

COURAGEOUS LEADERSHIP FOR DISTRICT-WIDE SUCCESS

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Agenda

1. Congratulations!

2. Framing the
Challenge Ahead

3. Building Capacity
to Meet the
Challenges



Rising Job Frustrations

A new national survey finds that three out of four K-12 public school principals, regardless of the types of schools they work in, believe the job has become
become
“too complex,”

1/3 say they are likely to go into a different occupation within next five years.

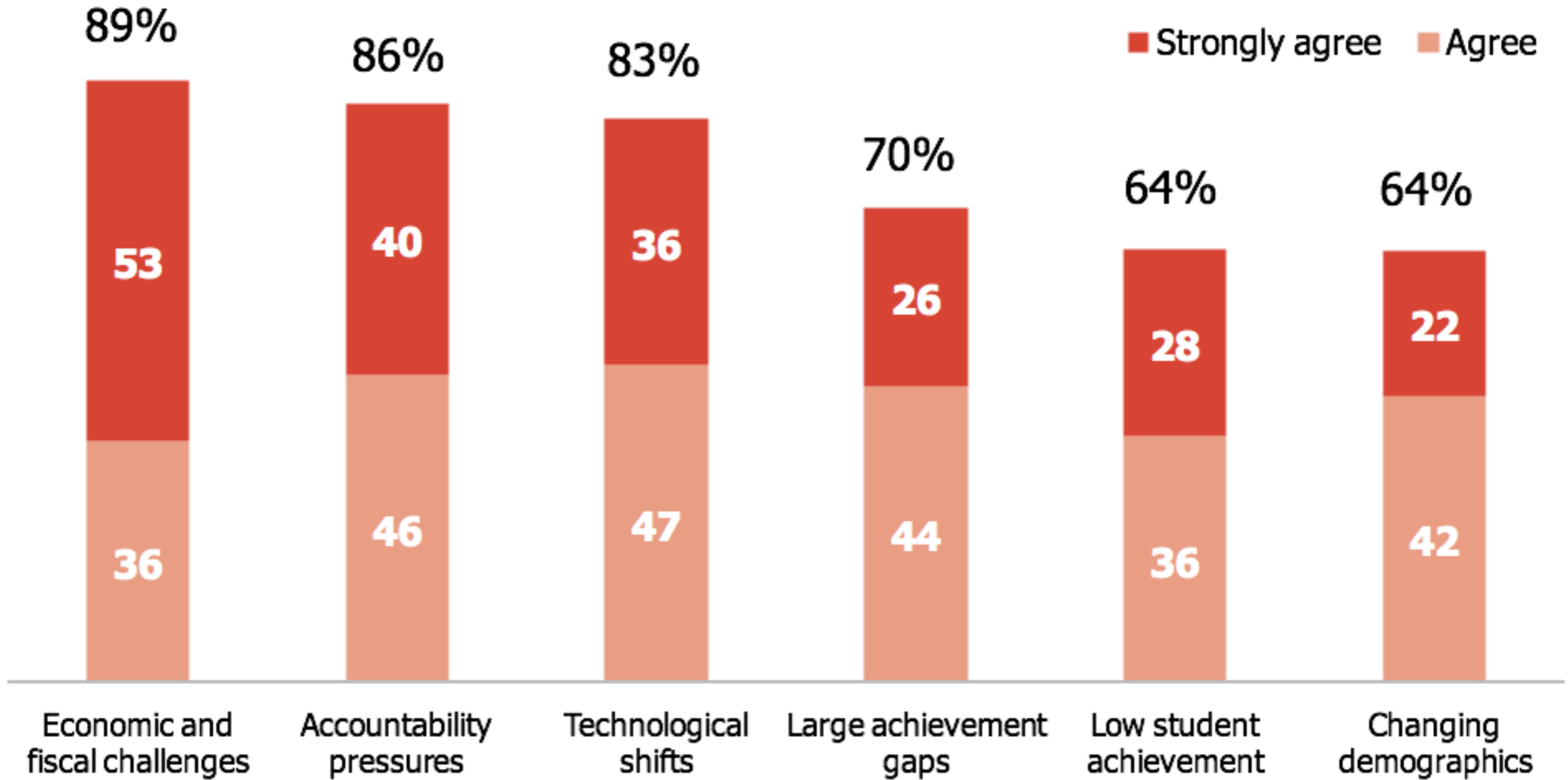
Rising Job Frustrations

83% percent of school leaders rate “addressing individual student needs” as “challenging” or “very challenging.”

