America: Two Powerful Stories
1. **Land of Opportunity:**

Work hard, and you can become anything you want to be.
2. **Generational Advancement:**

Through hard work, each generation of parents can assure a better life — and better education — for their children.
These stories animated hopes and dreams of people here at home

And drew countless immigrants to our shores
Yes, America was often intolerant... 

And they knew the “Dream” was a work in progress.
We were:

- The first to provide universal high school;
- The first to build public universities;
- The first to build community colleges;
- The first to broaden access to college, through GI Bill, Pell Grants, ...
Percent of U.S. adults with a high school diploma

- 1920: 21%
- 1940: 38%
- 1960: 61%
- 1980: 85%
- 2000: 88%
- 2012: 90%
Percent of U.S. adults with a B.A. or more

2012

33%
Progress was painfully slow, especially for people of color. But year by year, decade by decade...
Percent of U.S. adults with a high school diploma, by race

2012

White: 95%
Black: 89%
Latino: 75%
Percent of U.S. adults with a B.A. or more, by race

2012

White: 40%
Black: 23%
Latino: 15%
Then, beginning in the eighties, growing economic inequality started eating away at our progress.
In recent years, most income gains have gone to those at the top of the ladder, while those at the bottom have fallen backwards.

Instead of being the most equal, the U.S. has the third highest income inequality among OECD nations.

Note: Gini coefficient ranges from 0 to 1, where 0 indicates total income equality and 1 indicates total income inequality.

Not just big gaps in income (and household wealth), but increasing barriers to social mobility as well.
U.S. intergenerational mobility was improving until 1980, but barriers have gotten higher since.

The falling elasticity meant increased economic mobility until 1980. Since then, the elasticity has risen, and mobility has slowed.

The US now has one of lowest rates of intergenerational mobility

Cross-country examples of the link between father and son wages

At macro level, better and more equal education is not the only answer.

But at the individual level, it really is.
What schools and colleges do, in other words, is hugely important to our economy, our democracy, and our society.
So, how are we doing?
First, some good news.

After more than a decade of fairly flat achievement and stagnant or growing gaps in K-12, we appear to be turning the corner with our elementary students.
Since 1999, large gains for all groups of students, especially students of color

9 Year Olds – NAEP Reading

*Denotes previous assessment format

Since 1999, performance rising for all groups of students

9 Year Olds – NAEP Math

*Denotes previous assessment format

Looked at differently, and on the other NAEP exam…
1996 NAEP Grade 4 Math

By Race/Ethnicity – National Public

Percentage of Students

- African American
  - Proficient/Advanced: 3%
  - Basic: 24%
  - Below Basic: 73%

- Latino
  - Proficient/Advanced: 7%
  - Basic: 32%
  - Below Basic: 61%

- White
  - Proficient/Advanced: 26%
  - Basic: 49%
  - Below Basic: 26%

Source:
2013 NAEP Grade 4 Math

By Race/Ethnicity – National Public

Percentage of Students

- **African American**
  - Proficient/Advanced: 18%
  - Basic: 48%
  - Below Basic: 34%

- **Latino**
  - Proficient/Advanced: 26%
  - Basic: 47%
  - Below Basic: 27%

- **White**
  - Proficient/Advanced: 54%
  - Basic: 37%
  - Below Basic: 9%

Middle grades are up, too.
Record performance for all

13 Year Olds – NAEP Reading

*Denotes previous assessment format

Performance for all groups has risen

13 Year Olds – NAEP Math

Average Scale Score

- African American
- Latino
- White


*Denotes previous assessment format
Bottom Line:

When we really focus on something, we make progress!
Clearly, much more remains to be done in elementary and middle school. Too many youngsters still enter high school way behind.
But at least we have some traction on elementary and middle school problems.

The same is NOT true of our high schools.
Achievement is flat in reading for students overall.
Math achievement for students overall is flat over time.

17-Year-Olds Overall - NAEP

* Denotes previous assessment format

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, NAEP 2008 Trends in Academic Progress
And despite earlier improvements, gaps between groups haven’t narrowed much since the late 80s and early 90s.
Reading: Not much gap narrowing since 1988.

