



# Turning Around the Race to the Bottom

What ESEA Should Do To Improve Teacher Equity and Quality

Tri-Caucus Briefing

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# Reasons for the Achievement Gap

Nationally, students of color have significantly fewer school resources

- ▣ Less access to well-qualified teachers
- ▣ Less access to high-quality, relevant curriculum
- ▣ Less access to high-quality, current, and appropriate materials and equipment
- ▣ Less access to needed counselors, libraries, and other learning supports
- ▣ For ELs, less access to the kinds of teachers, teaching, materials, and assessments needed to support language learning and educational success

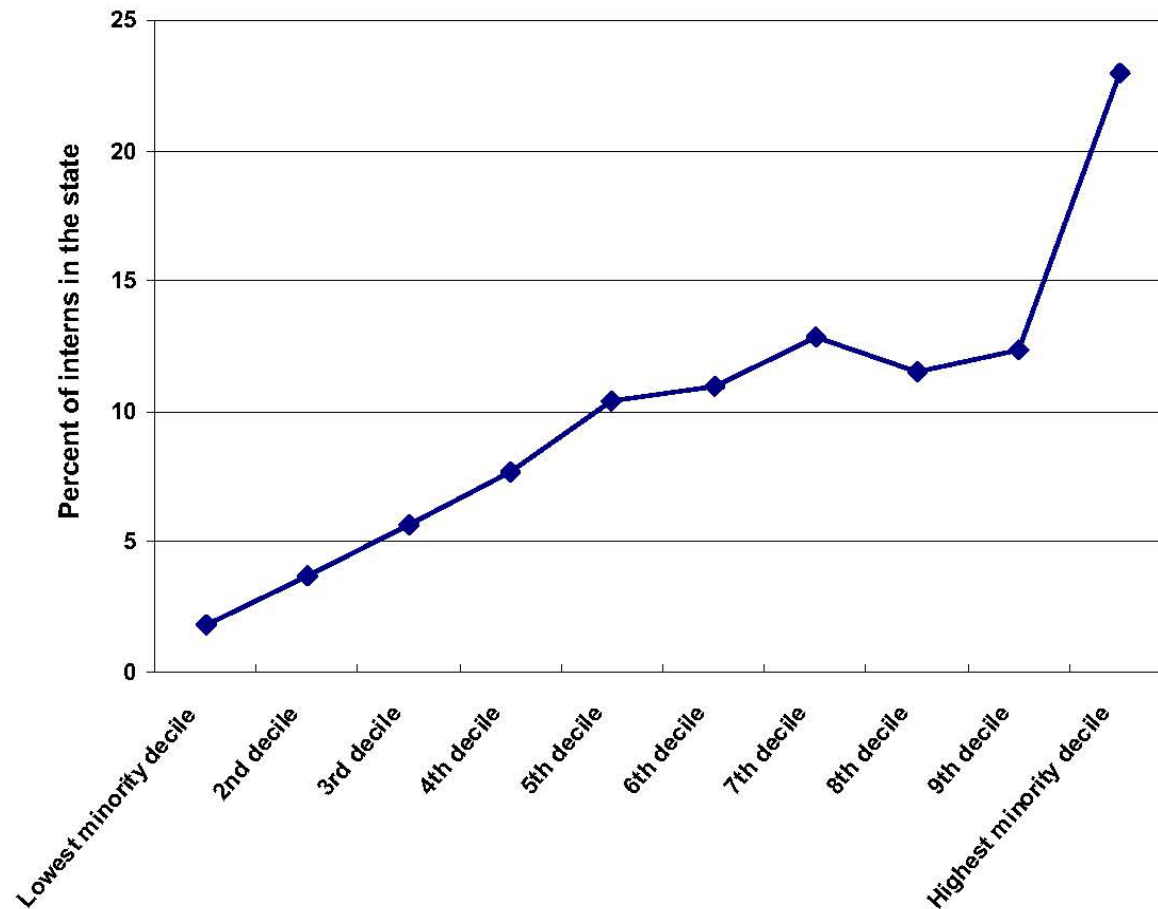
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# The Teaching Gap Creates Most of the Achievement Gap