78%rate managing the budget and resources as challenging or very challenging

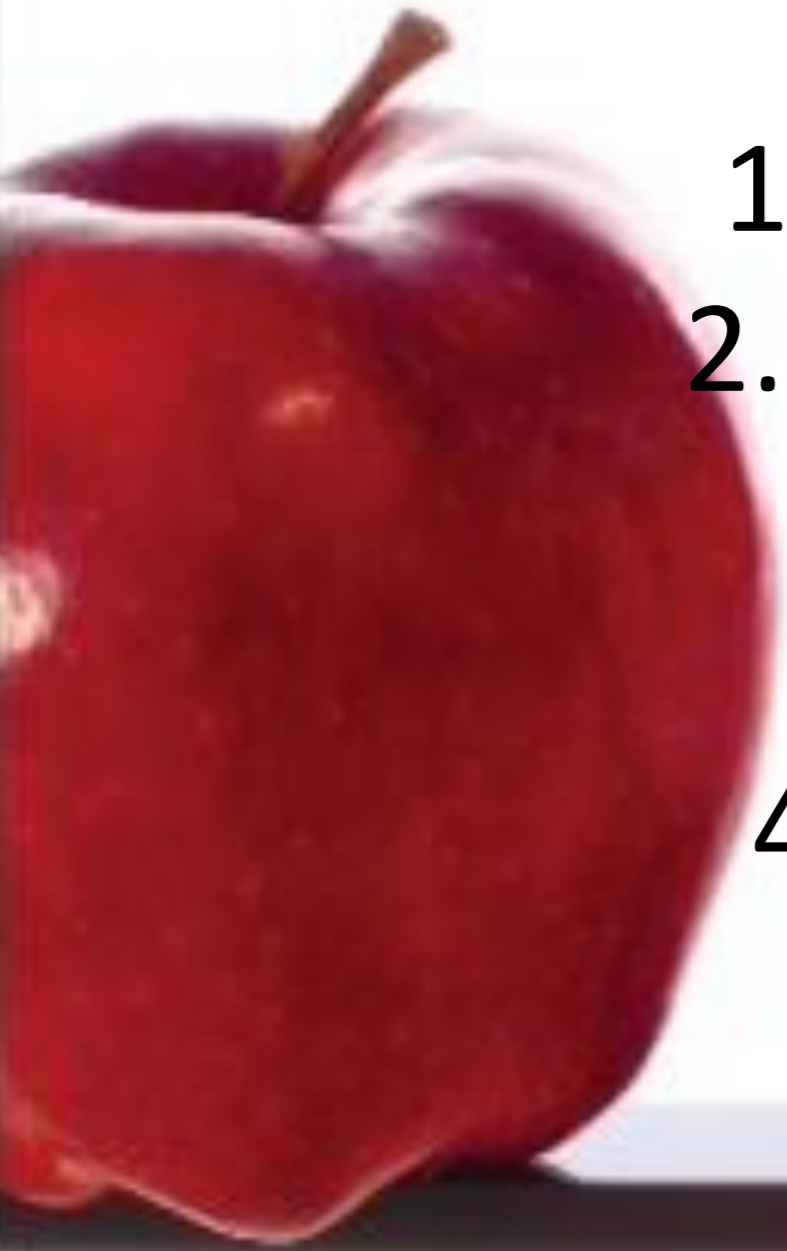
53% Evaluating Teacher Effectiveness

EdWeek Superintendent Survey



What is Creating These Challenges?