17 Year Olds – NAEP Reading

*Denotes previous assessment format

Math: Not much gap closing since 1990.

17 Year Olds – NAEP Math

*Denotes previous assessment format


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Moreover, no matter how you cut the data, our students aren’t doing well compared with their peers in other countries.
Of 34 OECD Countries, U.S.A. Ranks 17th in Reading

2012 PISA - Reading

Of 34 OECD Countries, U.S.A. Ranks 17th in Reading

Higher than U.S. average  Not measurably different from U.S. average  Lower than U.S. average

Of 34 OECD Countries, U.S.A. Ranks 20th in Science

2012 PISA - Science

Of 34 OECD Countries, U.S.A. Ranks 20th in Science

Average scale score

Japan       Finland   Estonia   Korea      Poland     Canada    Germany    Ireland    Australia  New Zealand  Switzerland  Slovenia   United Kingdom Czech Republic Austria     Belgium     France     Denmark    United States Spain       Norway     Hungary    Italy       Luxembourg Portugal    Sweden     Iceland    Slovak Republic Israel     Greece     Turkey     Chile      Mexico

Higher than U.S. average □ Not measurably different from U.S. average □ Lower than U.S. average

Of 34 OECD Countries, U.S.A. Ranks 27th in Math Literacy

2012 PISA - Math

- Higher than U.S. average
- Not measurably different from U.S. average
- Lower than U.S. average

Only place we rank high?

Inequality.
Among OECD Countries, U.S.A. has the 4th Largest Gap Between High-SES and Low-SES Students

2006 PISA - Science

Source: PISA 2006 Results, OECD, table 4.8b
Among OECD Countries, U.S.A. has the 5th Largest Gap Between High-SES and Low-SES Students

2009 PISA – Reading

Source: PISA 2009 Results, OECD, Table II.3.1
Gaps in achievement begin before children arrive at the schoolhouse door.

But, rather than organizing our educational system to ameliorate this problem, we organize it to exacerbate the problem.
How?

By giving students who arrive with less, less in school, too.
We spend less on their education…
# National Inequities in State and Local Revenue Per Student

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Gap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Poverty vs. Low Poverty Districts</td>
<td>-$1200 per student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Minority vs. Low Minority Districts</td>
<td>-$2,000 per student</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Education Trust analyses based on U.S. Dept of Education and U.S. Census Bureau data for 2010-12
We expect less of them...
Students in poor schools receive As for work that would earn Cs in affluent schools.

We teach them less...
Even African-American students with high math performance in fifth grade are unlikely to be placed in algebra in eighth grade.

Percentage of students who were in the top two quintiles of math performance in fifth grade and in algebra in eighth grade:

- African American: 35%
- Latino: 68%
- White: 63%
- Asian: 94%

Latino and African American students less likely to attend high schools that offer Algebra II.

Source: U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights, Civil Rights Data Collection, March 2012
And we assign them disproportionately to our least experienced, least well educated, and least effective teachers...
Students at high-minority schools more likely to be taught by novice* teachers.

Note: High minority school: 75% or more of the students are Black, Hispanic, American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian or Pacific Islander. Low-minority school: 10% or fewer of the students are non-White students. Novice teachers are those with three years or fewer experience.

Math classes at high-poverty, high-minority secondary schools are more likely to be taught by out-of-field* teachers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poverty</th>
<th>Minority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: High-poverty school: 55 percent or more of the students are eligible for free/reduced-price lunch. Low-poverty school: 15 percent or fewer of the students are eligible for free/reduced-price lunch. High-minority school: 78 percent or more of the students are black, Hispanic, American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian or Pacific Islander. Low-minority school: 12 percent or fewer of the students are non-white students. Teachers with neither certification nor major. Data for secondary-level core academic classes (math, science, social studies, English) across the U.S.

Source: Education Trust Analysis of 2007-08 Schools and Staffing Survey data.
Tennessee: High-poverty/high-minority schools have fewer of the “most effective” teachers and more “least effective” teachers.

Note: High poverty/high minority means at least 75 percent of students qualify for FRPL and at least 75 percent are minority.

Los Angeles: Black, Latino students have fewer highly effective teachers, more weak ones.