- The least experienced and prepared teachers typically teach the least advantaged students
  - High attrition rates for less-prepared and supported teachers create a revolving door and wasted resources for professional development and reform in less advantaged schools
  - Each teacher replacement costs \$15,000 - \$20,000
  - Students taught by under-qualified teachers have significantly lower achievement in reading and mathematics.
  - These effects are magnified in poorly staffed schools.
  - Other reforms cannot work when the teaching force is underprepared and unstable.
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# Inequitable Distribution: The Case of California

**Percentage of Interns in California by Minority Decile (2006-07)**





# Effective Teaching Can Help Close Achievement Gaps

Research finds that student learning gains are related to:

- Strong academic background
- Quality preparation prior to entry
- Certification in the field taught
- Experience (> 3 years)
- National Board Certification

**In combination, these qualifications predict more of the difference in student learning gains than race & parent education combined (Clotfelter, Ladd, & Vigdor, 2008; Boyd et al., 2007).**



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## Delegate Ana Sol Gutierrez

Maryland House of Delegates

Board Member, National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials

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# Latinos: The Future of Our Country

- Latinos have accounted for more than half (56%) of the nation's population growth during the last decade (NALEO, 2011)
- Latinos now are almost one in ten residents in Maryland (100% increase from 2000 Census)
- Largest, fastest growing, and youngest segment of our population
- One in four school-age children are Latino (2010 Census)
- Half of students in California and Texas are Latinos



# Latinos: Educational Challenges

- Only half of Latino students currently complete high school (Gandara, 2009)
- Latino educational attainment is currently lower than that of other groups (only 19 percent of Latino adults have earned an associate or higher degree) (Excelencia, 2010)
- Not all Latino students are English Language Learners, but ELLs do represent a significant portion of US student population (1 in 10)
- ELLs are a linguistically heterogeneous group, requiring agile, targeted solutions. Approximately 75% of ELLs speak Spanish at home, although ELL students speak more than 150 different languages.

# ESEA & Support for State Education Efforts: Teachers Are Essential



- **Require high-quality teacher preparation that develops content, pedagogical, linguistic and cultural expertise to support diverse learners and their families. ESEA must counter state policies like AZ where ELLs are isolated in segregated English-only instruction for 4 hours a day, undermining not only their English development, but all subject learning (and keeping them off track from graduating).**
- **Support integrated, interdisciplinary learning environments where teachers are skilled in differentiating instruction for heterogeneous groups. Prepare teachers who are skilled in integrating language instruction into all subject matter.**