1. Disparity of Wealth
2. Expanding Underclass
3. Growing Student Diversity
4. Increasing Disorder



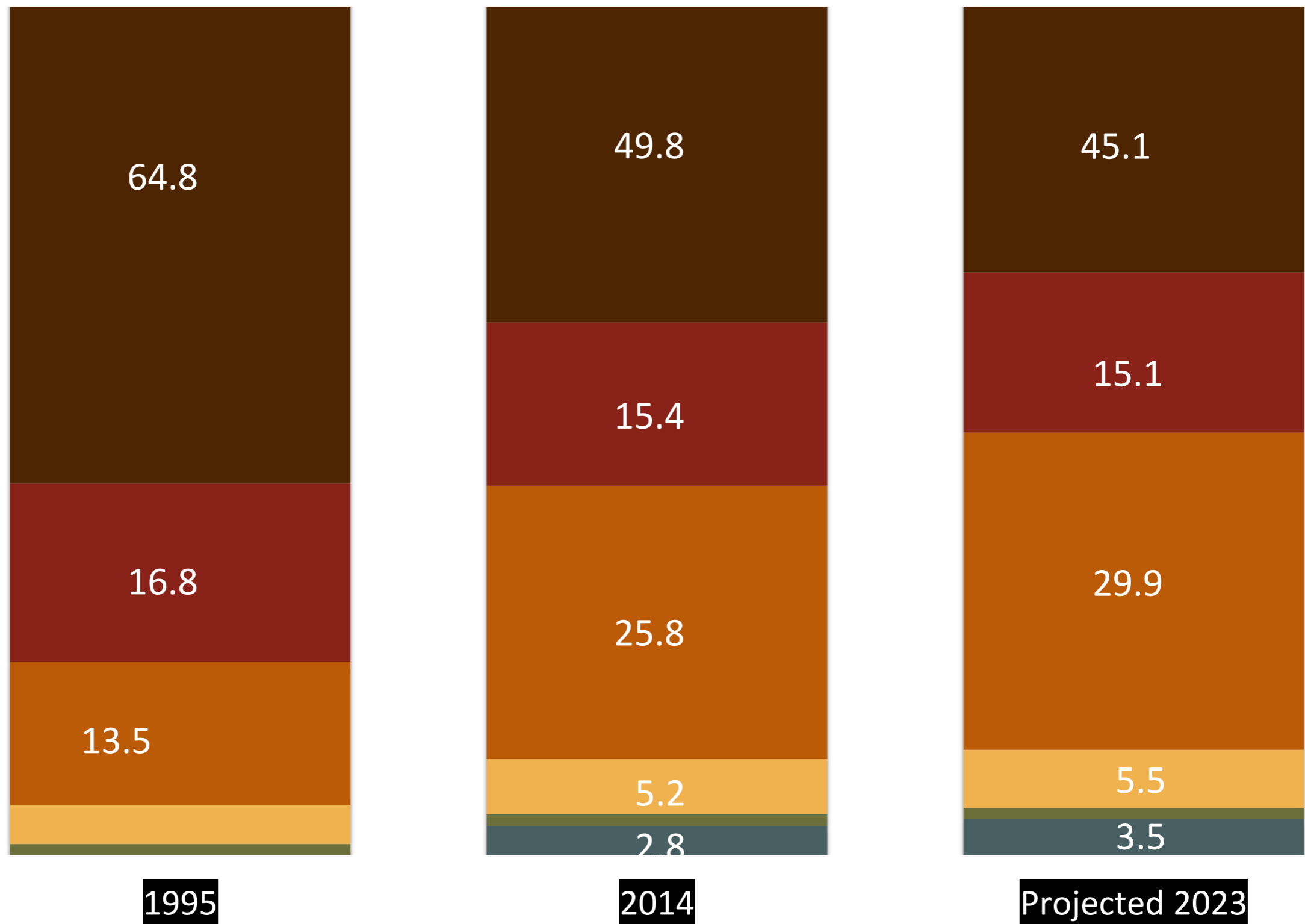
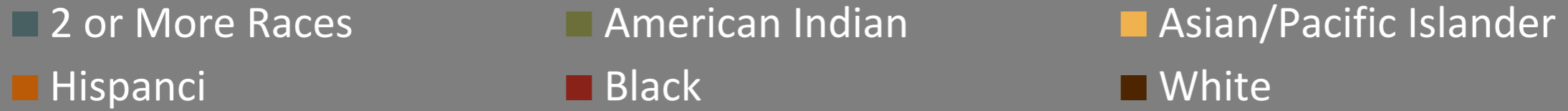
Top 1% has more of US wealth than bottom 95%



1,258,182



The Majority of Students in U.S. Public Schools are Now “Minority”



Could We Educate all These Children?

Places with bigger elderly populations now spend less on public education, especially when youth are of different races.

--James Poterba, MIT



We Need a New Paradigm...

