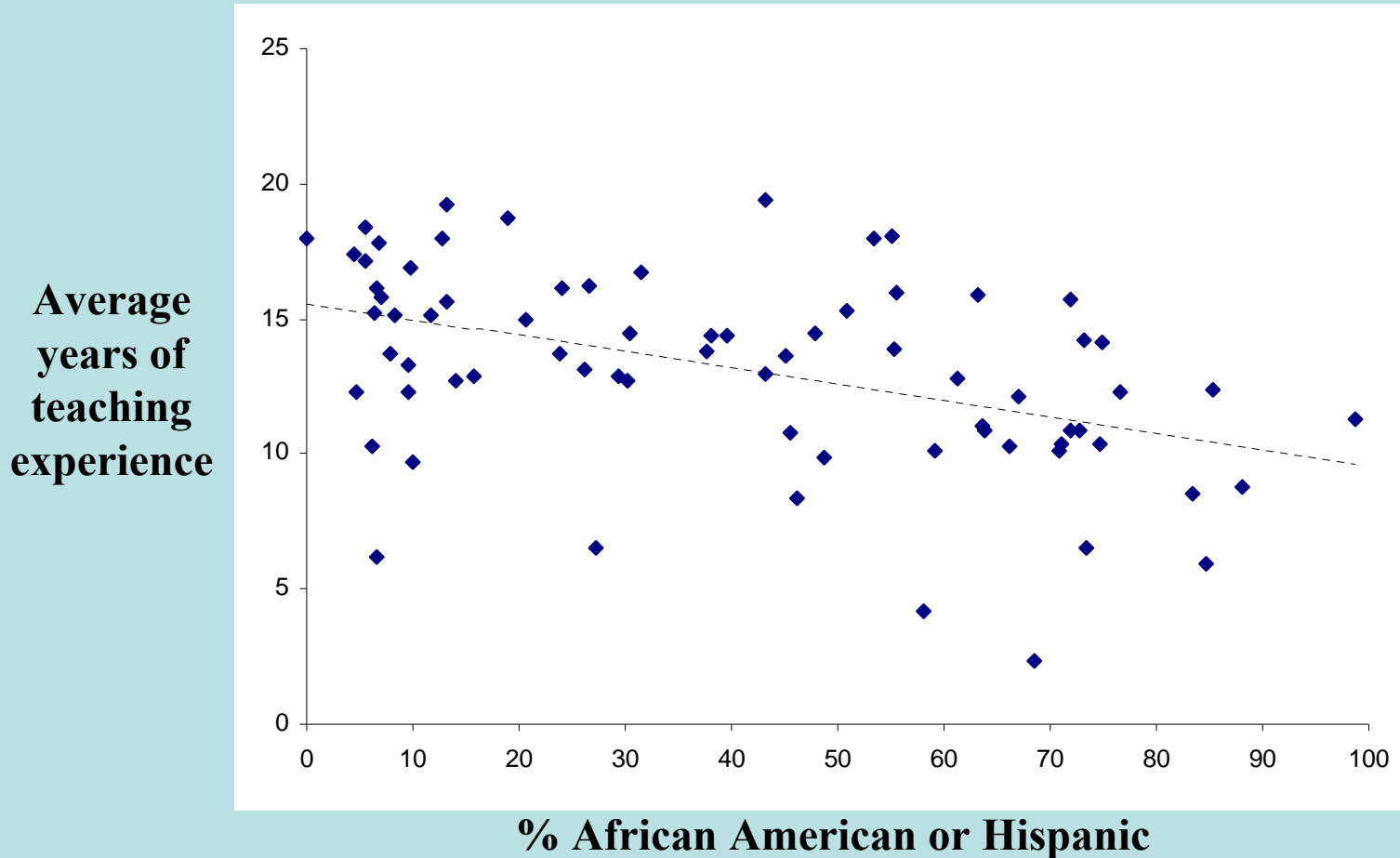
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## **3. UT Dallas Texas Schools Project study**

- » Tracked four cohorts (1994 to 1997) of students from third to eighth grade, with 200,000 students in 3,000 schools in each cohort
- » Increasing black percentage in a school negatively affects black achievement, but not white achievement
- » The negative effect is particularly strong for high-performing black students