Latino and black students are:

3X as likely to get low-effectiveness teachers

1/2 as likely to get highly effective teachers

The results are devastating.

Kids who come in a little behind, leave a lot behind.
And these are the students who remain in school through 12th grade.
Students of color are less likely to graduate from high school on time.

Class of 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>African American</th>
<th>Latino</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>Native American</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Averaged Freshman Graduation Rate</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Add those numbers up and throw in college entry and graduation, and different groups of young Americans obtain degrees at very different rates...
Whites attain bachelor’s degrees at nearly twice the rate of blacks and almost three times the rate of Hispanics

Bachelor’s Degree Attainment of Young Adults (25-29-year-olds), 2013

- White: 40%
- African American: 20%
- Latino: 16%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Educational Attainment in the United States: 2013
Young adults from high-income families are 7 times more likely to earn bachelor’s degrees by age 24.

Those numbers are not good news for the future competitiveness of your workforce…or, more importantly, for the lives of the young people in question.
Agenda #1

Working together to get more low-income students and students of color through college.

Chances of Staying at the Bottom If You’re Born at the Bottom

Without a 4-Year Degree

45%

Among black men, education makes a huge difference in life outcomes.

Cumulative Risk of Imprisonment by Age 34 for Young Black Men:

High School Dropouts

68%

Source: Bruce Western and Becky Pe
But Can We Really DO Anything To Change These Results??

An awful lot of Americans—including a lot of American educators—have decided that there really isn’t much we can do.
What We Hear Many Educators Say:

- They’re poor
- Their parents don’t care
- They come to schools without breakfast
- Not enough books
- Not enough parents
Let’s be clear, these things do matter. And we ought to be doing whatever we can to reduce the numbers of our children growing up in poverty.
That said, the next time somebody tells you that there is nothing our schools can do...that underachievement in inevitable among children suffering from the effects of poverty or racism...
I hope you will ask them how it is that schools like these—all traditional public schools serving very poor kids...
George Hall Elementary School
Mobile, Alabama

• 545 students in grades PK-5
  – 99% African American

• 98% Low Income

Note: Enrollment data are for 2011-12 school year
Source: Alabama Department of Education
Big Improvement at George Hall Elementary

Low-Income Students – Grade 4 Reading

- 2004: George Hall 48%, Alabama 73%
- 2012: George Hall 94%, Alabama 89%

Source: Alabama Department of Education
Exceeding Standards: George Hall students outperform white students in Alabama

Grade 5 Math (2011)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Students</th>
<th>African-American Students - George Hall</th>
<th>White Students - Alabama</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exceeds Standards</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meets Standards</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partially Meets Standards</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does Not Meet Standards</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Alabama Department of Education
Halle Hewetson Elementary School
Las Vegas, NV

- 962 students in grades PK – 5
  - 85% Latino
  - 7% African American
- 100% Low Income
- 71% Limited English Proficient

Note: Data are for 2010-2011 school year
Source: Nevada Department of Education
Big Improvement at Halle Hewetson Elementary

Latino Students – Grade 3 Reading

Source: Nevada Department of Education
Elmont Memorial High School
Elmont, New York

2011-2012 School Year
• 1,907 students in grades 7-12
  – 78% African American
  – 12% Latino
High Performance by ALL Students at Elmont Memorial High School

Secondary Level Math (2012)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Overall</th>
<th>African American</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Low Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage Proficient and Above</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: New York Department of Education


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High Performance by ALL Students at Elmont Memorial High School

Secondary Level English (2012)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage Proficient and Above</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Income</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Income</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: New York Department of Education


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High Graduation Rates at Elmont Memorial High School

Class of 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Elmont</th>
<th>New York</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economically Disadvantaged</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Economically Disadvantaged</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Includes students graduating by June 2011.