... And Courageous
Leadership to Advance
“the Movement”



5 Principles of Courageous Leadership





II. The Equity Challenge:

- Excellence and Equity are perceived as **incompatible goals**
- Too many schools become accustomed to the **predictability** of achievement patterns
- Addressing the needs of poor and immigrant children is difficult because it requires **adaptive leadership**
- Fiscal constraints: Doing more with less
- Political pressure: the public is impatient, politicians set unrealistic goals
- **Accountability is too narrowly defined** - based largely on test scores

Pervasive inequality makes the pursuit of equity difficult

- Equity Defined - Equality of opportunity with focus on outcomes and results;
 - Attention to addressing the needs of *all* students
 - Recognition that not all students are the same
 - Those with less will need more (e.g. time, attention and support)

Staying focused on outcomes – academic and developmental is key to progress

Balancing Technical and Adaptive Work

Leadership on the Line, R. Heifitz

Technical work - A focus on managing the operations of the system, insuring that procedures are working and that employees are in compliance with policy.

Adaptive work - A focus on the dynamic and complex nature of the work, its substance, meaning and purpose. Work guided by a long term vision, with medium and short term goals. An awareness that we are trying to achieve our goals in a constantly changing environment

The Five Essential Ingredients for School Improvement

Organizing Schools for Improvement, 2010 – Bryke, et.al

A coherent instructional guidance system

Ongoing development of the professional capacity of staff

Strong parent-community-school ties

A student-centered learning climate

Shared Leadership to drive change

Framework for Pursuing Excellence Through Equity

Child Development – requires a holistic approach to education and differentiation

Neuroscience – elasticity of brain requires personalized approaches to learning

Understanding and responding to the way students are affected by environmental context