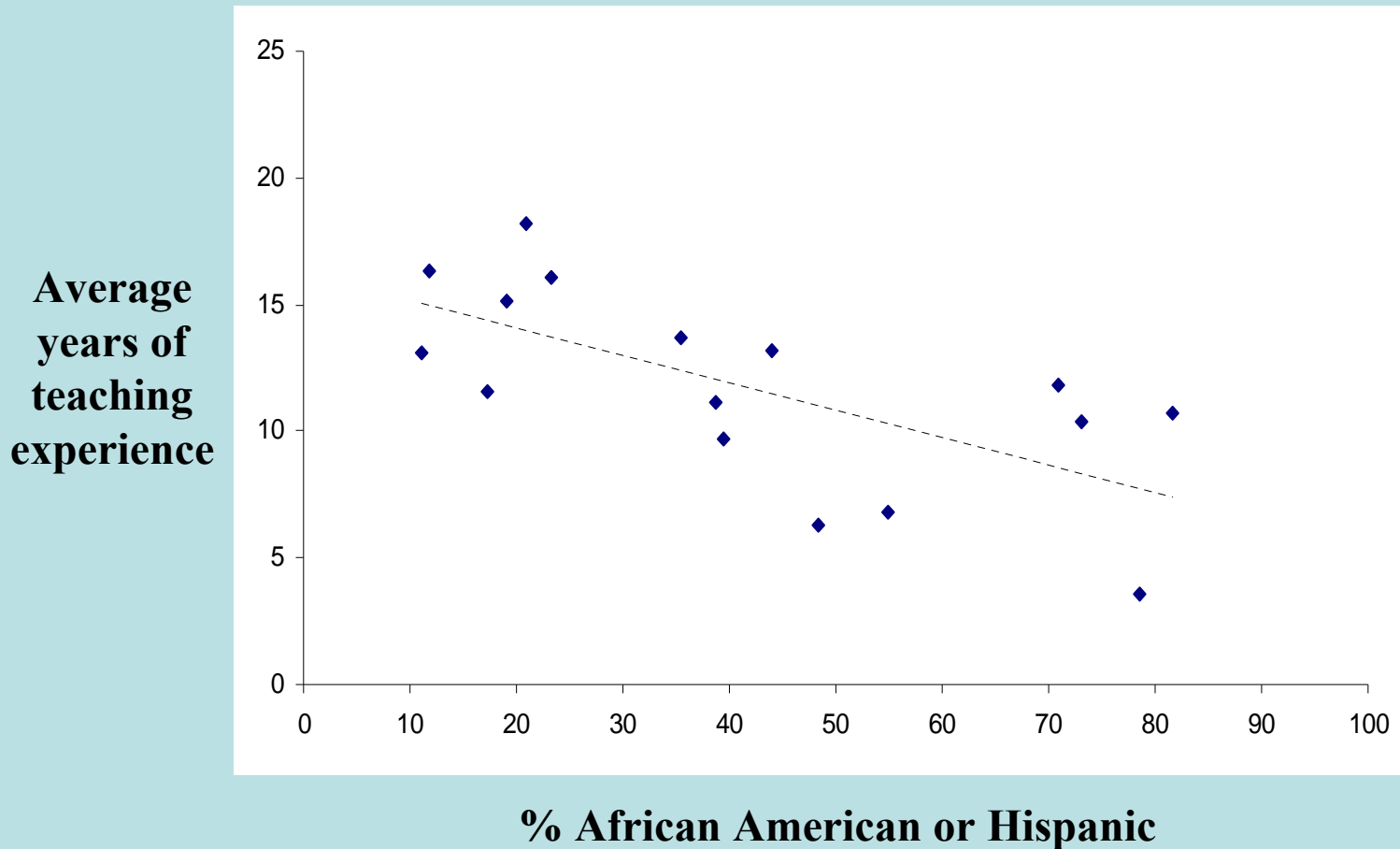
# The Opportunity Gap

## SFUSD elementary schools

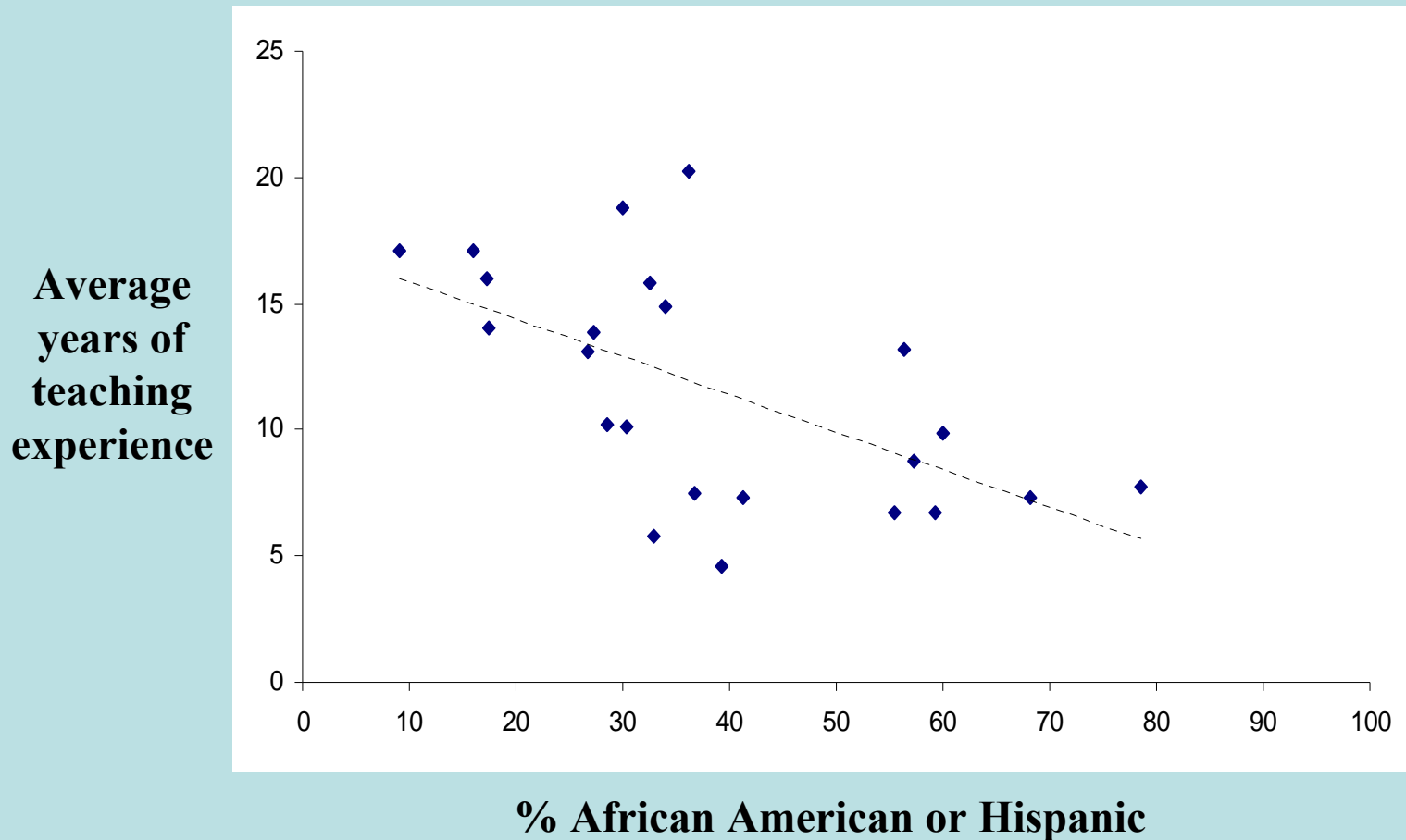


# The Opportunity Gap

## SFUSD middle schools



# The *Opportunity Gap* SFUSD high schools



# Research on teacher turnover

- Hamilton Lankford et al., “Teacher Sorting and the Plight of Urban Schools: A Descriptive Analysis,” *24 Education Evaluation & Policy Analysis* 37, 54 (2002): **“Nonwhite, poor, and low performing students, particularly those in urban areas, attend schools with less qualified teachers.”**
- Charles T. Clotfelter et al., “Who Teaches Whom? Race and the Distribution of Novice Teachers,” *24 Economics of Education Review* 377, 391 (2005): **“Within districts [in North Carolina], novice teachers are disproportionately assigned to the schools and to the classrooms within schools that disproportionately serve black students.”**