Source: New York State Department of Education

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And, it’s not just individual schools that are teaching us these kids can learn. Some whole districts…

If I were a legislator from Ohio, for example…
Average Scale Scores, by District Low-Income African American Students

Grade 4 – NAEP Reading (2013)

Note: Basic Scale Score = 208; Proficient Scale Score = 238

Source: NAEP Data Explorer, NCES
Change in Average Scale Scores, by District Low-Income African American Students

Grade 4 – NAEP Reading (2003-2013)

Source: NCES, NAEP Data Explorer

Note: Chart includes only districts that participated, and had members of this specific subgroup, in both the 2003 and 2013 NAEP TUDA administrations.
Average Scale Scores, by District Low-Income Latino Students

Grade 8 – NAEP Math (2013)

Note: Basic Scale Score = 262; Proficient Scale Score = 299
Source: NAEP Data Explorer, NCES

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Change in Average Scale Scores, by District Low-Income Latino Students

Grade 8 – NAEP Math (2003-2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Change in Mean Scale Score, 2003-2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boston</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houston</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large city</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National public</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District of Columbia (DCPS)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Diego</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York City</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleveland</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Chart includes only districts that participated, and had members of this specific subgroup, in both the 2003 and 2013 NAEP TUDA administrations.

Source: NCES, NAEP Data Explorer
In every state, there are schools and districts that can teach us a lot about what to do.

And there are schools and districts about which we need to get A LOT MORE SERIOUS.
But the same differences in performance and growth characterize states, as well.

And states have a lot to learn from the top performers—and top gainers.
Trying to improve early reading results?

These states have growth rates close to twice the national average—for every group of kids.
NAEP Grade 4 Reading – Low-Income Students

States with the Biggest Gains in Mean Scale Scores (2003 – 2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Gain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: On average, mean scale scores in reading for low-income fourth-grade students increased by 6 points from 2003 to 2013.
Source: National Center for Education Statistics, NAEP Data Explorer
# NAEP Grade 4 Reading – Latino Students

States with the Biggest Gains in Mean Scale Scores (2003 – 2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Gain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: On average, mean scale scores in reading for Latino fourth-grade students increased by 7 points from 2003 to 2013.
Source: National Center for Education Statistics, NAEP Data
### NAEP Grade 4 Reading – African-American Students

#### States with the Biggest Gains in Mean Scale Scores (2003 – 2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Gain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: On average, mean scale scores in reading for African-American fourth-grade students increased by 8 points from 2003 to 2013. Source: National Center for Education Statistics, NAEP Data Explorer
NAEP Grade 4 Reading – American Indian/Alaska Native Students

States with the Biggest Gains in Mean Scale Scores (2003 – 2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Gain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oklahoma</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyoming</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: On average, mean scale scores in reading for American Indian/Alaska Native fourth-grade students increased by 4 points from 2003 to 2013.

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, NAEP Data
Or what about middle grades math?

Take a look at what these top gainers have been doing.
## NAEP Grade 8 Math – Latino Students

### States with the Biggest Gains in Mean Scale Scores (2003 – 2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Gain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delaware</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhode Island</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: On average, mean scale scores in math for Latino eighth-grade students increased by 13 points from 2003 to 2013.

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, NAEP Data Explorer
NAEP Grade 8 Math – Low-Income Students

States with the Biggest Gains in Mean Scale Scores (2003 – 2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Gain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaii</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: On average, mean scale scores in math for low-income eighth-grade students increased by 12 points from 2003 to 2013. Source: National Center for Education Statistics, NAEP Data Explorer
NAEP Grade 8 Math – African-American Students

States with the Biggest Gains in Mean Scale Scores (2003 – 2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Gain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhode Island</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansas</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennessee</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: On average, mean scale scores in math for American-African eighth-grade students increased by 11 points from 2003 to 2013.
Source: National Center for Education Statistics, NAEP Data
## States with the Biggest Gains in Mean Scale Scores (2003 – 2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Gain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oklahoma</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyoming</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: On average, mean scale scores in math for American Indian/Alaska Native eighth-grade students increased by 6 points from 2003 to 2013. Source: National Center for Education Statistics, NAEP Data
The same differences hold true for:

- high school graduation or college entry rates;
- college graduation rates;
- funding fairness;
- teacher quality or standards implementation.
Remember, it’s about IMPROVEMENT!

If all of us could learn from each other and match the improvement rates of the top states among us, our country—and our kids—would be a whole lot better off.
Download this presentation on our website

www.edtrust.org