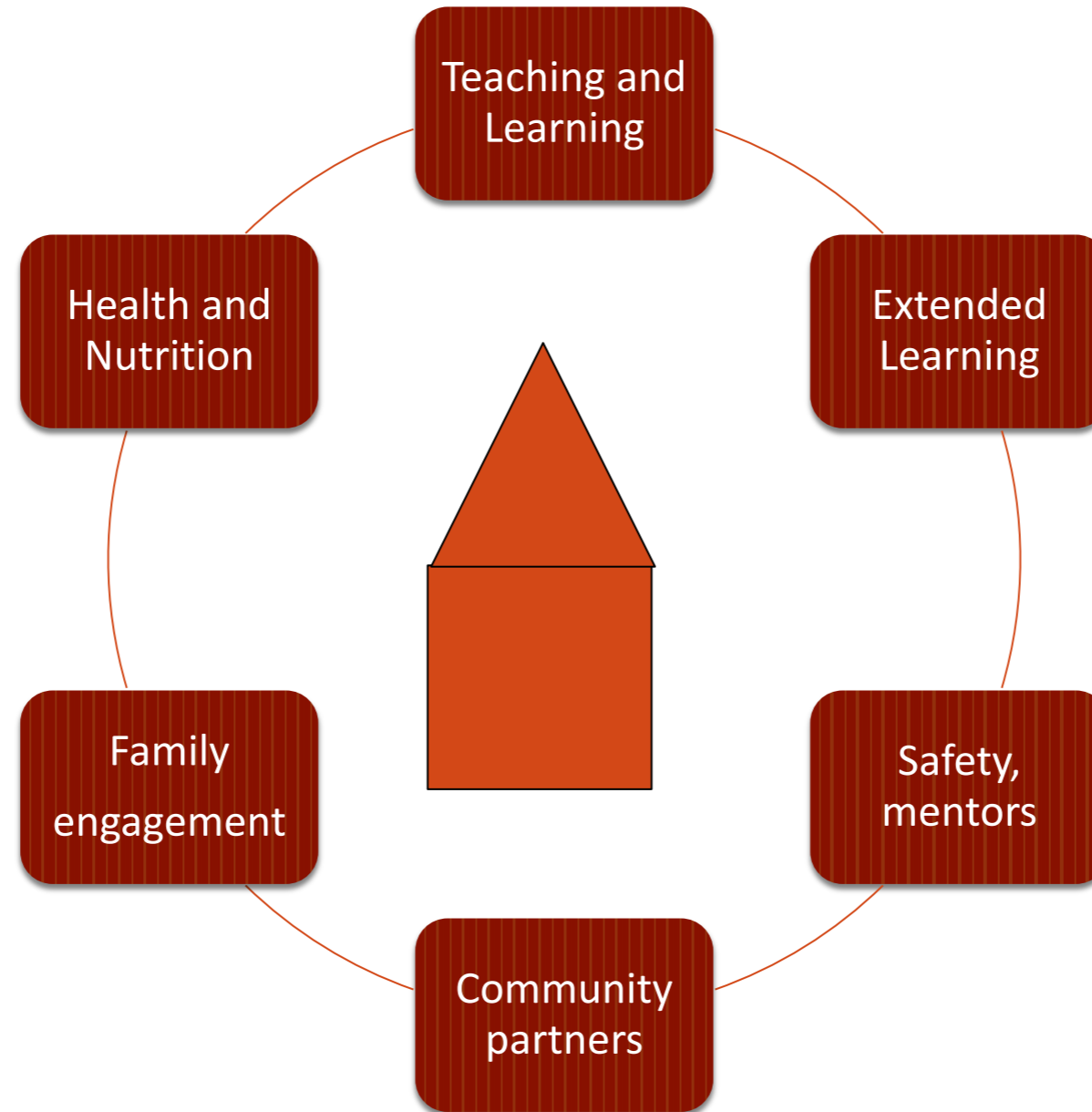
Family

Peers

Community

Society

Building School Capacity: A holistic vision



Schools are Influenced by Their Environment

**Safety, health, culture, political economy of local
community have an impact on schools**

**Broader demographic and economic trends also influence
schools – immigration, globalization**

**Schools must devise strategies to mitigate harmful effects
of the environment and draw upon community resources
for support**

Key Adaptive Questions:

What does it take to educate children in our schools?

The skills of the staff and resources available to the school must match the needs of students.

What are their lives like outside of school? What challenges do they and their parents face?

What are their unmet needs that may impact learning?

What are their dreams and aspirations?

We must know our students and see beyond their limitations

How do they learn at home? What motivates and interests them? How can we generate excitement about learning?

Engagement is multidimensional and a pre-requisite for learning

The Work:

- **Creating a culture** in which respect for teaching and learning are at the center of what we do
 - Rituals, shared practices and common expectations – how things are done
- Generating and sustaining **buy-in** among staff around shared goals and strategies
 - Clear and measurable
 - Time to deliberate, collaborate and process
- **Building community** with staff, students and parents
- Developing the **intrinsic motivation** of students to learn; it's easier to teach kids that are invested in learning

III. Building Partnerships with Parents Based on Shared Interests

Key Ingredients

Staff is trained in how to communicate respectfully and effectively with parents across race/class differences

A variety of events and activities are organized throughout the year for parental engagement and to build trust

Parents receive clear and consistent feedback on student performance and guidance on what they can do to support their children

Keep in mind: The most important form of parental involvement occurs at home

Why Working with Parents Can Be a Challenge

Differences related to race, class and culture often make communication difficult

Lack of trust – Do parents believe that the school is looking out for the interests of their children?

Lack of respect - Are parents treated with respect?

Lack of cultural competence - Does the staff have the ability to interact comfortably across differences?

Projection - Parents who have had bad experiences in school often have negative attitudes toward school

Deference – Immigrants and some low-income parents may be more likely to defer to school authority, less likely to understand why they should be involved

Basic Requirements for Improving Relationships Between Parents and Schools

Must be based on

- ...a recognition of mutual need, responsibility and respect
- ...a recognition that all parents can help their children
- ...empathy for the situation confronting parents and families

Are We Ready for Parental Involvement?

Middle class parents often have strong sense of entitlement and awareness of their rights.

Are you willing to solicit ideas from parents to make your schools more responsive to their needs?

Tolerance for tension and some degree of conflict is necessary

Possible Areas for Cooperation Between Parents and Schools

- ▶ Parent-School Contracts - Formal agreements laying out expectations for all parties, can include children
- ▶ Site-based leadership - Comer model, Chicago site councils, provide parents with decision making roles at schools
 - Mutual accountability
- ▶ Academic enrichment - math and literacy nights, diagnostic testing
- ▶ Parent education - discipline, raising teenagers, talking to kids about sex, helping kids get ready for college

IV. Building partnerships with community to address student needs

Universities – curriculum development, tutors, mentors, professional development for teachers

Hospitals and Clinics: wellness, immunizations, nutrition, counseling

Employers: internships, career academies, management support

Community-based Organizations and Churches:

Outreach to parents, social services, mentoring and tutoring


Create opportunities for youth leadership and civic engagement

Key Conditions for Effective Partnerships

Clear agreements on front end to prevent turf wars

Clear, measurable goals to evaluate effectiveness

Regular communication, mutual respect

A background image featuring a large, soft-focus red apple on the left and a large, soft-focus orange on the right. The text is overlaid on this background.

**Poverty is not a learning
disability, but...**

**WHEN POVERTY IS
IGNORED IT CAN
BE DISABLING**