# Research on teacher turnover

- Eric A. Hanushek et al., “Why Public Schools Lose Teachers,” 39 *Journal of Human Resources* 326 (2004): **Teacher turnover in Texas is more closely associated with student characteristics—i.e., race, SES, achievement level—than with salaries and working conditions.**
- Benjamin Scafidi et al., “Race, Poverty, and Teacher Mobility,” 26 *Economics of Education Review* 145 (2007): **Teacher turnover in Georgia is highly correlated with school racial composition, independent of school poverty and students’ test scores.**

# Research on teacher turnover

- **Evidence suggests experience matters to teacher quality in the early years (up to 5 years)**
- **But retaining teachers (minimizing turnover) is important even beyond the range where experience is correlated with teacher quality because turnover ...**

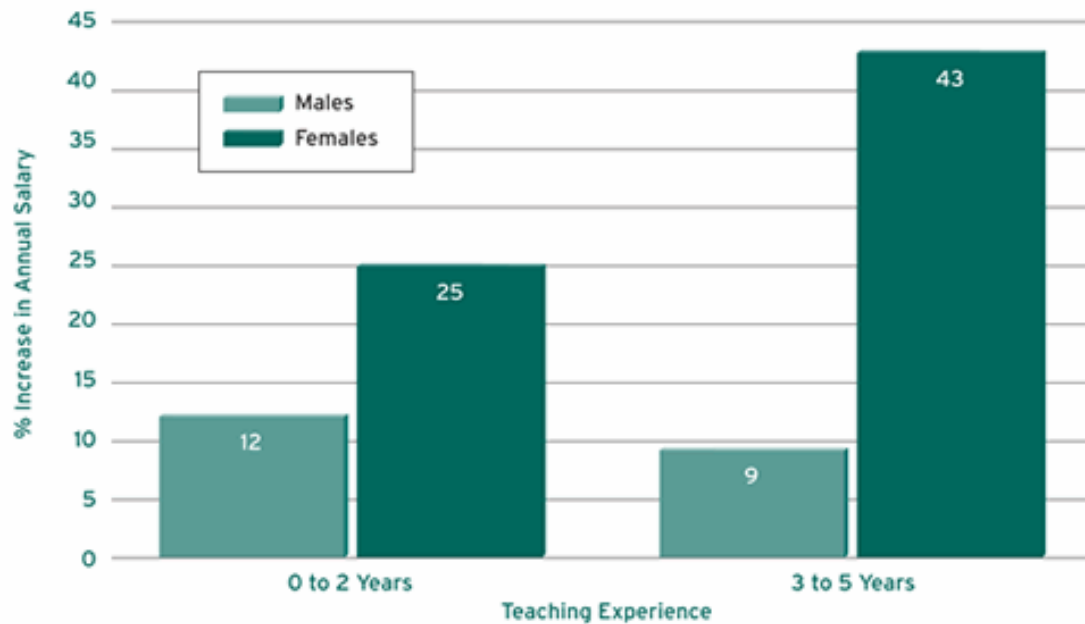
**... undermines school stability and program implementation**

**... necessitates investment in training and mentoring**

## How Much "Combat Pay" Is Necessary? (Figure 2)

Substantial boosts in salary would be needed to retain teachers in low-achieving, high-minority schools at rates similar to the retention rates experienced in suburban schools. The large bonuses required for women—from 25 to 43 percent depending on experience—reflect their unresponsiveness to salary differentials.

Increase in Salary of Urban Teachers Necessary to Equalize Turnover between Urban and Suburban Schools



Note: Estimates based on the differences in average achievement and in the shares of African-American and Hispanic students between large urban and suburban districts.

SOURCE: Authors

# Questions and Discussion