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# Developing a New ESEA

- Invest in in-service learning opportunities to enable teachers to assess and develop individual student learning, with professional skills that can go beyond current initiatives demanding formulaic curricula and constant testing.
  - Invite direct recommendations from academia and the involvement of state legislators with knowledge of education policy AND budgets.
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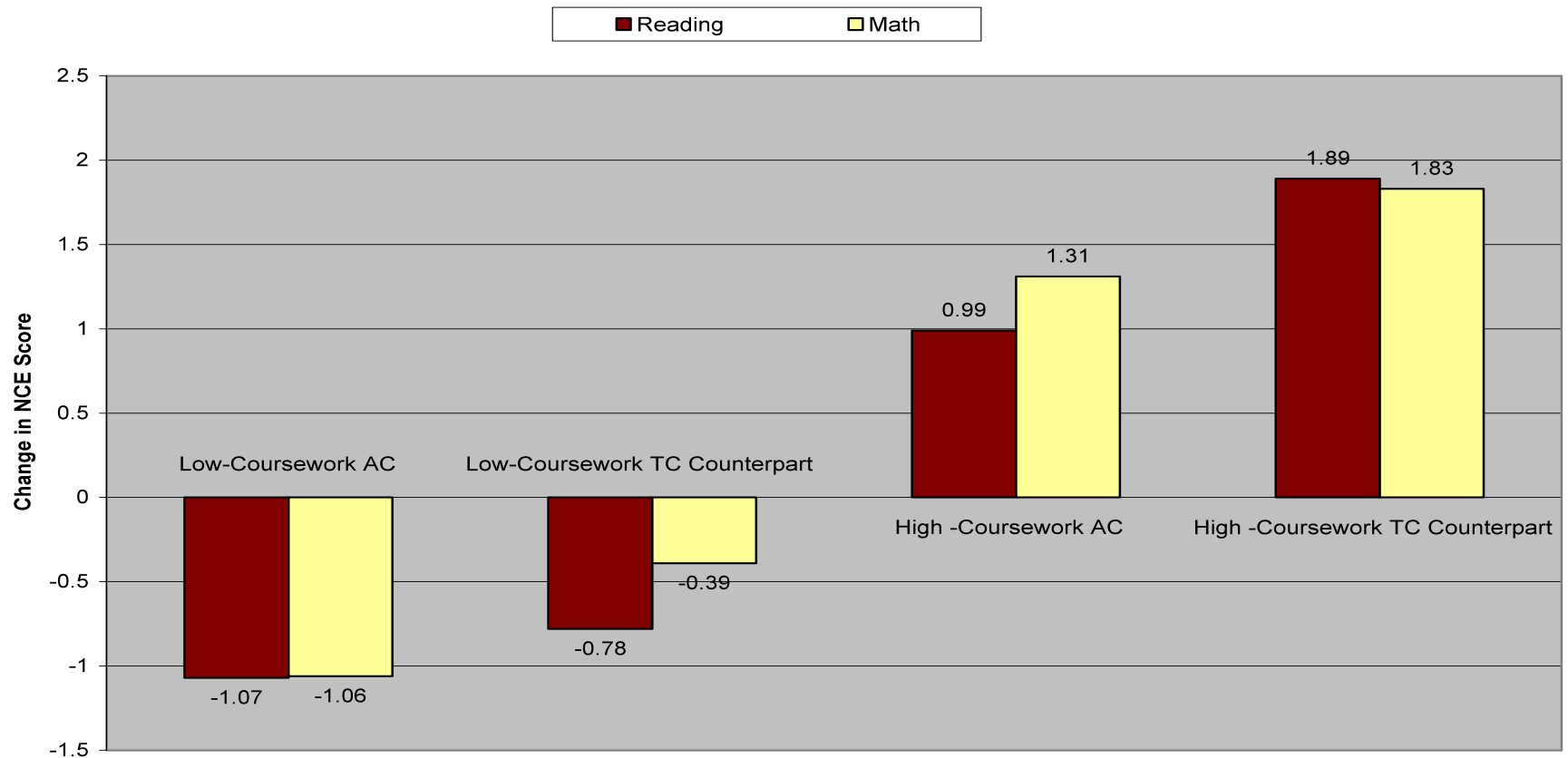
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# Challenging the Myths

- ❑ Teacher qualifications don't matter
  - ❑ Investments in professional learning don't work and are not needed
  - ❑ Equal outcomes can be achieved by testing without investing
  - ❑ We can improve student achievement by eliminating expectations and support for teacher training, reducing standards for entry, and firing those who later fail to improve student achievement
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# Underprepared Teachers Decrease Student Achievement

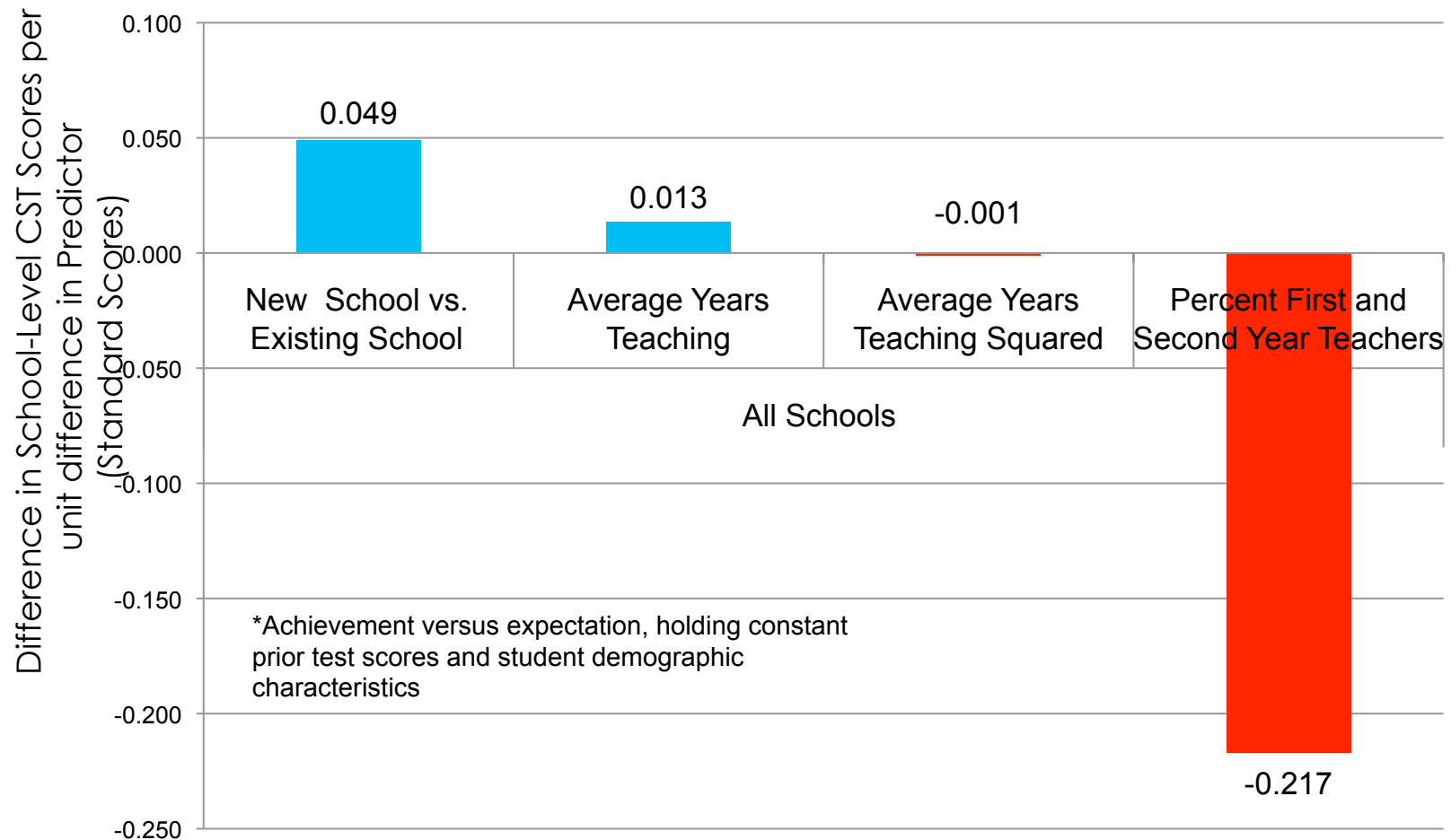
Fall-to-Spring Test Score Gains / Losses of Students Taught by Alternative Route and Traditional Route Teachers



Based on actual (unadjusted) fall and spring scores



# Staffing Strongly Influences School Achievement Gains



# Professional Learning Opportunities in High-Achieving Nations Abroad

## High-achieving nations:

- Ensure high-quality initial preparation that includes clinical training in model schools (fully subsidized and salaried)
- Offer competitive and equitable salaries
- Provide beginners with intensive mentoring
- Offer extensive, sustained learning opportunities embedded in practice:
  - Teachers have 15-25 hours a week for collaboration plus 100 hours a year for professional learning
  - Most engage regularly in Shared Planning, Lesson Study, Action Research, and Peer Observation and Coaching

# What We Know

- Improving hiring practices, salaries, and working conditions can eliminate shortages and improve outcomes (NY, San Diego, CT)
- High-quality preparation produces stronger outcomes for low-income students, English learners, and students with disabilities
- Investments in preparation and mentoring can increase supply and diversity of teachers, stem attrition, save money, and boost achievement
- Features of high-quality preparation and professional development have been identified and can be leveraged



## If we really wanted to close the achievement gap, we would:

- Maintain requirements for teachers to be qualified – fully prepared and certified – and insist on comparability of teaching and other resources
- Support greater effectiveness by validly *assessing* and *developing* teachers' abilities to teach diverse learners well through:
  - teacher performance assessments for new teachers
  - multi-faceted evaluations of veteran teachers' practice and contributions to student learning and the school as a whole

## And we would...



- Invest in more widely available service scholarships
- Invest in programs that prepare students to succeed and stay in high-need communities
  - Teacher Residencies and Grow Your Own Programs
  - Professional Partner School Models
  - Training programs in Minority-Serving Institutions
- Expand access to proven models of pre- and in-service training for teaching English learners, students with disabilities, and culturally diverse students

# And finally we would:

Focus school improvement and teacher incentive initiatives on factors that support effectiveness and teacher retention:

- Effective school leadership
- Productive teaching conditions
- Induction and Mentoring
- Continuous, high quality learning  
Coaching  
Professional Learning Communities
- Time for collaboration





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